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Cross-Cultural Education in Relation to National Minorities, Using the Jewish Minority as an Example

*Your deeds gain their proper
meaning only on the following day;
your words become a fact, separate
from yourself.*¹

Reinhart Koselleck

The Power of Diversity

In commencing consideration of cross-cultural education, it is worth taking a closer look at the communities themselves within which this education is to take place. From the time the education system changed in our country, the method of imparting knowledge, in an institutionalised manner, about other cultures and about acquiring the ability to establish and sustain cross-cultural relations, has been a matter under discussion amongst teachers, educational sociologists, political scientists and all those social scientists who discerned and appreciated the significance of diversity. As data drawn from the 2011 *Narodowego Spisu Powszechnego Ludności i Mieszkań*² (the 2011 census) shows, Poland is a rather homogeneous country. Considering contemporary movements in migration and individual mobility, the issue of cross-cultural contact becomes extremely relevant.

An additional element which attracted attention, and also related to that census, is the issue of a compound national-ethnic identity. For the first time in the history of research carried out on such a scale in our country, respondents were asked two questions regarding their national/ethnic identity. The notions of national identity and ethnic identity are closely connected within the Act concerning national and ethnic minorities, as well as are the definitions of regional³ languages of national and ethnic minorities. Still, in accordance with this legal document, national minorities are *groups of Polish citizens which meet the following criteria:*

- 1) They are fewer in number than the rest of the population of the Republic of Poland;*
- 2) They are, in a significant manner, distinguished from other citizens by language, culture or tradition;*
- 3) They aspire to retain their language, culture or tradition;*
- 4) They are conscious of their historical, national bond and act towards its expression and protection;*

¹ R.Koselleck, *Dzieje pojęć. Studia z semantyki i pragmatyki społeczno-politycznego* (*A History of Ideas. Studies From Semantics and Socio-Political Pragmatics*), Warsaw 2009, p.10 .

² Główny Rząd Statystyczny (Chief Statistical Office), *Raport z wyników Narodowego Spisu Powszechnego Ludności i Mieszkań* (*Report of the 2011 Census*), Warsaw, 2012

³ *Ustawa z dnia 6 stycznia 2005 r. o mniejszościach narodowych i etnicznych oraz o języku regionalnym* (*An Act, dated 6th January 2005, Regarding National and Ethnic Minorities and Regional Languages*) (Dz. U., dated 31/01/2005.)

- 5) *Their ancestors will have lived, for at least 100 years, within the current territory of the Republic of Poland;*
- 6) *They identify with the nationality of their own country*⁴.

Within our own country, we can count nine minority national groups: Armenian, Belarusian, Czech, German, Lithuanian, Russian, Slovak, Ukrainian, as well as Jewish, about whom more will be written in this article.

In light of the Act, a main difference amongst national and ethnic minorities refers to the issue of identifying with the nationality of their own country. Four ethnic minorities, in Poland, do not have an historically-politically created country, understood as a territorial and geopolitical unit from which their definition arises - the Karaims, the Lemkos, the Roma and the Tartars⁵.

Table I: Population, in 2011, According to National-Ethnic Definition

National-Ethnic Identification	In Total	
	Thousands	Percentage
Total population	38,512	100.00
Only Polish	36,157	93.88
Polish and Non-Polish	842	2.19
Only Non-Polish	562	1.46
Among them two non-Polish	38	0.10
Unknown	951	2.47
Polska – in total	36,999	96.07
Non-Polish – in total	1,404	3.65

Source: Chief Statistical Office, *Report of the 2011 Census*, Warsaw 2012.

Table I presents the results of the census, with reference to the issue under discussion – nationality and ethnicity.

As can be seen from the data, 880,000 respondents took the opportunity of declaring a dual identity. It is possible to treat this result, in the first instance, as an indicator of the broader issue which is cultural diversity. Many of us find it more and more difficult to define ourselves nationally or ethnically in one dimension. Ever more often, we are undoubtedly helped by our cross-cultural contacts through the development of modern technology and the greater possibilities associated with territorial migration and the availability of information.

Looking at the experience of other countries, in which the percentage of dual, or identity other than that of the dominant social majority, is double, national or ethnic identity is considerably stronger than in Poland. Here, it is possible to try to show three routes which they could follow as multicultural societies. The first of these routes is where there is the desire to eliminate that which differs from our way of interpreting reality on the road to open conflict.

⁴ Ibidem, art 2.1.

⁵ See Ibidem, art 2.2.

The second option involves the dominance of attempts at separatism, where we encase often ourselves within invisible walls and have a reluctance to get to know *others*. And, finally, the third route is where dialogue dominates, providing the possibility of building common, cross-cultural relations. For the realisation of this option, members of a given society must be able to, in a constructive manner, join in to a cross-cultural process of communication. This requires that the people, engaged in this process, not only possess communication abilities, but are also fully conscious of the different ways of perceiving the world, of different codes and of different interpretations of the realities in which they find themselves. In this respect, there is a need to systematic and institutionalised education.

Cross-Cultural Education as an Element of General Education

When we speak of general education, we are thinking of the institutionalised system, beginning at pre-school level and ending at a level of higher education. It is worth noting here as whether the issue of cultural diversity is contained within that system and, if so, to what extent. That issue is not part of this article, but a research topic for today's humanities and social researchers⁶.

In studies devoted to cultural heterogeneity, we encounter various notions clarifying this issue. Within them, we read about multiculturalism and cross-culturalism. Multiculturalism is *the co-existence, within the same space (or within the immediate neighbourhood without any delimitation, or within aspirations to fill the same space) of two or more social groups with differing, distinctive characteristics with regard to external appearance, language, religion, value sets, etc., which contribute to a mutually perceived difference, resulting in various effects. It is also essential, that the difference in small local groups, peers or small neighbourhood groups is perceived by others*⁷.

What we are dealing with here is a situation of differing identification based upon autonomic, individual auto-definition. Reference to national and ethnic difference (the difference could also refer to other aspects of defining identity such as age, gender, competence or sexual orientation) can be tied up with describing oneself as a Pole and not as a member of a national/ethnic minority. As Marian Golka points out, there are individualised optics when it comes to the perception of issues of interaction, or a lack thereof, between members of culturally different social groups.

⁶ One of the most valuable studies within Jerzy Nikitorowicz's work is *Kreowanie tożsamości dziecka. Wyzwania edukacji międzykulturowej* (*The Creation of the Identity of a Child: the Challenge of Cross-Cultural Education*), Gdańsk 2005, in which he presents a program of cultural sensitisation „Ku tożsamości międzykulturowej” (Towards a Multicultural Identity), aimed at children six years after pre-school, pp. 104-199.

⁷ M. Golka, *Oblicza wielokulturowości* (*The Face of Multiculturalism*), [w:] *U progu wielokulturowości. Nowe oblicza społeczeństwa polskiego* (*On the Threshold of Multiculturalism. The New Face of Polish Society*), (ed.) M. Kempny, A. Kapciak, S. Łodziński, Warsaw 1997, pp. 54-55.

In situations where we deal with the phenomenon of where the multiculturalism of people, living in the same place, does not enter into interpersonal relations, where they live next to each other and divide space to be reserved for one group and for the other group, differences are thereby emphasised. In this instance, multicultural education is intended to introduce students to various other cultures, pointing out the aspects of difference and, as a consequence, breaking ethno-centric ways of thinking stereotyping and prejudice.

However, a problem arises here regarding the emphasis which we place upon actual differences within the realisation of multicultural education. In working, for many years, with various cultural groups, I have noticed a certain regularity in the appearance of conflicts relating to ethnic differences. Whilst none of the participants in the meeting begin stressing their nationality or ethnicity, all the parties are interested in achieving a common goal. The moment someone's separateness is emphasised, stressing their difference, this is the beginning of a conflict situation. Its resolution is again dependent upon linked, shared and consolidated issues.

Another way of describing culturally heterogeneous communities is connected with the notion of inter-culturalism, in which the prefix *inter* (Latin for "between") points to the gravity of what happens between two (or more) culturally different social groups, and to the dynamics which occur in those processes. Inter-culturalism is *a phenomenon where there is a deeper inter-relation between individual representatives of different cultures, leading to a mutual recognition and understanding which, as a consequence, has an influence over the functioning, within the environment, of stereotypes and other responses to differences*⁸. Taking the above into consideration, we can define cross-cultural education as an arena to create synergetic qualities, to come to know other cultures and to accept differences, co-operation and co-existence. Including cross-cultural education as a part of general education should be such as to have, as its aim, the realisation of all three didactic areas in the teaching process – knowledge, ability and attitudes. With reference to the subject matter of this article, among others, the following aims should be:

- the imparting of knowledge about other cultures,
- the formation of attitudes of tolerance and openness,
- the development of communication skills (including learning other languages),
- the imparting of the values of equality and the meanings of democracy and human rights,
- the creation of opportunities for direct multicultural contacts.

This manner of reflection on cross-cultural education has its roots in the work of teachers concentrated around the American Bureau of Cross-Cultural Education (the "Bureau"), which was established in 1939.

⁸ J. Nikitorowicz, *Kreowanie tożsamości dziecka. Wyzwania edukacji międzykulturowej (The Creation of the Identity of a Child: the Challenge of Cross-Cultural Education)*, Gdańsk 2005, p. 43.

The initiators were people connected with the Progressive Education Association (headed by Rachel Davis DuBois – a pioneer in cross-cultural education in the United States) and the Jewish minority who co-financed the Association's activities and specific projects. The main project of the organisation, launched in the year of the outbreak of World War II, was to support New York teachers and school administrators in the process of planning and implementing programs aimed at cross-cultural education. Other Bureau tasks were to educate teachers on the cross-cultural issue and to conduct academic research into interpersonal relationships in the centre of cities, with particular reference to tensions and conflicts resulting from cultural diversity⁹.

Attending to the significance of the education system, as well as preparing teachers to impart knowledge, and to shape abilities to function within multi-cultural communities, brought about the introduction of numerous legal regulations and educational activities, worldwide. Among them were:

- the 1993 Vienna Declaration which stated, *National minorities, formed in Europe as the result of historical turmoil, should be protected and respected so that they may contribute to stability and peace*¹⁰,
- The European Youth Campaign Against Racism, Xenophobia, Antisemitism and Intolerance (*All Different, All Equal*), commenced in 1994, which had, as its main aim, the popularisation of positive models of co-existence and co-operation within multicultural communities, and to increase the involvement of young people in shaping the future of those communities¹¹,
- The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, adopted in 1998, the Articles of which include, among others, banning discrimination, the promotion of real equality, the promotion of conditions which support the protection and development of cultures, religions, languages and traditions, as well as education, and also ban on forced assimilation¹²,
- The joint declaration of European Ministers of Education, from 2003, on the subject of cross-cultural education in a new European context, in which the education ministers declared that they were *determined to make the necessary arrangements such that cross-cultural education will become a significant component [...] of education policy; this involves taking appropriate action with regard to school curricula, school administration and teacher training*¹³,

⁹ Zob. P.P. Grzybowski, *Edukacja międzykulturowa – konteksty* (Cross-Cultural Education - Contexts), Kraków 2011, pp. 14-15.

¹⁰ *Vienna Declaration*, http://www.coe.int/t/dcr/summit/decl_vienne_pl.asp, [accessed: 20.12/2012]

¹¹ See <http://www.communitybuilders.ro/all-different-all-equal-european-youth-campaigns-for-diversity-human-rights-and-participation>, [accessed: 20/12/2012]

¹² See *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (Dz. U. 2002, No.22, Item 209), http://bilingua.haus.pl/pliki/akty/Konwencja_ramowa_Rady_Europy.pdf, [dostęp: 20.12.2012]

¹³ *The joint declaration of European Ministers of Education* https://www.men.gov.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=406%3Adeklaracja-europejskich-ministrow-edukacji-na-temat-edukacji-midzykulturowej&catid=173%3Amodzie-i-zagranica-wspolpraca-midzynarodowa-organizacje-midzynarodowe&Itemid=209, [accessed: 20/12/2012]

- The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, which was adopted in 2001 by the General Assembly of the United Nations and which declared that 21st May, annually, would be *World Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development Day*. In 2012, the campaign's main aims were to encourage individuals and organisations, around the world, to take specific action in support of diversity, such as raising the awareness of the meaning of cross-cultural dialogue and integration, as well as combating polarisation and stereotyping for the betterment of understanding and interaction between peoples of differing cultures¹⁴.

All these legal regulations and education programs have a meaningful influence over the perception of cultural differences within member societies. And even Rachel D.DuBois, while expressing scepticism regarding the results of educational influences (their intensiveness and permanence), which were the result of the process of imparting knowledge about other cultures, at the same time said that these were, at least, small steps in the right direction¹⁵ – a direction of building a society in which difference is seen as a value and a linking element, rather than one of conflict.

So how is it possible to create an educational process which will lead towards cross-cultural dialogue? One answer to that question is proposed by Milton J. Bennett, author of the *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity* (DMIS). According to Bennett, this concept is based upon two fundamental phenomena – the human ability to perceive differences in the same thing, as well as the cultural handling of their significance¹⁶. So the concept of differentiation constitutes the pivotal point in considering the development of cross-cultural sensitivity. It is precisely within this process of development that an individual gains the knowledge on how to recognise cultural differences and, more importantly, how to deal with those differences in a constructive manner, contributing to the building of cross-cultural co-operation.

Within the DMIS process, M.J. Bennett differentiates two main cognitive orientations – the ethno-centric world view and the ethno-relativistic world view. Both comprise several intermediate stages which will be discussed further in this article.

Below is a table showing the passage through the individual stages, from the stage of denial through to the integration stage, and is an attempt at depicting the accepted concept of acquiring a cross-cultural experience.

¹⁴ See <http://www.un.org/en/events/culturaldiversityday/>, [accessed: 20/12/2012]

¹⁵ See D. Selig, *Americans Ali: The Cultural Gifts Movement*, Cambridge 2008, p. 97.

¹⁶ See M.J. Bennett, *Towards Ethnorelativism: a Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity*, [w:] *Education for the Intercultural Experience*, Ed. R.M. Paige, Yarmouth 1993, p. 22.

Table 1. Milton J. Bennett's Model of the Development of Cross-Cultural Sensitivity

Orientation	Stage of Development	Development of Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Experiencing Cultural Differences
Ethno-Centric World View	1. Denial	
	2. Defence	
	3. Minimalisation	
Ethno-Relativistic World View	4. Acceptance	
	5. Adaptation	
	6. Integration	

Source: Based on M.J. Bennett's *Towards Ethno-Relativism: a Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity*, [w:] *Education for the Intercultural Experience*, Ed. M.R. Paige, Yarmouth 1993.

Ethno-centric orientation is characterised by the conviction that *my* (the individual's) point of view is a fundamental, crucial and better element of social reality. In this manner, interpretations ensue in the following stages: denial, defence and minimalisation¹⁷. Lying at the base of the ethno-centric world view is denial which involves excluding all differences from one's field of vision. This is possible through isolating oneself from ethnically different groups or by ethnically isolating oneself from all contact with difference and dissimilarity. This could lead, in extreme cases, to the dehumanisation of individuals not belonging to "our" ethnic or national group, considering them as being a category of sub-humans.

The next step along the road of developing cross-cultural sensitivity is defence. This is the moment in which we start noticing differences, but perceive them as being threatening to our differing culturally re-asserted significance. Against this, we apply various defensive strategies, for example, slandering representatives of national groups, attributing them with common features, stereotyping them and pointing out their inferiority. Other strategies include pointing the strengths of one's own group, whilst ignoring values connected with our cultures. Paradoxically, acts of aggression appear more often at this stage than at the denial stage. This results from the specific need to actively measuring oneself up against a perceived cultural difference.

Minimalisation is the next and final stage in the ethno-centric orientation. It consists of recognising cross-cultural differences, while simultaneously attempting to belittle their meaning to the individual's social functioning. We accept cultural differences which manifest themselves in various manners but, at the same time, we assume a biological or transcendental universality. ("We are all human.") In M.J.Bennett's opinion, the perception of differences in this manner is, at least, decidedly more competent than the previous way. However, it does have its ethno-centric aspects. This concerns how we interleave thinking about the social value of people belonging to our various groups with that of other national or ethnic groups. Individuals, for whom the very strategy of minimising differences is immediate, can regard certain characteristics and attributes of the majority to be equally apt for members of minority groups.

¹⁷ See M.J. Bennett, *Intercultural Communication: A current Perspective*, [w:] *Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication: Selected Readings*, Ed. M.J. Bennett, Yarmouth 1998, http://www.ikwa.eu/resources/Bennet_intercultural_communication.pdf, [accessed: 12/10/2012]

After passing through the stages of the ethno-centric orientation, which are characterised by their own set of norms and cultural customs used in evaluating the behaviour of people, we then pass, often subconsciously, onto the ethno-relativistic orientation. In this approach, the key assumption is that the only possible means of understanding other cultures is by learning about them, and that this knowledge is the basis for forming the appropriate ability of interpreting the behaviour of people of other cultural groups. This manner of perceiving cultural differences has three stages – acceptance, adaptation and integration¹⁸.

At the base of the ethno-relativistic orientation lies acceptance within which we have the pleasure of finding recognition and exploration of differences. This is acceptance, in the sense of accepting the existence of behavioural diversity and values, but not in the sense of approval, recognition or affirmation of culturally different models of behaviour. Where accept that there are, in fact, differences and that there is no one right response with reference to evaluating reality, although there may be better responses in individual contexts. Respect for differences in behaviour in a value system of people belonging to culturally different groups, without their axionormative values, constitutes the basis for a person's functioning within the approval stage of ethno-relativism.

Adaptation is the next stage in DMIS. Here, the individual has some knowledge about cultural diversity and uses it intentionally to move within this culturally heterogeneous reality. Crucial to the stage of adaptation is the ability to empathise and to accept different perspectives in the process of understanding meanings. Crossing cultural borders leads us to become multicultural individuals (as Bennett calls them), who are capable of crossing cultural frames of reference in order to, in a skilful way, apply alternative interpretations or to expand one's repertoire of behaviours, not only as part one's own culture, but also within the scope of other cultures.

The final stage in the development of cross-cultural sensitivity is integration. An increased experiencing of cultural differences leads to the internalisation of recognised issues. This forms a useful basis for the contextual interpretation of future events. People, at the integration stage, perform the specific role of cross-cultural mediator. They understand the frames of reference of two (or more) sides and are able to evaluate them, while simultaneously acknowledging, in the case of conflict situations, that there are no good or bad responses, and that each side has its own appropriate manner of evaluating reality in support of a specific cultural code. An element which is exhibited in the integration stage is the ability to function in the world without the feeling of belonging to a culture. This is reminiscent of Ken Wilber's¹⁹ comment with reference to the development of an individual, where the ultimate, highest state is the achievement of the best consciousness, understood as (if it is possible to attempt at applying a single meaning to this concept) functioning in a reality which is not divided by any borders.

¹⁸ See *ibidem*.

¹⁹ See K. Wilber, *Niepodzielone. Wschodnie i zachodnie teorie rozwoju osobowości* (*Undivided. Eastern and Western Theories on the Development of the Personality*), Poznań 1996.

Towards an Ethno-Relativistic Education

A practical application presents itself in the model for developing cross-cultural sensitivity. In order to form an ability to pass on multicultural knowledge to future generations, we must first determine at which stage the individual, with whom we wish to work, finds him/herself, and then skilfully lead them through the next DMIS stages.

Within Polish education, the conviction still pervades that the issue of cultural diversity only refers to those areas concerning national minorities, and teaching alone is often concentrated on students gaining a theoretical knowledge of other cultures. The results in a lack of shaping an ability to function in a multicultural reality, and a lack of development of tolerance and openness towards differences – both of which help to overcome prejudice and stereotyping. Ethno-centricity, which largely characterises our society, and within which social research includes attitudes to national minorities and to people belonging to culturally different groups²⁰, constitutes a point of departure from educational discussions on cultural diversity.

For centuries, national and ethnic minorities have constituted a part of the society which lived within the borders of our country. It is worth examining what we do, at an institutional level, to increase young people's knowledge about our neighbours. One of these groups is the Jewish minority which, according to the 2011 census, numbered 7,000 people (among them, there were 5,000 people who also claimed to be members of the Polish community)²¹.

In 2010, the Ministry of National Education (MEN) established an advisory/consultative panel on the subject of *Teaching the Holocaust*. Among panel members were individuals with a knowledge of and experience in Holocaust education. Its work was directed by a person specialising in Polish-Jewish relations and representing the Minister of National Education. The panel meets at least once a year to undertake tasks amongst which are:

- *Preparation of opinions, for the Minister, on the directions of, and changes in, the area of teaching the Holocaust;*
- *Putting solutions in the area of teaching the Holocaust;*
- *Drafting projects and materials for use in the teaching of the Holocaust*²².

Apart from the panel's work at the 2004 direction of the Minister of National Education, on 19th April each year, namely the anniversary of the outbreak of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, a *Day of Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Crimes Against Humanity* is observed in Polish schools. Educational projects form part of the day's commemorations and each school can take part in a nationwide project competition, devoted to the issue of the Holocaust, as well as to crimes against humanity.

²⁰ See, among others, the Public Opinion Research Centre, *Tożsamość narodowa Polaków oraz postrzeganie mniejszości narodowych i etnicznych w Polsce. Komunikat z badań (Polish National Identity and the Perception of National and Ethnic Minorities in Poland – Research Result)s*, by J. Lewandowska, Warsaw 2005; Public Opinion Research Centre, *Stosunek Polaków do innych narodów. Komunikat z badań (The Attitudes of Poles to Other Nationalities)*, by M. Omyła-Rudzka, Warsaw 2012.

²¹ See Central Statistical Office, *Results of the 2011 Census*, Warsaw 2012.

²² Ministry of Employment & Social Policy, *Instytucje dialogu społecznego przy urzędach administracji rządowej (Social Dialogue Institutions within the Civil Service)*, Warsaw 2012, p. 290.

There are also numerous other initiatives conducted throughout the school year aimed at teaching about the history and culture of the Jews, as well as about the Holocaust. The full list can be viewed on the *Preserving Memory: The History and Culture of Two Peoples* website. The diverse list offers workshops and lectures in places of remembrance and Holocaust museums, from educational projects, youth meetings and seminars for teachers, through to university courses²³.

The *Preserving Memory* project, commenced in 2003, is the result of a co-operation agreement between the Polish and Israeli governments in the areas of culture, academia and education. The partners in the project are the Centre for the Development of Education, the Yad Vashem Institute, the Polish Institute in Tel Aviv and the International Auschwitz and Holocaust Education Centre. Apart from creating websites where teachers and students can find educational material and information on Polish-Jewish relations, the project also arranges for meetings of young people and runs the *Blżej siebie (Closer to Each Other)* and *Pamięć i edukacja - uczymy się od siebie (Remembrance and Education – Learning From Each Other)* programs. These programs have as their aim the creation of a Poland-wide network of regional co-ordinators and teachers whose task is to animate and support school projects on the issue of Polish-Jewish relations²⁴. The co-operative work between Israeli and Polish youth, as well as the exchange of teachers' experiences, leaves the way open to the expansion of this co-operation between these two culturally different groups.

Among the other projects created under the patronage of the Ministry of National Education from 2008 include the *School of Dialogue*, planned and carried out by the *Forum for Dialogue Among the Nations*. The main aim of the project is to broaden students' knowledge on the subject of the Jewish presence in Polish history, as well as the role members of that community played in the country's social, cultural and economic development. As part of the program, third year high school students, and post-middle school students, under the guidance of Forum trainers, learn about the history of their own localities through the prism of the, often no longer present, Jewish community. Projects prepared on the basis of the pre-War presence of a Jewish minority in the local community are to be in the format of commemorating and remembering the meaning of those groups to the functioning of their hometowns. The projects carried out from schools throughout Poland are then entered into a competition²⁵.

Other organisations, in co-operation with MEN, also plan and prepare Poland-wide competitions, for students at various levels, on the issue of a common past of Polish and Jewish culture²⁶. From the viewpoint of cross-cultural sensitivity development, what can be considered as important are the present and actual experience of making contact within different cultures.

²³ See http://www.polska-izrael.edu.pl/images/stories/igak/materialy_do_pobrania/2012_13_lista%20programow%20edukacja%20o%20holokaucie.pdf, [accessed: 22/12/2012]

²⁴ See <http://www.polska-izrael.edu.pl/pl/2012-07-10-20-55-46/o-projekcie>, [accessed: 22/12/2012]

²⁵ See <http://www.dialog.org.pl/programy.html>, [accessed: 12/12/2012].

²⁶ See *Zob. XX i XXI Sprawozdanie z realizacji przez Rzeczpospolitą Polską postanowień Konwencji w sprawie likwidacji wszelkich form dyskryminacji rasowej za okres od sierpnia 2009 r. do grudnia 2011 r (XX and XXI Reports on the implementation, by the Republic of Poland, of the provisions of the Convention on the removal of all forms of racial discrimination from August 2009 to December 2011)*, Warsaw 2012, p. 14.

All the above programs emphasize the importance of past mutual relationships. What is a necessary element of shaping an ethno-relativistic orientation is to possess a current perspective with an accent towards the future. A post-middle school student, when asked what she knew about Jewish culture, replied that she knew almost nothing "because what she learns at school is about the Holocaust and, after all, that is only a part of Jewish culture". Living in a culturally diverse society demands cultural competence, knowledge and an ability to move amongst various cultural frames of reference and, from there, we can direct our footsteps onto the road towards building a society sensitive to difference.

Such activities are often undertaken by NGO's (non-government organisations) as part of community campaigns. In concluding this article, the following examples, concerning cross-cultural education, are taken from two such campaigns. The first campaign took place in the Netherlands with the heading *Should you have to hide the real you to be accepted?* The second campaign, conducted by the Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Poland (Związek Gmin Wyznaniowych Żydowskich), introduced individuals with dual national/ethnic identities – *I am a Jew, I am a Pole*.

Below: Public campaign posters devoted to cultural diversity



Source: <http://theoriens.com/dutch-ad-campaign-targets-discrimination/>;

<http://www.jewish.org.pl/index.php/pl/wiadomosci-mainmenu-57/1004-ruszysza-kampania-qjestem-polkpjestem-polakiemq.html>

These photographs present current issues associated with the heterogeneity of contemporary societies. They point to vitally important issues which members of minorities face as part of everyday life within a society dominated by a cultural majority. Should you have to hide in order to be accepted? Can I be proud and speak openly about my own culture? Today's generation of students replied to this and other questions by identifying differences in culture and finding ways of creating an ability to live in a multicultural world. Whether they succeed will depend upon the extent to which they can accept, adapt to and, finally, integrate themselves into a cross-cultural reality.

