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## **MULTICULTURALISM AS AN EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGE**

### **MULTIKULTUROWOŚĆ JAKO WYZWANIE WYCHOWAWCZE**

### **МУЛЬТИКУЛЬТУРАЛИЗМ КАК ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНЫЙ ВЫЗОВ**

#### **Abstract**

*The subject of the article is the analysis of multicultural issues as a challenge for contemporary pedagogics. This analysis concerns the practical, philosophical and social aspects as well as educational and preventive aspects of multiculturalism. The inspiration to take up the topic was the growing problems related to it, and above all, still registered by sociologists, act of treating "other" as "foreign" by a large percentage of students. In this context, an important pedagogical task is to reject the ideological understanding of multiculturalism and to encourage respecting Polish tradition and culture, and on the other hand to counteract the aggression caused by unhealthy reactions to multiculturalism.*

**Keywords:** *multiculturalism de facto, multiculturalism de iure, cult of multiculturalism, relativism, eurocentrism, postmodernism, resistance to aggression program.*

#### **Streszczenie**


*Przedmiotem artykułu jest analiza problematyki wielokulturowości, jako wyzwania dla współczesnych działań pedagogicznych. Analiza ta dotyczy aspektów: praktycznych, filozoficzno-społecznych i wychowawczo-profilaktycznych multikulturalizmu. Inspiracją do podjęcia tematyki stało się narastanie problemów z nią związanych, przede wszystkim zaś wciąż rejestrowane przez socjologów traktowanie przez spory procent uczniów „innego”, jako „obcego”. W tym kontekście istotnym zadaniem pedagogicznym staje się z jednej strony odejście od ideologicznego rozumienia multikulturalizmu i wdrażanie do szacunku wobec fundamentów polskiej tradycji i kultury, z drugiej zaś przeciwdziałanie agresji, wywołanej niezdrowymi reakcjami na wielokulturowość.*

**Słowa kluczowe:** *Wielokulturowość de facto, wielokulturowość de iure, kult wielokulturowości, relatywizm, eurocentryzm, postmodernizm, program odporności na agresję.*

#### **Аннотация**

ISSN 2450-2146 / E-ISSN 2451-1064

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Łukjaniuk J., (2018) Multiculturalism As An Educational Challenge.

*International Journal of New Economics and Social Sciences*, 2(8)2018: 393-402

[DOI 10.5604/01.3001.0012.9952](https://doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0012.9952)

*Предметом статьи является анализ поликультурной проблематики, которая может быть вызовом для современной педагогики. Анализ касается практических, философских, социальных, а также образовательных и профилактических аспектов мультикультурализма. Источником вдохновения для изучения этой темы послужили возникающие проблемы, связанные, прежде всего, с отношением большого числа учеников к «другим», как к «иностранцам», которое все еще наблюдается социологами. В этом контексте важной педагогической задачей является с одной стороны отказ от идеологического понимания мультикультурализма и поощрение уважения к польской традиции и культуре, а с другой стороны, противодействие агрессии, вызванной нездоровой реакцией на мультикультурализм.*

**Ключевые слова:** мультикультурализм де-факто, мультикультурализм де-юре, культ мультикультурализма, релятивизм, евроцентризм, постмодернизм, программа противодействия агрессии.

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**Article history:** Received: 18.11.2018 / Accepted: 15.12.2018 / Published: 30.12.2018


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### **Statement of the problem in general outlook and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks.**

In a properly organized school, within the well-developed and implemented educational process, multicultural issues should be taken into account; 2. appropriate preventive programs should be developed to prevent aggression and violence among students due to their nationality, skin color, religious beliefs or cultural and religious tradition. In the first part of the article, the author deals with the philosophical and social aspects of these assumptions, in the second part draws two general conclusions regarding preventive programs. Author claims that the notions of "multiculturalism" and "cultural pluralism" describe a certain factual state of contemporary developed Western societies; because of the large number of immigrants, multiculturalism is a reality in them. In addition, today's widespread migration, information globalization and associated pluralism are connected with the processes of economic globalization, and the actual multiculturalism - with postmodernism. Postmodernism emphasizes the multiplicity of cultures,

their wealth and equality, "the joy of pluralism". This tendency is reflected in the slogan "il est interdit d'interdire". As a result of the merging of waves of immigration, the jure pluralism – present in the west has become postmodern. This pluralism is described by author as the ideology of "multiculturalism" (German: Multikulti, a term popularized in the 1980s among the Gruenen - "Greens"). In the article, the author highlights that an ideology that assumes a harmonious coexistence in a society of different cultural or ethnic groups; permission to use their Euro-Atlantic cultural achievements and freedoms; tolerating - in the name of respect for otherness - behaviors contrary to these achievements; giving "other" legal and financial support, while promoting the postmodern trend as the dominant one, in practice mean the negation of the Christian foundations of their own culture. At the beginning of the 21st century, anyone who did not support the ideology of multiculturalism was accused

ISSN 2450-2146 / E-ISSN 2451-1064

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of backwardness, obscurantism and xenophobia (the example of Oriana Fallaci). However, it turned out that "Multikulti" not only does not eliminate problems, but promotes the isolated religious ghettos, especially Muslim ghettos, maintains traditions that are contrary to human rights (limiting women's rights), poor youth integration, non-identification with the country of settlement, and supports in not learning host country language. In Poland, multiculturalism breaks through with difficulty, because the "other" is still very often treated as foreign and suspect. This reprehensible phenomenon is clearly noticeable at schools. In the article, the reader finds a summary of disturbing research results, conducted on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising by the "Homo Homini" Institute. The author's first conclusion is as follows: an important element of the prevention. The cooperation of the family, school, media, the Church is needed for raising respect for others, and abandoning the "dictatorship of relativism" characteristic for contemporary Euro Atlantic culture (Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger).

Cultural pluralism - the future Pope Benedict XVI stated - with great enthusiasm praised and supported, often consists in rejecting with contempt what is our own, from escaping from our own values. The second conclusion is as follows: in preventive programs, the help of eminent specialists in the field of aggression research should be used. The author refers to the guide on developing personal immunity to evil and aggression, presented in the book "The Lucifer Effect" by Philip Zimbardo, an outstanding American researcher of violence and aggression, who in 1971 carried out the famous Stanford-based prison experiment. With the term "Lucifer effect" Zimbardo described the transformation of a man from an angel into a devil under the influence of the environment. As an illustration of his thesis, Zimbardo shows the actions of ordinary American soldiers bullying the Iraqis, Muslims recognized as "potential terrorists" and imprisoned in Abu Ghraib during the Second Gulf War (2003). On this basis, he formulates his ten-step compendium discussed in the final part of the article.


### **Analysis of latest research where the solution of the problem was initiated.**

The issue of multiculturalism is widely discussed in the sociology, law, philosophy and religion literature. This applies above all to: reflection on contemporary society (P. Sztompka, *Sociology, Analiza społeczeństwa*, Kraków 2002), cultural identity and multiculturalism in the aspect of identity (M. Castells, *Siła tożsamości*, Warsaw 2009; W. Burszta, *Dwie Europy*, in: J. Mucha (Ed.), *Dylematy tożsamości europejskich pod koniec drugiego tysiąclecia*, Toruń 1997), as well as immigration and integration policy (J. Balicki, *Imigranci z krajów muzułmańskich w Unii Europejskiej. Wyzwania dla polityki integracyjnej*, Warszawa 2010). In the sphere of definition, the following items were

used in the article: S. Domagalska, "Multiculturalism in the era of post-modernism" (*Wielokulturowość w dobie „ponowoczesności”*, *Zeszyty Naukowe WSOWL* (2012) No. 2, pp. 187-188 and A. Bullock (Eds.), "Dictionary of contemporary concepts" (*Słownik pojęć współczesnych*, Katowice 1999). The issue of resistance to unhealthy multiculturalism is well reflected in the reading of Oriana Fallaci's classic analyzes: "The Rage and The Pride", and "Apocalypse - Interview with herself" (*Wściekłość i duma oraz Wywiad z samą sobą*, Warsaw 2005). There are not many studies in the pedagogical field, and the solutions presented in the article are taken from Joseph Ratzinger's

ISSN 2450-2146 / E-ISSN 2451-1064

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philosophical and religious studies: "Europe foundations today and tomorrow" and

psychological - Zimbardo, "The Lucifer Effect".

### **Aims of paper. Methods.**

The main problem of the article is to raise the issue of multiculturalism in the current pedagogical debate. It is important to distinguish de facto pluralism (the actual state of multiculturalism in Western European societies) and de iure pluralism (ideologically conditioned thinking that the model type of society is a multicultural society). In the situation of actual pluralism and the tension caused by ideological multiculturalism, both pedagogical reflection and prevention are very important. The aim of the

article is to give the impulse to take on the subject of multiculturalism as a pedagogical challenge. The first part uses the method of exposing the issue of multiculturalism in a sociological and philosophical perspective. Further, reference was made to the method of exemplifying the state of affairs in a Polish school. Criticism of the conditions of postmodernist de iure pluralism has been made, and a ten-degree aggression resistance program developed by Zimbardo has been proposed.

### **Exposition of main material of research with complete substantiation of obtained scientific results. Discussion.**

#### **Pluralism, multiculturalism de facto**

The concepts of "multiculturalism" and "cultural pluralism" describe a certain state of contemporary developed western societies (Seweryniak H. 2018, p.315). Multiculturalism is a factual state in these societies, which can be easily observed in schools or playgrounds in Western countries. Researchers describe the stages of shaping this phenomenon. First, immigration was encouraged in order to gain cheap labor and solve demographic problems (this motive is still decisive in the social policy of the USA, Germany or Great Britain). A significant role was also played by the factor of helping people and families experiencing drama: economic poverty, exile or persecution. At the next stage there was also a significant ideological factor consisting in the ideological break-up of the Western monolith society by discovering and showing the richness of cultures and traditions of other nations, emerging from Eurocentrism, etc.


Multiculturalism, apart from unquestionable economic and cultural benefits, is carrying serious difficulties today, such as

lack of cultural integration with native society, creation of enclaves and ghettos on the suburbs of large cities, rejection and exclusion syndrome, and consequently acts vandalism and hooliganism of immigrants and protest movements of members of traditional societies.

#### **The trend of postmodern culture**

Migration movements, information globalization and pluralism are connected with the processes of economic globalization, and the actual multiculturalism - with the trend in the Euro-Atlantic culture, referred to as postmodernism. As it is widely known, in philosophy for the first time, the term "postmodernism" was used by Jean-François Lyotard (died 1998) in the book "Post-modern condition. Report on the state of knowledge" (1979). A characteristic feature of the current model of thinking - wrote Lyotard - was the desire for unity, synthesis. The metaphysical doctrines sought uniform principles for explaining the world and existence. Worldviews created meta-statements, "big texts" explaining the world. Today, in the days after Nie-

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tzsche, Auschwitz and the fall of communism, metanarratives lost their credibility. Modern man resigns from the desire to grasp the meaning of existence, is afraid of the holders of "ultimate truths". Modern man content himself with useful and partial truths.

Postmodernism is also reflected in the views of people and in culture. It emphasizes the multitude of cultures, their richness and equality. Many writers and artists from this trend proclaim the "joy of pluralism" and persuade them to "taste the multiplicity". Life is for the representatives of this cultural trend only an opportunity to search for experiences and experiences, among which the transient one should be at the forefront. Therefore, no permanent commitments should be made because everything is fleeting and temporary. In upbringing, the postmodern tendency found its resonance in, for example, the well-known slogan of the '68 revolution, written on the Sorbonne wall: "il est interdit d'interdire" - "it is forbidden to be forbidden", "it is forbidden to forbid". The cult of multiculturalism, the overcoming of eurocentrism, is simply an excellent medium for the views of postmodernists.

### **„Multikulti” – multiculturalism de iure**

So far, we have talked about how the things going with multiculturalism, and thus about a certain state de facto. As a result of the merging of the above-described tendencies: waves of immigration, religious situation, the ideology of 'multiculturalism' became considered as a postmodernism. Multiculturalism (popularly: German Multikulti, a term popular in the 1980s among Gruenen - "Greens") assumes harmonious coexistence in the society of different cultural or ethnic groups, permission to use Euro Atlantic cultural achievements and freedom, toleration - in the name of respect for differences - behaviors contrary to these gains, providing "other" legal and financial

support, while propagating the postmodern trend as dominant, which in practice meant (and still means) the negation of the Christian foundations of their own culture. Anyone who did not support the ideology of "multiculturalism" was accused of backwardness, obscurantism and xenophobia.

Big social tensions are the result of the ideology of multiculturalism and the unsolved immigration problems. This tensions were also observed at the school level: "a photo of a Muslim teacher in the Federal Republic of Germany, losing the process of the right to wear a headscarf, circulated around the world press; wearing short sport outfit by girls from Islamic families has become a serious educational problem in France; creation of large settlements for Muslims on the suburbs of Paris, Marseilles and Lille resulted in youth gangs and subcultures. It turned out that the "multicultural" not only does not eliminate problems, but favors the closure of religious ghettos, especially Muslim ghettos, sustaining traditions that are contrary to human rights (limiting women's rights), poor youth integration, non-identification with the country of living and not speaking this country language." (H. Seweryniak, 2018, p. 319).

The beginning of the disaster was heralded by the tragedy of September 11, 2001 and by the support that the anti-Muslim publications of Oriana Fallaci's "The Rage and The Pride" and "The Power of Reason" connected with this date gained in the entire Western world. "The eleventh September - an eminent journalist wrote - really stole me from myself, and what has been happening since then, entangles me more than a sticky spider web. Every thread of this network is like a rope that binds me, it catches me to this tragedy, among which our life goes on. This tragedy is greedy, creepy, dark Islam. His voracity and desire for conquest, subjugation. His cult of

Death, love in Death. His duplicity and insincerity. Blind, deaf, stupid West. His moral and intellectual cancer, his weakness and timidity. His masochism." (Fallaci O. 2005, p.165). According to Fallaci, European Union law shelters millions of Muslims, among them mainly terrorists, "making it easier for invaders to enter our territory, and then letting them roam freely around our home" ( Fallaci O. 2005, p.130). "Not all Muslims are terrorists, but all terrorists are Muslims," she emphasizes. At the same time, she accuses the ideologues of multiculturalism of searching the illusory similarities between the Islamic culture and European culture and denying the size and sources of the European culture. She asks: "What the hell does it mean << cultural similarities with the Middle East you mentally underdeveloped beings? Where the hell is the cultural similarity [...]?! In Mecca? In Gaza, in Damascus, in Beirut?!? In Cairo, in Tripoli, in Nairobi, in Tehran, in Baghdad, in Kabul?!?" (Fallaci O. 2005, p.181). Comparing the cultural

property of Europe and the Middle East, identified with Islam, is unacceptable. Although, as she admits, "The Fairytales of a Thousand and One Nights", are the stories of her childhood (Fallaci O. 2005,p.45), they can never be combined with the works of Plato, Virgil, Saint. Augustine, Dante, Shakespeare and Kant. Although she was an atheist, she considered herself a "Christian atheist", which meant for her that Europe is deeply rooted in Christianity, and its axiological and cultural achievements.


After 2010, Western leaders (except Canada) began to reject the idea of "multiculturalism" and - in the face of the next "migration crises" - promote integration policy, especially through learning native languages and cultures of host countries, learning the rules of democracy, accepting of the culture and principles of social life in the countries of settlement. Many are afraid that multiculturalism and tolerance connected with it become part of the moral relativism phenomenon.

## **Conclusions.**

In Poland multiculturalism - although it is promoted by various groups – have lot of difficulties to break through. There is nothing to be happy about - the main reason for this is the fact that the "other" is still very often treated as "stranger". Of course, in the media, we watch dozens of programs, documentaries, films telling about completely different cultural behaviors, moral attitudes, and religious cults, than those that are prevalent in Poland. The interest in Jewish culture is spreading, especially among the older high school students and university students. A Museum of Polish Jews was established in Warsaw, which will certainly also attract numerous school trips. More and more Romani kids are start to going to Polish schools. Also Buddhism gets great popularity among young people.

There are more and more students who have come across (of course in various levels) with the Western culture of Ireland or Great Britain, after their families return to Poland. Although Islam is still ante portas in our country; it is no longer a surprise to meet the African or East Asian on the street, but unfortunately this African or Asian will often face the insults, the most delicate of which will be "black". Muslim man or Muslim women in traditional clothes will be identified with terrorists, and Ukrainian woman will be sometimes the subject of the vilest jokes. Students often use racist nicknames in the corridors of our schools, try to wear clothes with racist slogans, write on the walls: "Jews to gas", even though they have never seen a real Jew. The best proof of what is happening

ISSN 2450-2146 / E-ISSN 2451-1064

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in this matter in our schools is the study conducted on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising commissioned by the Jewish Community in Warsaw by the Institute of Opinion Research "Homo Homini". The research was carried out in 20 high schools in Warsaw on a sample of 1,250 students. It turned out that every one of two examined students would be dissatisfied if he discovered that he had a Jewish person in the family, and almost half of student would not want a Jewish neighbor. Over 60% would not want a girlfriend or a boyfriend of Jewish nationality. In addition, every fifth respondent believes that the help of Poles for hiding Jews during the occupation was "too big", and every fourth, that the uprising in the ghetto ended with the victory of the insurgents over the occupant.

Marek Zajac, commenting on these studies, wrote that it was a good thing that the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the uprising did not bring hundreds of students' delegations this year in front of the Ghetto Heroes Memorial. Their presence would deny the minds of many of them and "even the most wonderful celebrations will not help much unless their work in families, school, media, churches will precede them. [...] I do not deny and underestimate - adds the journalist - the effort of those who organized and joined the anniversary celebration. [...]. As Marek Edelman said, when asked about the sense of doomed to failure Ghetto Uprising: "It is better to do anything than to do nothing". But we must know that one day will not change the mentality and imaginations that have been evolving for decades." (Zajac M. 2013, s. 9).

**Important conclusions are as follows:**

1. An essential component of the most basic prevention against aggression due to multiculturalism is the matter of the foundations of our culture. I believe that

tolerance itself is not enough; we need smart programs and a wise policy. On the one hand, these programs must use all the positive foundations of our culture, starting with "love your neighbor as yourself", and ending on the grand pattern of the multinational and multicultural Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. On the other hand, as Marek Zajac rightly observed, it is necessary to cooperate with family, school, media, and church in raising respect for others. Only if the family is so weak, so busy to work, so ridiculed by all the ridiculous experiments of "marriage for all", then one element of this puzzle is gone. And if the school will be treated as the proverbial test rabbit of subsequent ministers, then we have the second element "out of the head". And if the Church is still ridiculed, because it sees only intellectual, and more recently also a moral darkness, then no "love your neighbor as yourself" will break through to the heads of young people. Of course, there are many reasons for the failure of the multiculturalism: the victory of a certain form of Islam that directly leads to terrorism; the economic crisis, and unemployment, the low level of culture of newcomers, for whom the towers of the Gothic cathedral in Cologne, the motets of Bach or the frescoes of Michelangelo mean little. But the most serious reason is that in Europe, as in 2000 Cardinal Ratzinger, we are heading to the "dictatorship of relativism" - the postmodern relativity of everything becomes the rule. If the old continent is to survive - emphasized later Pope Benedict XVI - he needs "a new self-acceptance". Cultural pluralism, with great enthusiasm praised and supported, often consists in rejecting with contempt what is its own, in escaping from its own values. And yet this pluralism cannot stand without the common preservation of certain fixed values; without reference points in our own tradition; without cultivating in ourselves the respect for the

sacred; finally, it cannot do without displaying the face of God that has been revealed to us - God full of mercy for the poor and the weak; God who became a man and who, suffering with us, gives the sufferer dignity and hope. If we do not do it, we not only reveal the identity of Europe, but also become unable to dialogue with others. For world cultures, and especially for Islam, the absolute secularism that spreads in the West is something deeply understandable. That is why cultural pluralism is a challenge for us to understand ourselves again - concluded J. Ratzinger (Ratzinger J. 2005, p. 31-32). Unfortunately, every day, also in our schools, the political correctness is omnipresent: in good tone should be quoting Confucius on the Polish language lesson but not Jesus Christ; in psychotherapy it is not a bad thing to refer to Buddhist teachings, but it looks like it is a bad thing to refer to the Gospel. The teacher will not come with the young people to the church where the retreat takes place, because it is not his duties. Political correctness means the ability to adapt to the ill-conceived beliefs of the majority. And unwise adjustment to the majority is an educational defeat. Especially in the field I was talking about here.

2. Aggression caused by the reaction to multiculturalism demands - let me repeat - not tolerance, but rather education for thought, non-stipulation of stereotypes, and wise prevention. I think that it can be a great help to use in our preventive programs books of eminent specialists in the field of aggression or violence research, such as anthropologist René Girard ("Sacrum and violence", "Horseshoe Goat"), or psychologist and educator Philip Zimbardo. Here I will refer only to the well-known book of the latter "The Lucifer Effect". Philip Zimbardo, is an outstanding American researcher of the phenomena of violence, aggression and ... timidity, who

in 1971 carried out the famous Stanford-based prison experiment. With the term "Lucifer effect" Zimbardo described the transformation of a man from an angel into a devil under the influence of the environment. As an illustration of his thesis Zimbardo gives the actions of ordinary American soldiers bullying the Iraqis, Muslims recognized as "potential terrorists" who during the Second Gulf War (2003) were imprisoned in Abu Ghraib near Baghdad. At the end of his book Zimbardo presents a ten-stage program, a kind of compendium or a guide to developing personal immunity to evil, aggression. Here are the 10 points in a nutshell: 1. I made a mistake ("let's start," encourages Zimbardo - from encouraging admitting our mistakes, first to ourselves and then to others "); 2. I am careful ("think first, then act", imagine the final scenarios of current activities, help children become smarter and more cautious consumers of knowledge); 3. I am responsible ("always imagine such a moment in the future when today's deed will stand on the court foreclosure and no one will approve your excuses that <you just obeyed orders> or that <everyone did it>"); 4. I will emphasize my (and others) unique identity (do not let you be de-personalized, do not unnecessarily put on some uniform or mask, take off your sunglasses, "anonymity and secrecy hide bad conduct and undermine relationships between people"; encourage such ways of dealing, where others have a sense of personal meaning and self-worth, remember - labels and jokes can be destructive if they mock others); 5. I respect well-deserved authority, but rebel against undeserved authorities ("many people who pose as authorities are pseudo-leaders, false prophets, frauds, self-advertising experts who should neither be respected nor listened to, but openly subjected to critical. Parents, teachers and religious leaders should play a more active



role in teaching children this important distinction "); 6. I want be accepted by the group, but I value my independence (we live inside our own psyche, in "a great retreat", so we should be ready, able to declare our inner independence); 7. I will be aware of the reference framework (Zimbardo follows these "reference frames" as follows: "we want things that are presented as "rare", even if they are abundant", we prefer those that bring profit rather than losses, even if the likelihood of both is the same: in various strategies of violence against the "other" we fall then, when we allow ourselves to enter into such a reference framework); 8. I balance my time perspective (this rule it's quite difficult to explain. Professor Zimbardo means that we can be led to do things that are not in accordance with our beliefs, when we let ourselves be caught in the "trap of the enlarged present moment". The way out of the "hedonism (or fatalism) "set in the present" thinking. This happens when" we do not go with the flow", but we go against the flow of thinking and actions around us who - like in Abu Ghreib - behave brutally, use unjustified violence.); 9. "I will not sacrifice personal or civil liberties in exchange for the illusion of security" (the need for security is one of the basic human needs.) Someone who makes us take action that is abhorrent to us, can use manipulation to present us with alleged threats to our security or promise of protection against danger, this temptation should be rejected, we should not sacrifice basic personal freedoms in exchange for a promise of security, because this sacrifice is a real act and the


proposed security assurance is a distant illusion. This may concern both marriage and also dedication of good citizens for the good of the state, when its leader promises personal and national security at the expense of collective sacrifices in the form of suspension of rights, privacy and liberties. Zimbardo recalls here the title of Fromm's book "Escape from freedom".10. I can oppose unfair systems (individuals lose courage in the face of systems' strengths: gangs, cliques, sects, corporations, dysfunctional families. However, the individual's resistance combined with the resistance of other individuals with the same way of thinking and determination can be important in opposing the group thinking mentality. Systems are characterized by immense immunological ability, which is why the testimony - an individual act of heroism - is so important.) (Zimbardo P. 2000, p. 431-436).

Philip Zimbardo's tenth-stage program is clearly structured on the ideological and moral foundations of our civilization. The evidence of which is also one final recommendation: "avoid the sins of corruption and petty crimes, such as cheating, lying, gossiping, spreading rumors, laughing at racist or sexist jokes, teasing others and bullying the weaker. They can become a way leading to more serious sins. Serious evil deeds always begin with minor deeds that seem trivial, but remember that evil is a slippery slope. These deeds are small facilitators for destructive thoughts and actions directed against your neighbor" (Zimbardo P. 2000, p. 436).

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ISSN 2450-2146 / E-ISSN 2451-1064

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*International Journal of New Economics and Social Sciences*, 2(8)2018: 393-402

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