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SECONDARY SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS IN WESTERN PRUSSIA, 1807-1911

The history of the system of women's education in Western Prussia in the 19th century was an integral part of the general Prussian system, hence it was subject to the processes embracing the whole of the Prussian state. Women who wanted to acquire a secondary education, in comparison to males, were in a much worse situation. While in the 19th century there were various educational institutions for males, very few types of them were open to women. This was the result of a conviction rooted for ages that a woman is destined for family life, hence she should not receive the same education as a man, whose field of activity is public life. Therefore the main source of a girl's education was her family home. Depending on the social status of their parents, girls were either taught by their governesses¹, or — in poorer families — by their mothers, from whom they gained some knowledge of housework — washing, sewing and cooking. Girls also used to be sent to boarding²-, or convent-schools. Until the beginning of the 19th century the most popular form of girls' education was precisely that provided by the convents. Let us cite the example of Gdańsk (Danzig) where since the 15th century this was organized by the Bridgettines who settled there towards the end of the 14th century. Similar activity was conducted by the women's convents in Chełmno (Culm), Toruń (Thorn), Grudziądz

¹ I. Hardach-Pinke, *Erziehung und Unterricht durch Gouvernanten*, in: *Geschichte der Mädchen und Frauenbildung*, ed. E. Kleinau, C. Opitz, vol. 1, Frankfurt am Main 1996, pp. 408-427.

² Cf. D. Łukasiewicz, *Szkolnictwo w Prusach Południowych (1793-1806) w okresie reform oświeceniowych (The School System in Southern Prussia [1793-1806] During the Enlightenment Reforms)*, Poznań-Warszawa 2004, pp. 221-231.

(Graudenz), Żarnowiec and Żukowo³. The convent schools for girls probably did not introduce a division into classes with various levels of advancement, and taught religion, reading, writing and needlework. The moment, however, when Danzig Pomerania became part of Prussia, convent schools for girls ceased to exist.

Secondary schools for girls of lower level, the so-called *mittlere Mädchenschulen*

Social transformations and the liquidation of convent schools created a need for organizing new forms of women's education. There were two types of secondary schools for girls in the 19th century. The first was the so-called *mittlere Mädchenschule*, that is a secondary school for girls of lower level, organized on the basis of the disposition of 15 Oct. 1872. Secondary schools (*Mittelschulen*) were of a higher level than popular schools and until the middle of the 19th century were called citizens' schools — they had various names: *Bürgerschulen*, *Mittelschulen*, *Rektorschulen*, *höhere Knaben-* and *Mädchenschulen* and were established by commune councils, not by the state. It was not until the above-mentioned disposition of 15 Oct. 1872 that the curricula became standardized and all the above-mentioned schools acquired the name of *Mittelschulen*⁴. They were meant to prepare their graduates for clerical posts of lower level. Education took 6 years. These schools, just as the popular ones, were supervised by regency authorities⁵. The disposition of 1872 was in force until 3 Feb. 1910 when it was replaced by a new one. This new regulation concerned both schools for boys and girls. The learning period was extended from 6 to 9 years. The lower degree embraced forms IX–VII, the intermediate VI–IV, and the higher III–I⁶. Secondary schools for girls of lower level functioned in

³ J. Rink, *Die Mädchenerziehung im Westpreußen vor 1772. Beitrag zur Geschichte der Mädchenbildung. Wissenschaftliche Beilage zum Jahresprogramm 1910/11 der Marienschule zu Danzig*, Danzig 1911, pp. 12–30; J. Fankidejski, *Klasztory żeńskie diecezji chełmińskiej (Women's Convents in the Culm Diocese)*, Pelplin 1883.

⁴ See M. Niedzielska, *Dzieje szkolnictwa (The History of the School System)*, in: *Historia Pomorza*, ed. S. Salmonowicz, vol. IV, part 2, Toruń 2002, p. 283.

⁵ See *Das Mädchenschulwesen in Preußen. Ministerielle Bestimmungen und Erlasse*, ed. G. Schöppa, Leipzig 1909, pp. 63–75.

⁶ See *Bestimmungen über die Neuordnung des Mittelschulwesens in Preußen vom 3. Februar 1910. Mit ergänzenden Anhang*, Berlin 1912.

Thorn (Toruń)⁷, Elbing (Elbląg)⁸ and Graudenz (Grudziądz)⁹. They also operated in Danzig, but the surviving data do not allow us to say when they were established and by whom they were run¹⁰.

Secondary schools for girls of higher level, the so-called
höhere Mädchenschulen

The other type of secondary schools for girls bore the name *höhere Mädchenschulen*, or *höhere Töchterschulen*; these were schools of a higher level and their form was determined by the disposition of 6 Oct. 1886, concerning their curricula and time-table (the disposition was not binding), and of 31 May 1894 — *Allgemeine Vorschriften für die über das Ziel der Volksschule hinausgehenden Mädchenschulen*. This disposition said that the schools of higher level were to consist of nine forms. The lower degree embraced forms IX–VII, the intermediate VI–IV, and the higher III–I. This regulation concerned both private and municipal schools.

Despite the name “higher school” that they used, these were not institutes of higher education, but, in the modern understanding — secondary schools. In the 19th century Prussian legislation the legitimate term “higher” was reserved only for the schools for males: grammar-schools and modern schools, higher modern schools, preparatory grammar-schools, preparatory modern schools or higher municipal schools. The terms: “secondary” (*mittlere Mädchenschule*) and “higher” (*höhere Töchterschule*) did not reflect the level of education transmitted in a given school, but indicated the social group to which the pupils belonged¹¹.

⁷ M. Niedzielska, *Życie polityczne i kulturalne Torunia (1815–1914)* (*Political and Cultural Life in Toruń, 1815–1914*), in: *Historia Torunia*, ed. M. Biskup, vol. III, part 1, Toruń 2003, pp. 268–269; State Archives in Toruń (henceforward SAT), *Höhere Töchterschule*, call number 70, pp. 112–115, 122–125, 128–129, 135–138; *Bericht über die Bürger Mädchenschule zu Thorn*, Ostern 1893, p. 1.

⁸ *Altstädttsche Mädchenschule in Elbing. Zu der am Montag, den 29. März 1897, vormittags von 9 Uhr ab stattfindende öffentlichen Prüfung*, Annual Report, p. 19.

⁹ State Archives in Gdańsk (henceforward SAG), call number 1/10/5733, document of 27 Aug 1853; *Gehelmes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz Berlin-Dahlem* (henceforward GStAPK), I. *Hauptabteilung* (henceforward HA), Rep. 89, N^o 22563, documents of 15 June 1898, 17 June 1898.

¹⁰ I. Janiszewska, *Wychowanie dziewcząt w dawnym Gdańsku* (*The Upbrning of Girls in Old Gdańsk*), “Gdańskie Zeszyty Humanistyczne”. *Prace Pomorzoznawcze*. Y. 13–15: 1970–1972, N^o 20, p. 77.

¹¹ J. Zinnecker, *Sozialgeschichte der Mädchenbildung. Zur Kritik der Schulerziehung von Mädchen im bürgerlichen Patriarchalismus*, Weinhelm–Basel 1973, p. 55; see SAG, call number 7/654, I. 5; call number 1/9/1962, I. 35; F. Cauer, *Von der “höheren Töchterschule” zur höheren Schulen*, in: *Neugestaltung des Schulwesens*, ed. G. Louis, Berlin 1920, p. 111; cf. A. Schwalb, *Mädchen-*

Documents concerning, for example, the foundation of a given school, used some formulas defining at the outset the social status of a pupil. Among the frequent phrases describing the addressees of schools for girls, there were: *gebildete Stände der Stadt und umliegenden Umgebung, höherer Bürger- und Beamtenstand, mittlere und höhere Stände*¹², or *wohlhabende und gebildete Klassen*¹³. It is hard to ascertain whether these terms were synonymous. Differences in the social structure of schools for girls resulted from the position of individual schools within the local school hierarchy. It was characteristic of the whole of the 19th century that private schools were attended by higher-class, richer pupils than public schools. ("Public", of course, not in the British sense)¹⁴.

The oldest secondary "higher" school for girls in Western Pomerania was that in Marienburg, created in 1807. On 7 Nov. 1907 it celebrated its hundredth anniversary and received the name *Luisenschule*¹⁵. Secondary "higher" schools for girls were also opened in Thorn¹⁶, Danzig¹⁷, Elbing¹⁸, Marienwerder (Kwi-

bildung und Deutschunterricht. Die Lehrpläne und Aufsatzthemen der höheren Mädchenschulen Preußens im Kaiserreich und in der Weimarer Republik, Frankfurt am Main 2000, pp. 28–30.

¹² See A. Prowe, *Aktenmäßige Darstellung der Geschichte der höheren Töchterschule zu Thorn*, Książnica Kopernikańska w Toruniu, MS N° 148, p. 9.

¹³ Cf. M. Blochmann, *Das "Frauenzimmer" und die "Gelehrsamkeit". Eine Studie über die Anfänge des Mädchenschulwesens in Deutschland*, Heidelberg 1966, p. 107.

¹⁴ "Vierteljahresschrift für höhere Töchterschulen", Y. 1: 1867, N° 1, p. 35; see J. Zinnecker, *op. cit.*, pp. 50–51.

¹⁵ GStAPK. I. HA, Rep. 89, N° 22563, document of 26 Sept 1907.

¹⁶ *Festrede des Direktors Herrn Dr. Adolf Prowe am 1. November 1870*, "Thorner Zeitung", 3 November 1870, N° 258.

¹⁷ In 1821 the first municipal higher school for girls was established in Danzig; until 1838 it was situated in Frauengasse (Mariacka street), then moved to Jopengasse (Piwna street); in 1884 it was renamed as *Victoriaschule*; this was the biggest school for girls in Danzig; apart from this school, there were many private ones, among others *Dörntigsche Schule*, or *Ochrlirschsche Schule* (SAG, call number 7/650, l. 80); a private higher school in Danzig–Langfuhr (Gdańsk–Wrzeszcz) was founded by the teacher Clara Wilde on 11 April 1877; it received full rights only two years later, in 1879 (GStAPK. I. HA, Rep. 76–VI, Sekt. 4ee, N° 3, vol. I, *Bericht über die Wilde'sche höhere Mädchenschule in Langfuhr am Schluß des Sommerhalbjahres 1905*; cf. *ibid.*, document of 5 May 1904); *Martenschule*, that is the Catholic private higher school for girls in Danzig was established in 1886; its founder and long-time director was Marie Landmann (P. Gehrke, *Danziger Schulalmanach*, Danzig 1907, p. 19).

¹⁸ SAG, call number 369.2/4202, document of 4 Feb 1824; SAG, call number 369.2/4203, pp. 66–67; B. Th. Satori-Neumann, *Elbing im Biedermeter und Vormärz*, Elbing 1933, p. 207.

dzyn)¹⁹ and Graudenz²⁰. Higher secondary schools for girls worked also in Mewe (Gniew), Karthaus (Kartuzy), Zoppot (Sopot), Schwetz (Świecie), Dirschau (Tczew) and Tuchel (Tuchola)²¹. The questions concerning secondary "higher" schools for girls were finally regulated in August 1908 during the reform of the system of women's education²².

Schools of Crafts and Commerce for Girls: *Handels- und Gewerbeschulen für Frauen und Mädchen*

A separate category of post-elementary schools for girls consisted of the so-called *Handels- und Gewerbeschulen für Frauen und Mädchen*. It was usual in merchants' families for the spouses to work together. The gamut of women's occupations was not wide. They were mainly charged with book-keeping and the sale of goods in a shop. The development of industry and trade in the major towns of the Prussian partition created a need for establishing vocational schools for women. In the second half of the 19th century special schools of that type started to be created in Western Prussia. They were state vocational schools which at the provincial level were subject to the jurisdiction of regency presidents, and at the central level to the Ministry of Crafts and Commerce (*Ministerium für Handel und Gewerbe*)²³. They were active in Danzig, Elbing and Graudenz²⁴. They also prepared teachers in these specializations²⁵.

¹⁹ SAG, call number 7/654, p. 14.

²⁰ GStAPK, I. HA, Rep. 89, N° 22563, documents of 15 June 1898, 17 June 1898.

²¹ State Archives in Elbląg (seat at Malbork — Marienburg, henceforward SAM), call number 59-181/IIb/5520, *Erster Bericht über die städtische höhere Töchterschule zu Schwetz, 1878* (a provisional call number, since the files of SAM have not yet been classified); GStAPK, I. HA, Rep. 89, N° 22563, documents of 23 June 1891, 29 June 1891; SAM, call number 59-181/IIb/6201, document of 14 Dec 1893.

²² B. Gaster, *Die moderne Frauenbewegung und die Reform des höheren Mädchenschulwesens. Vortrag gehalten am 3. Februar 1904 in Antwerpen*, Wolfenbüttel 1904; H. Lange, *Die Reform der höheren Mädchenschule in Preußen*. "Die Frau", Y. 13: 1906, vol. 6, pp. 321-328; S. Doff, *Englischlernen zwischen Tradition und Innovation. Fremdsprachunterricht für Mädchen im 19. Jahrhundert*, München 2002, pp. 108-109.

²³ See *Handbuch über die Organisation und Verwaltung der öffentlichen preussischen Unterrichtsanstalten*, in lexikalischer Form bearb. und hrsg. v. D. Heinemann, vol. I, Potsdam 1907, pp. 604-615.

²⁴ SAG, call number 7/626, *Prospect der Gewerbe- und Handelsschule für Frauen und Töchter aller Stände Geschwister Gerner*, p. 706; J. Konieczny, K. Szymański, *Dzieje szkolnictwa grudziądzkiego (The History of the School System in Grudziądz)*, part II, "Rocznik Grudziądzki" (henceforward "RG"), vol. 3: 1963, p. 84; I. Janiszewska, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

²⁵ SAG, call number 7/627, *Zwetundzwanzigster Jahresbericht der Gewerbe- und Handelsschule für Frauen und Mädchen zu Danzig* (Danzig 1902), p. 12.

Convent Schools and the State

Girls were also educated by the nuns. However, the gradual restrictions on the influence of the Catholic Church and the decree on monasteries and convents of 1875 decisively affected the educational work of religious orders²⁶. The history of the Educational Institute of Our Lady in Berent (Kościerzyna), created in 1861, clearly reflects the anti-Catholic policy of the Prussian Government²⁷. The decree on convents affected also schools for girls in Culm (Chełmno). There, secondary education for girls was provided mainly by the boarding-schools. In 1816 two such Catholic schools and a Protestant one were organized there. The most-renowned and very popular with Poles of all the three partitions was that run by the Sisters of Charity. The staff included not only nuns, but qualified grammar school teachers of both the sexes, who ensured a high standard of education. The schools run by the Sisters of Charity were closed down on the strength of the decree on convents of 31 May 1875. On 1 Oct. 1875 the Catholic School for Girls of the Sisters of Charity was incorporated in the Municipal Simultaneous School for Girls. On 27 June 1878 the boarding-school run by the sisters, numbering about 300 pupils, was closed down, and on 1 Apr. 1879 their orphanage and day-nursery suffered the same fate²⁸.

In 1877 their institute for girls in Löbau (Lubawa) was also liquidated²⁹. Since then the only possibility of acquiring post-elementary education had been offered to girls by the so-called *gehobene Privatmädchenschule*. Unfortunately, we cannot ascertain the date of the foundation of this school.

Supervision Over the Secondary Schools for Girls

Supervision over the higher schools for girls was regulated by the dispositions of 13 June 1883 and 2 March 1887, on the strength

²⁶ A. Liedtke, *Zakład Najświętszej Marii Panny Antelskiej w Kościerzynie wobec ustawy o klasztorach z 31 V 1875 (The Educational Institute of Our Lady at Berent in the Face of the Decree on Monasteries and Convents of 31 May 1875)*, Pelplin 1936, p. 4.

²⁷ Idem, *Historia Zakładu NMP Antelskiej w Kościerzynie (1861–1936) (The History of The Educational Institute of Our Lady at Berent, 1861–1936)*, Kościerzyna 1936, p. 9.

²⁸ P. Chmielowski, *Zarys dziejów szkolnictwa chełmińskiego (An Outline of the History of the Schools in Culm)*, part II, "RG", vol. 8: 1983, pp. 76, 84, 88.

²⁹ SAM, call number 59-181/11b/4848, document of 13 March 1896.

of which at the local level it was exercised by the headmasters or specially appointed Curators³⁰. At the upper level it was done by district authorities. Those higher schools for girls which were connected with the training colleges for teachers, entitled to the so-called *Entlassungsprüfung*, were supervised by the *Provinzial-schulkollegium* (henceforward PSK)³¹.

Earlier, at the communal level, the task of the supervision of higher schools for girls was fulfilled in Western Prussia directly by the municipal councils. Only in Graudenz and Marienwerder (Kwidzyn) special *Schuldeputationen* were appointed for this task³². We do not know exactly whether in Marienwerder it was the same deputation that also supervised elementary schools. It seems probable, since there was no higher school for boys there under the municipal patronage. In Graudenz such School Deputation was made up of members of the Municipal Council, Protestant and Catholic Clergymen and the headmasters of the higher secondary modern school (*Oberrealschule*) and of the higher secondary school for girls. The Deputation was also supposed to advise the Municipal Council³³. Between 1820–1890 the schools for girls in Thorn were supervised by the district school inspector (*Kreis Schulinspektor*). Until the regulation of 1872 this

³⁰ The Institute of Our Lady in Berent was controlled by the specially appointed Curators who took care both of its property and the external and internal administration: *Dem Kuratorium liegt außer der Vermögens Verwaltung auch die innere Verwaltung der Anstalt ob, und hat dasselbe die Leitung der Erziehung, die Erteilung des Unterricht, die Pflege der Zöglinge und Weisen sowie der Krankenpflege und Führung des Haushalts durch eine Geschäftsordnung zu regeln und die dazu geeignete Personen anzustellen* (SAG, call number 7/609, *Statut des St. Marienstifts in Berent*, § 4); the Curators included among others: episcopal commissioner and the local Catholic priest; as an ecclesiastical foundation the IOL was subject to the supervision of the bishop ordinary; the Curators held every month regular sessions in the school building; the first curator of the school was Rev. Juliusz Prądzyński (A. Liedtke, *Historia Zakładu NMP Antielkiej*, pp. 33–34; SAG, call number 7/609, *Statut des St. Marienstifts in Berent*, § 4).

³¹ *Handbuch über die Organisation*, vol. 1, pp. 299–300; see SAG, call number 369.2/4208, documents of 2 June 1897, 12 Dec 1899; cf. SAG, call number 508/2133, document of 15 Nov 1895; in the case of Berent, PSK supervised the select form (the one which trained candidates for teachers), while the supervision of lower forms was the responsibility of regency government (GStAPK, I. HA., Rep. 76–VI, Sekt. 1, Gen. ee, N° 11, vol. 1, pp. 85, 101).

³² The director of a school for girls did not have to take part in each session of the School Deputation, except when the problems of his school were discussed; see SAM, call number 59–181/IIb/5524, document of 29 Sept 1913.

³³ *Die kommunale Verwaltung der öffentlichen höheren Mädchenschulen in Preußen, Schriften des preußischen Zentralverbandes für höhere Frauenbildung*, N° 1, Berlin 1911, p. 5; see *Handbuch über die Organisation*, vol. 1, pp. 884–887.

was the superintendent of the Thorn ecclesiastical district (*Thorner Kirchenkreis*), and later *hauptamtlicher Kreisschulinspektor*³⁴.

The reform of 1908 placed secondary schools for girls under the supervision of the PSK³⁵. This, of course, concerned only those that were recognized as the secondary schools of higher level. The PSK also extended its control over the private schools for girls³⁶, but only over a few private schools for boys³⁷. After this take-over, the Municipal School Deputation was excluded from any decisions concerning the internal affairs of a given school. The external organization of those schools, however, as well as financial questions were solved through the Municipal Council, as their patron.

The Principles of Financing

The activity of secondary schools for girls reflected the general tendencies of the governmental authorities in relation to girls' education. Politicians did not think this problem worthy of interest, as is shown not only by the belated legal regulations, but also by the fact that the entry concerning expenditures on *höhere Mädchenschulen* appeared in the state budget only in 1877³⁸. Almost throughout the 19th century this education in Western Prussia was run by the municipalities, hence all the financial questions, that is subsidies and grants were the responsibility of the local authorities. Secondary schools for girls were also established and maintained by private persons and organizations as well as by religious institutions (the Institute of Our Lady in Berent-Kościerzyna). The municipal public schools, on the other hand, were financed by the municipal budget. This was the case of the higher municipal school in Elbing. Another source of money for this school consisted of the pupils' fees.

³⁴ B. Maydorn, *Geschichte des städtischen Oberlyzeums zu Thorn. Festschrift zum Gedächtnistage des hundertjährigen Bestehens am 1. November 1920*. Książnica Kopernikańska w Toruniu, MS N° 582, pp. 159–160.

³⁵ GStAPK, I. HA., Rep. 76–VI, Sekt. 1, Gen. ee, N° 6, vol. II, document of 18 Aug 1908; see also: *Handbuch über die Organisation*, vol. II, Potsdam 1909, p. 1586.

³⁶ As regards private secondary schools for girls the take-over of supervision by PSK depended on the recognition of the school as *höhere Mädchenschule* which satisfied the requirements specified in the disposition of 18 Aug 1908.

³⁷ See H. Romberg, *Staat und höhere Schule. Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Bildungsverfassung vom Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*. Weinheim–Basel 1979, pp. 137–138.

³⁸ J. Zinnecker, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

Schools could also be maintained by the so-called School Associations (*Schulvereine*). This was the case of the private higher secondary school for girls in Czersk. The Association in Czersk was formed by 20 citizens, five of whom created the board. Paragraph 2 of its statute defined their aim in the following way: *durch die Beschaffung, Heizung und Reinigung geeigneter Lehr-räume, Anschaffung der erforderlichen Unterrichtsmitteln, durch Besoldung der nötigen Lehrkräfte und durch Aufbringung der hierzu notwendigen Mittel die Gründung und Unterhaltung der Schule zu sichern*³⁹.

The financial situation of private secondary schools for girls in small localities was very difficult. The money coming from the fees in most private schools was not sufficient to cover the costs of the upkeep of the school building and the teachers' salaries⁴⁰.

The financial situation of municipal schools was much better, because as self-government institutions they were subsidized by the municipalities⁴¹. They could also apply for additional allocations from the state budget⁴². Financial support offered by the municipalities also embraced private schools⁴³. They could also receive the so-called single grants⁴⁴.

³⁹ SAM, call number 59-181/IIb/4556, document of 10 Mar 1910; cf. D. Klík a. *Höhere Töchter Schulen — wozu haben sie qualifiziert, wozu haben sie sozialisiert?*, "Die deutsche Schule. Zeitschrift für Erziehungswissenschaft, Bildungspolitik und pädagogische Praxis", Y. 83: 1991, vol. 1, p. 95; A. Wahlfeld, R. Willerding, *Frauengeschichtsforschungsgruppe Kassel. Mädchenbildung in Frauenhand. Der Kasseler Frauenbildungsverein 1869 — ein Projekt der bürgerlichen Frauenbewegung*, Kassel 1987, p. 23; E. Küpper, *Die höheren Mädchenschulen*, in: *Handbuch der deutschen Bildungsgeschichte*, ed. K.-E. Jelsmann, P. Lundgreen, vol. III: 1800-1870, München 1987, p. 186.

⁴⁰ See SAM, call number 59-181/IIb/6201, *Rechnung der höhere Privat-Mädchenschule zu Tuchel für 1903*; GSTAPK, I. HA, Rep. 76-VI, Sekt. 4ee, vol. I, *Nachweisung der Einnahmen und Ausgaben der höheren Privat-Mädchenschule — Oltva (vom 1. April 1904 bis 31. März 1905)*; *ibid.*, document of 18 Jan 1908; cf. *ibid.*, I. HA, Rep. 76-VI, Sekt. 1, Gen. ee, N° 1, vol. II, pp. 86-87.

⁴¹ See SAG, call number 508/2132, pp. 924-925; call number 508/2133, document of 15 Sept 1886; see *ibid.*, *Auszug aus dem Haushaltsetat der Stadt Marienburg pro 1894/95*, pp. 444-446.

⁴² *Ibid.*, call number 369.2/4208, document of 16 July 1898; call number 508/2133, pp. 451, 456, 504, 567, 574.

⁴³ GSTAPK, I. HA, Rep. 76-VI, Sekt. 4ee, N° 7, vol. I, documents of 29 July 1910, 17 Aug 1910, 3 Sept 1910, 10 Sept 1912.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, I. HA, Rep. 76-VI, Sekt. 4ee, N° 2, vol. I, documents of 18 Dec 1909, 28 Feb 1910, 3 Sept 1910; SAG, call number 7/652, p. 205.

Regular state subsidies did not appear until the 1880s⁴⁵. The state budget from 1 Apr. 1892 to 31 March 1893⁴⁶ allocated 90 thousand marks to the higher schools for girls. Additionally, 80 thousand marks were allotted to Western Prussia, the Posen (Poznań) Province, and the regency district of Oppeln (Opole)⁴⁷.

The Government's Attitude to the secondary Schools for Girls

Hopes for a change in the system of women's education appeared in 1888 with the accession of Emperor William II who promised a school reform. The leitmotiv of this reform was "We want to educate young Germans, not young Romans or Greeks"⁴⁸. His wish to depart from the classical-humanist tendency in education, for many women signified considerable changes in the system of their education⁴⁹.

The secondary schools for girls changed to advantage with the establishment of the Department for Women's Higher Schools headed by Stephan Waetzoldt at the Ministry of Education in 1899⁵⁰. He supported the stipulations of women's movement for a greater participation of women in the didactic work in schools and teachers' training-colleges. His chief aim was to modernize the ten-form higher school for girls and enable the pupils to take their final examinations after finishing a three-year course created on the basis of this school⁵¹.

⁴⁵ U. Wagner, *Die preußische Verwaltung des Regierungsbezirks Martenwerder 1871-1920*, Köln 1982, p. 95.

⁴⁶ The fiscal year as an accounting period began on April 1 and finished on March 31 every year (act of 29 June 1876); see *Handbuch über die Organisation*, vol. I, pp. 159-160.

⁴⁷ [...] zur Ergänzung des Fonds Titel 31a behufs besonderer Förderung des deutschen höheren Mädchenschulwesens in den Provinzen Westpreußen und Posen, sowie im Regierungsbezirk Oppeln 80 000 M. (*Handbuch über die Organisation*, vol. I, p. 304).

⁴⁸ Cit. from: M. W. Blochmann, "Laß dich gelüsten nach der Männer Weisheit und Bildung". *Frauenbildung als Emanzipationsgelüste 1800-1918*, Pfaffenweiler 1990, p. 91.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 91-97.

⁵⁰ J. Wychgram, *Das höhere und mittlere Unterrichtswesen in Deutschland*, Berlin-Leipzig 1913, p. 45; A. Reble, *Schulgeschichtliche Beiträge zum 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Bad Heilbrunn 1995, p. 146.

⁵¹ H.-J. Apel, *Sonderwege der Mädchen zum Abitur im Deutschen Kaiserreich. Bildung zur Studienfähigkeit der Abturberechtigung am Ausgang des Kaiserreich (1908)*, "Zeitschrift für Pädagogik", Y. 34: 1988, vol. 2, p. 182.

The questions concerning women's higher education were also discussed at the House of Deputies (*Abgeordnetenhaus*) and the House of Lords (*Herrenhaus*). For the first time this issue was moved at the session of the Prussian Cabinet (*Staatsministerium*) on 25 Apr. 1898. The debate concerned the motion for establishing a secondary school for girls in Breslau (Wrocław), but it was rejected by the then minister of education Robert B o s s e⁵². He was also against admitting women to higher studies, although as unregistered students they could attend university lectures at that time. He condemned all kinds of actions of women's movement⁵³. Liberal groupings voted for a limited introduction of the final exams for girls. Conservative groupings were for sustaining the disposition of 1894 (that regulated the principles of work of the higher secondary schools for girls), but also for enabling "the women from the elite" to take up university studies. They were invariably firm in their conviction that women's education should be orientated towards meeting the needs of a future wife and mother, but they also allowed for the education of female teachers⁵⁴.

Although so many politicians were against the modernization of women's education, the beginning of the 20th century brought a lot of work aimed at introducing new regulations. Very significant in this field was director Friedrich A l t h o f f, responsible for the higher school system at the Ministry of Education from 1897–1907⁵⁵. His engagement in the work for the reform of women's education was appreciated by the activists of women's movement. Elisabeth M e y n v o n W e s t e n h o l z, the author of the publication *Der Allgemeine Deutsche Lehrerinnenverein in der Geschichte der deutschen Mädchenbildung*, regarded Althoff

⁵² Cf. *Acta Borussica. Die Protokolle des Preussischen Staatsministeriums 1817–1934/38*, vol. 9: 23. Oktober 1900 bis 12. Juli 1909, comp. R. Z i l l c h, Hildesheim–Zürich–New York 2001, N° 42 (*Sitzung des Staatsministeriums am 16. Mai 1902*), p. 88.

⁵³ *Ibid.* vol. 8/1: 21. März 1890 bis 9. Oktober 1900, comp. H. S p e n k u c h, Hildesheim–Zürich–New York 2003, N° 330 (*Sitzung des Staatsministeriums am 25. April 1898*), p. 310.

⁵⁴ H.–J. A p e l, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

⁵⁵ See B. v o n B r o c k e, *Hochschul- und Wissenschaftspolitik in Preußen und im Deutschen Kaiserreich 1882–1907: das "System Althoff"*, in: *Bildungspolitik in Preußen zur Zeit des Kaiserreiches*, ed. P. B a u m g a r t, Stuttgart 1980, pp. 9–118; W. N e u g e b a u e r, *Das Bildungswesen in Preußen seit der Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts*, in: *Handbuch der preussischen Geschichte*, ed. O. B ü s c h, vol. II: *Das 19. Jahrhundert und Große Themen der Geschichte Preußens*, Berlin–New York 1992, pp. 766–775.

not only as an outstanding politician of the Ministry, but also the main author of the reform of 1908⁵⁶.

It is worth noting that the activity of the state in the field of women's education was mainly inspired by the activeness of the teachers from girls' schools. In 1872 in Weimar the first supra-regional meeting of the headmasters and teachers of such schools took place. One of its main initiators was the headmaster of the secondary school for girls in Thorn Adolf Prowe, one of those Prussian pedagogues most involved in the reform of secondary schools for girls⁵⁷. One can hardly speak of the direct influence of individual Western-Prussian pedagogues on the state policy in this respect. We can only speak of an indirect influence through their participation in teachers' organizations. The fact that many directors of higher secondary schools for girls in Western Prussia enrolled in the chief teachers' organizations, such as *Deutsches Veretn für das höhere Mädchenschulwesen*, or *Veretn der Direktoren an Preussischen höheren Lehranstalten für Mädchen*, aimed at a reform of women's education, testifies to their great interest in this issue⁵⁸. More active in this field were teachers from schools in big cities such as Danzig, Elbing, Thorn or Marienwerder.

Female teachers were less active at the supra-regional level, though there were some exceptions. Special involvement was shown by Marie Landmann, the headmistress of Danzig's

⁵⁶ E. Meyer von Westenholz, *Der Allgemeine Deutsche Lehrerinnenverein in der Geschichte der deutschen Mädchenbildung*, Berlin 1936, p. 182; see GStAPK, VI. HA, *Nachlaß Althoff*, A I, N^o 101, document of 29 Oct 1893; A. Sachse, *Friedrich Althoff und sein Werk*, in: *Die Entwicklung der höheren Mädchenbildung in Deutschland von 1870-1914*, dargestellt in Dokumenten v. E. Beckmann, Hamburg 1936, p. 118; A. Schaser, *Helene Lange und Gertrud Bäumer. Etne polittische Lebensgemeinschaft*, Wien 2000, p. 120.

⁵⁷ SAT, *Höhere Töchterschule*, call number 70, p. 211; cf. *Rede, von weltem gehalten an die Versammlung der Töchterschule-Lehrer zu Weimar, den 30. September 1872, vom Rektor Hasenbalg in Thorn, Thorn 1872*; E. Williams, *Zur Versammlung, der Dirigenten, Lehrer, und LehrerInnen deutscher höherer Mädchenschulen zu Weimar*, "Monatsschrift für das gesamte deutsche Mädchenschulwesen", 1873, vol. 1, pp. 3-5.

⁵⁸ SAT, *Höhere Töchterschule*, call number 70, p. 225; "Jahrbuch für das höhere Mädchenschulwesen im Königreich Preußen", 1910/1911, pp. 62-63; cf. "Thorner Zeitung", 21 Juni 1914, N^o 143; E. Kleinau, *Bildung und Geschlecht. Etne Sozialgeschichte des höheren Mädchenschulwesens in Deutschland vom Vormärz bis zum Dritten Reich*, Weinheim 1997, pp. 29-31; see *Vorschläge zur Änderung der Satzungen des Deutschen Veretns für das höhere Mädchenschulwesen*, "Die Mädchenschule", Y. 16: 1903, vol. 7, pp. 137-140; M. Fischer, *Der Veretn für das höhere Mädchenschulwesen 1872-1906*, *ibid.*, Y. 19: 1906, vol. 10/11, pp. 177-183; Dr. Schöne, *Der Preußische Veretn für öffentllche höhere Mädchenschulen*, "Die höhere Mädchenschule", Y. 22: 1909, vol. 12, pp. 419-425.

Marienschule, member of *Verein Katholischer Deutscher Lehrerinnen*, head of the section of higher schools for girls in this organization, who also took part in the Congress of Women's Organizations at Kassel in 1907⁵⁹. That female teachers of secondary schools for girls were not very involved in the organizational life is also testified by the fact that in Western Prussia such organizations arose only in Danzig (1890 — *Danziger Lehrerinnen Verein*)⁶⁰ and Elbing (1893 — *Elbinger Lehrerinnen Verein*)⁶¹.

Female Teachers

The situation of female teachers in the schools for girls was much worse than that of men. This concerned both their financial status⁶² and their position within the staff. This was largely connected with their worse education⁶³. Women mainly worked as ordinary teachers (*ordentliche Lehrerinnen*), technical teachers (*Technische Lehrerinnen*) and assistant teachers (*Hilfslehrerinnen*), and taught the classes of intermediate or lower degree. Those who were allowed to teach in higher forms were the so-called *Oberlehrerinnen*, who passed special examinations that were finally established for them. It should also be stressed that they were in a minority within the staff. The statistical data of 1886 concerning higher secondary schools for girls in Western Prussia show that women constituted less than 1/3 of the staff. In the case of

⁵⁹ "Jahrbuch für das höhere Mädchenschulwesen im Königreich Preußen, 1910/1911", p. 72; H. Rasmus, *Lebensbilder westpreussischer Frauen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, Münster 1984, pp. 90–91; see *Satzung des Bundes deutscher Privat Mädchenschulen*, "Die höhere Mädchenschule", Y. 22: 1909, pp. 65–69.

⁶⁰ *Jahresbericht des Danziger Lehrerinnen-Vereins pro 1894/95*, Danzig 1895, p. 2.

⁶¹ SAG, call number 392/89, *Satzungen des Elbinger Lehrerinnen-Vereins*.

⁶² The earnings of female teachers in secondary lower and higher public schools for girls depended on their place of work (town), experience and position in the staff hierarchy; their salaries were in direct proportion to the size of town where they worked; they also depended on the legal status of the school, that is whether it was private, or maintained by the state.

⁶³ In Western Prussia the first teachers' training college for women was founded in 1840 in Marienwerder; it was attached to the *Höhere Bildungsanstalt für die weibliche Jugend*, created in 1838; in the years 1820–1914 no state teachers' training college (*staatliche Lehrerinnenseminare*) for women was established in the province of Western Prussia, while 6 municipal ones did arise: in Danzig (*Victoriaschule*, 1883 — a simultaneous school), Elbing (Protestant, 1879), Graudenz (simultaneous, 1849), Marienburg (Protestant, 1879), Marienwerder (Protestant, 1854) and Thorn (Protestant, 1856). Private teachers' colleges worked in Berent (Catholic) and two in Danzig: one Catholic (Marie Landmann, 1891), and one Protestant (Dr Scherler).

Berent among 30 teachers' posts, only 8 were held by women⁶⁴. The picture was a bit better in the case of *Victoriaschule* in Danzig, where the 30-person staff numbered 14 women (13 Protestants and one Catholic)⁶⁵. In Dirschau the relation between the total number of teachers and that of women was 12:4, in Graudenz 13:6, in Marienwerder 9:3, in Schwetz 7:3, in Thorn 22:9⁶⁶. After 1894, when the examination for *Oberlehrerinnen* was established and subsequent dispositions issued in this matter, women were allowed to work in higher forms. In 1906 in Danzig's *Victoriaschule* the teaching staff numbered 33 people, including 4 female teachers of higher degree. In Danzig's private schools, on the other hand, because of their worse financial possibilities, there were no woman-teachers of that degree⁶⁷.

After the reform of 1908 there were 19 full-time female teachers with university degrees in all kinds of higher secondary schools for girls in Western Prussia, as against 63 male teachers. 150 women worked as ordinary teachers (*ordentliche Lehrerinnen*), while only 25 men held such posts. Women were also in the majority among technical teachers: 55 as against 6 men⁶⁸.

Women were clearly discriminated against by the principle of celibacy⁶⁹. Getting married automatically signified for them the end of their professional career, which they could resume only if they were widowed. The choice of a teacher's profession meant they had to resign from their own sexuality and family⁷⁰. The documents they signed at the beginning of their employment contained a clause saying that in case of marriage a female teacher must leave her place of work by the end of a half-year term⁷¹. Initially, after getting married they had to leave work with

⁶⁴ GStAPK, I. HA, Rep. 76-VI, Sekt. 1cc, N° 11, vol. 1, p. 84.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-105.

⁶⁷ See P. Gehrke, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-24; cf. GStAPK, I. HA, Rep. 89, N° 22315, pp. 74-75.

⁶⁸ GStAPK, I. HA, Rep. 76-VI, Sekt. 1, Gen. ee, N° 11, vol. II, documents of 1 Feb 1913, 20 Apr 1912, 1 Feb 1914, 1 Feb 1915.

⁶⁹ J. C. Albisetti, *Deutsche Lehrerinnen im 19. Jahrhundert im internationalen Vergleich*, in: *Frauen zwischen Familie und Schule. Professionalisierungsstrategien bürgerlicher Frauen im internationalen Vergleich*, ed. J. Jacobi, Wien-Weimar 1994, pp. 51-52.

⁷⁰ J. Brehmer, *Mädchenerziehung und Frauenbildung im deutschsprachigen Raum*, in: *Mädchenbildung, Frauenbildung. Beiträge der Frauenforschung für die Lehrerinnenbildung*, ed. E. Glumper, Bad Heilbrunn 1992, p. 104.

⁷¹ GStAPK, XIV. HA, Rep. 163, N° 198, document of 22 Feb 1904; N° 318, document of 13 Sept 1912; N° 350, document of 13 Feb 1912; SAG, call number

the end of the school year⁷². Some deviations from that principle were introduced during warfare. From 1915 onwards, because of the shortage of teachers, married women could also work in this profession⁷³.

Pupils

An analysis of the number of pupils in lower and higher secondary schools for girls in Western Prussia in the 19th century shows a constant growth of attendance, which is both the evidence of interest and demand for that type of education. For example, in the first year of work of the higher school for girls in Thorn, that is in 1820, there were only 27 pupils. In the next year there were already 89. In subsequent years a certain fall could be noted, but in 1856, a year before the reorganization of the schools for girls in Thorn, there were already 152 pupils. Until 1920 their number was constantly growing. In 1880, when the selected class educating future candidates for the teaching profession was transformed into a two-year teachers' training college, the number of

1/10 5395, documents of 20 Feb 1913, 3 Oct 1919; see GStAPK, I. HA, Rep. 76–VI, Sekt. 1, Gen. ee, N^o 6, vol. II, document of 18 May 1907; XIV, HA, Rep. 163, N^o 486, document of 6 Jan 1914; SAM, call number 59–181/IIb/5525, document of 5 Oct 1916; call number 59–181/IIb/4849, document of 8 Sept 1911.

⁷² See *Handbuch über die Organisation*, vol. I, p. 302.

⁷³ See R. Billing, *Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Lehren. Ein Überblick von 1800 bis zur Gegenwart*, Göttingen 1983, pp. 96, 101; S. Doff, *op. cit.*, p. 317; the Polish Constitution of 17 March 1921 guaranteed equality of the sexes; labour acts issued before and after the voting of the Constitution, motivated by the principle of equality of citizens, did not differentiate between the rights of employees on gender ground; both men and women had the same rights both as regards the signing of the contracts of work, its time and leave; an exception was restriction on women's right to work at school sustained in Silesia; in March 1926 the so-called "celibacy act" was issued, on the strength of which after marriage the contract of work was dissolved; it was in force until 20 April 1938; on 22 May 1931 The Silesian Sejm passed a similar act concerning female clerks in the Silesian Voivodeship; G. Kempa, *Szansie kobiet na rynku pracy na Śląsku (Women's Chances in the Labour Market in Silesia)*, in: *Kobieta i praca. Wiek XIX i XX*, ed. A. Żarnowska, A. Szwarz (series "Kobieta i...", vol. 6), Warszawa 2000, p. 156; A. Glińkos-Nadgórska, *Nauczyciele i nauczycielki: zróżnicowanie szans w zawodzie w międzywojennym województwie śląskim (Male and Female Teachers: Different Chances in the Teaching Profession in the Silesian Voivodeship in the Interwar Period)*, in: *Kobieta i praca*, pp. 175–176; cf. C. Kraft, *Równość i nierówność w II Rzeczypospolitej. Prawo małżeńskie w dyskursie publicznym na przełomie lat dwudziestych i trzydziestych (Equality and Inequality in the 2nd Polish Republic. Matrimonial Law in the Public Discourse in the Late 1920s and Early 1930s)*, in: *Kobieta i małżeństwo. Społeczno-kulturowe aspekty seksualności. Wiek XIX i XX*, ed. A. Żarnowska, A. Szwarz (series "Kobieta i...", vol. 8), Warszawa 2004, pp. 314–316.

students was 231, and almost forty years later, in 1919, it amounted to 891⁷⁴.

Statistical data of 1886 say that the number of pupils in higher public schools for girls (*öffentliche höhere Mädchenschulen*) in the whole of Western Prussia totalled 2487, 1360 of them in the Danzig regency and 1127 in the Marienwerder regency. Protestant faith predominated (1902 pupils), followed by Judaism (318), and Catholicism (236)⁷⁵. In the Danzig regency, in contrast to Marienwerder, the number of Catholics and those of the Jewish faith was balanced. There were 119 Catholic, 117 Jewish and 1093 Protestant pupils. The respective numbers looked different in the Marienwerder regency, where 201 pupils were Jewish, and only 117 Catholic. Protestants were of course in the majority, numbering 809. The data for the Danzig regency include also 31 pupils of other faith, without saying precisely what it was⁷⁶.

Western Prussian data concerning a smaller number of pupils of the Catholic faith confirm the general tendencies characteristic of the whole of Prussia⁷⁷.

On the basis of the school certificates of the 62 students of the teachers' training college in Graudenz between 1855–1867 an analysis was carried out of the social background of those girls. Their fathers' occupations can be divided into four professional groups. Civil servants (*Zivilbeamten*) were in the majority (33). The next group consisted of landowners and merchants (15). Only 10 fathers were craftsmen, while the military, both professional soldiers and clerical officers, constituted the smallest group (5)⁷⁸.

Pupils of Polish origin were embraced by a scholarship programme. In 1870 a Society for Educational Assistance to Girls

⁷⁴ This result is the sum of the number of pupils attending the *lycée*, the higher *lycée* and the training school; see A. Prowc, *op. cit.*, pp. 160–161.

⁷⁵ No data enable us to ascertain whether the Catholic pupils were of Polish origin; however, information given by "Vierteljahresschrift für höhere Töchterschulen" allows us to suppose that Catholics were mainly Polish, while Protestants mainly German; see "Vierteljahresschrift für höhere Töchterschulen", Y. 1: 1867, N° 1, *Statistik*, p. 35.

⁷⁶ GSIAPK, I. HA., Rep. 76–IV, Sekt. 1, Gen. ee, N° 11, vol. II, p. 28.

⁷⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 86.

⁷⁸ SAG, call number 1/10/5733, pp. 162, 292–296, 302–310, 323–332, 395–401, 428–434, 538–545, 603–608, 629–641, 667–681, 698–708, 724–783, 794–808.

(henceforward *TPNdD*) was established in Thorn⁷⁹. Involved in its work was the head of the girls' schools in Thorn Adolf Prowe and Franciszek Rakowicz, editor and publisher of "Gazeta Toruńska" ("Thorn News"), champion of better education for women⁸⁰. The rise and activity of the *TPNdD* reflected the strivings of Pomeranian activists who wanted to involve women in the mainstream of social life. The Society was established on 14 July 1870 at its first plenary session⁸¹.

Polish pupils of higher schools for girls did not belong to any organizations. This situation slightly changed during the First World War. On 29 June 1918 the Pomeranian Circle of Young Ladies started its activity in Thorn⁸². It brought together girls whose education equalled the level of the German higher school for girls, and they were probably pupils of such schools⁸³. It tried to make use of the education of Polish girls and organize courses for adults and public, private and unpaid lessons of Polish for children⁸⁴.

⁷⁹ More extensively on *TPNdD* in Thorn-Toruń in: K. Wodniak, *Towarzystwo Pomocy Naukowej dla Dziewcząt w Toruniu (1870-1937) i jego rola w emancypacji zawodowej kobiet na Pomorzu (Society for Educational Assistance to Girls in Thorn, 1870-1937, and its Role in the Professional Emancipation of Women in Pomerania)*, "Przegląd Historyczno-Oświatowy", 1999, N° 1-2, pp. 55-82; H. Domański, *Towarzystwo Pomocy Naukowej dla Dziewcząt w Toruniu 1870-1939 (na tle męskich Towarzystw Pomocy Naukowej i organizacji charytatywnych) (Society for Educational Assistance to Girls in Thorn [Toruń], 1870-1939, as against the Societies for Educational Assistance and Charitable Organizations for Boys)*, Toruń 1978 (typescript of an M.A. thesis written under the direction of I. Janosz-Biskupowa: UMK[Nicholas Copernicus University] Archives, call number 33818).

⁸⁰ See. A. Niewęgłowska, *Średnie szkolnictwo żeńskie w Toruniu w latach 1820-1920 (Secondary Schools for Girls in Thorn in the Years 1820-1920)*, "Rocznik Toruński", vol. 31: 2004, pp. 114-116.

⁸¹ See. Z. Piśkorska, *Z historii Towarzystwa Pomocy Naukowej dla Dziewcząt w Toruniu (From the History of the Society for Educational Assistance to Girls in Toruń)*, Mestwin, 1929, N° 2, pp. 5-6; eadem, *Kronika Towarzystwa Pomocy Naukowej dla Dziewcząt w Toruniu (The Chronicle of the Society for Educational Assistance to Girls in Toruń)*, Toruń 1935; SAT, *Towarzystwo Pomocy Naukowej dla Dziewcząt (henceforward: *TPNdD*)*, call number 1, p. 49; call number 3, *Sprawozdanie za rok 1870*, pp. 1-3.

⁸² SAT, *Pomorskie Koło Panien (the Pomeranian Circle of Young Ladies)*, call number 4, pp. 14-15, letter of Wanda Szumanówna of 29 June 1918 about the rise of the Circle of Young Ladies; T. Zakrzewski, *Życie polskie Torunia w ostatnich latach zaboru pruskiego (1916-1920) (Polish Life in Toruń in the Last Years of the Prussian Partition, 1916-1920)*, Toruń 1985, p. 40.

⁸³ SAT, *Pomorskie Koło Panien*, call number 2, p. 3 (*Ustawy Pomorskiego Koła Panien*, point 3).

⁸⁴ T. Zakrzewski, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

Teaching

Throughout the 19th century the chief educational aim of secondary schools for girls was not so much to convey some real knowledge as to prepare them for family life⁸⁵. The general German pedagogical theories of the first half of the 19th century found no application in the schools for girls. Educational postulates aimed at training the mind and developing independent thinking, propagated so loudly by outstanding German pedagogues and poets, in the case of women's education were raised only towards the end of the 19th century, and sanctioned in 1908⁸⁶. The pedagogical theories of the end of the 18th and the first half of the 19th century concerning women's education showed two main conceptions in this field. The first was traditional, and aimed to prepare a girl for fulfilling her role in the family as a wife. Women's education was adjusted to the needs and expectations of their surroundings, that is society, their husbands, children and the Church. A model woman was an exemplary wife, who took care of the family and ran the house. Education was adjusted to the realization of those expectations. A woman's best school was her home, where she would acquire all the skills necessary for fulfilling her obligations. Her education was focused not on conveying to her some knowledge, but on shaping the suitable features of her character. This theory was based on the conviction of the polarization of the sexes, and its consequence was a different education of boys and girls. This trend was represented among others by Joachim Heinrich Campe and Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher. The adversaries of traditional pedagogical conceptions, on the other hand, repudiated the arguments of conservatives that in their opinion justified the different upbringing of each sex. They went on the assumption that a woman as a human being has a right

⁸⁵ See L. Hagen, *Die Erziehung der weiblichen Jugend von 15 bis 20 Lebensjahre*, Erfurt 1897, p. 2; SAG, call number I/9/1962, p. 35; S. Rahn, *Die Karrierisierung des weiblichen Lebenslaufs. Eine historische Rekonstruktion der Entstehung der Berufswahl im weiblichen Lebenslauf Ende des 19. und zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Frankfurt am Main 2001, p. 57.

⁸⁶ Cf. I. Strehler, *Den Männern gleich an Rechten...: Auffassungen zur Emanzipation der Frau in Frankreich und Deutschland zwischen 1789 und 1871*, Leipzig 1989, pp. 65–66; M. Uliński, *Kobieta i mężczyzna. Dzieje refleksji filozoficzno-społecznej (Woman and Man. The History of the Socio-philosophical Reflection)*, Kraków 2001, pp. 147–172.

to the same kind of education as a man⁸⁷. The main representative of this group was Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel of Königsberg. He transplanted the ideas of the French Revolution, such as equality and freedom, into Prussia. Th. G. von Hippel was not the only man who identified with those ideas, but the only one who referred them to both the sexes. His example shows that the adherents of equal rights for women could be found also among men. Such a radical voice in defence of women's rights in Prussia was, however, exceptional⁸⁸.

The higher secondary schools for girls at that time were definitely in favour of teaching according to the principles propagated by classical theorists, which found its expression in the differences in the curricula designed for each sex. In view of the fact that their pupils were mainly derived from higher social groups, the schools were to prepare them above all for the role of "ladies"⁸⁹. An excellent example that confirms this thesis was the content of the public announcement of the Thorn Municipalities of 1821 concerning the state of the school system in the town. The fragment concerning the tasks set to the higher school for girls founded in Thorn in 1820 says: "its aim is to give the young ladies a higher education than they acquired in the above-mentioned schools for girls⁹⁰, and to teach them proper morals and manners. They should get an excellent idea of geography and universal history, be able to speak French, write letters and other written compositions and keep necessary accounts, practice drawing, needlework and singing, in a word practice whatever will let them occupy their proper place in society or some other vocation they will follow in their future life"⁹¹. Girls were taught

⁸⁷ Ch. Brokmann-Nooren, *Weibliche Bildung im 18. Jahrhundert "gelehrtes Frauenzimmer" und "gefällige Gattin"*. Oldenburg 1994, pp. 53-254; M. Blochmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-76.

⁸⁸ See D. Schwab, *Frauenrechte und Naturrecht*, in: *Naturrecht im 19. Jahrhundert. Kontinuität-Inhalt-Funktion-Wirkung*, ed. D. Klippel, vol. 1, Goldbach 1997, pp. 81-82.

⁸⁹ *Die jetzige Töchtererziehung, besonders in den sogenannten höheren Ständen, scheint [...] darauf berechnet zu sein, das weibliche Geschlecht für das gesellige Leben allein auszubilden*; cit. from: J. Zinnecker, *op. cit.* p. 95; cf. *Die Berliner Frauen Vereins Conferenz am 5. und 6. November 1869*, Berlin 1869, p. 59.

⁹⁰ These were schools for girls that arose in 1817 and 1820; at the beginning of the 19th century in Toruń girls could only acquire their education in private schools; however, neither the *Grafsche Mädchenschule*, nor the French boarding-school of J. A. Chavet de la Perrière, which taught foreign languages, dancing and principles of good behaviour, provided a sufficient basis for girls' education.

⁹¹ SAT, *Höhere Töchterchule*, call number 1, p. 12.

the following subjects: religion (but only Protestant), singing, German, Polish (four hours a week), French, physics, geography, history, arithmetic, writing, drawing and needlework⁹².

Different aims of education were set for secondary schools for girls of lower level. Apart from enabling their pupils to develop spiritually, they placed great emphasis on the practical aspect of learning so that the skills acquired by them at school could be used outside their homes, in their professional life. The differences in the educational aims resulted from the different social background of students. Those from higher schools for girls came mainly from well-to-do families, while those from schools of lower level from families of moderate means for whom giving their daughters some professional qualifications was especially important⁹³.

On 15 Oct. 1872 a disposition was issued that standardized the curricula in secondary schools of lower level⁹⁴. As we have said, they were meant to prepare the pupils for lower posts in the administration, though they were not vocational schools in the present sense of the word. The course of learning was shorter than in the higher schools for girls, it took six years. Special emphasis was laid, as in higher schools, on teaching German. Mathematical subjects also took many hours and were divided into arithmetic and geometry. The basic difference between both types of schools was the approach to foreign languages. Higher schools, apart from German, taught French and English, while the *Mittelschulen* only French. The pupils were to acquire the linguistic skills that would allow them to write a simple commercial letter or run some other kind of correspondence, as well as take part in conversation. In higher schools, lessons of French were also to convey some knowledge of French literature, naturally only at the elementary level.

In 1886 the *Normal-Lehrplan für höhere Mädchenschulen* was published in Prussia⁹⁵. This was the first governmental plan of the curriculum for higher secondary schools for girls, and though it was a model for many such schools in Prussia, it did not have

⁹² See A. Prowc, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

⁹³ SAG, call number 1/9/1969, pp. 83–87.

⁹⁴ See *Das Mädchenschulwesen in Preußen*, p. 75.

⁹⁵ This plan was identical with that of the higher schools for girls in Berlin which also appeared in 1886; it was published in "Zentralblatt für die gestammte Unterrichtsverwaltung in Preussen"; see GStAPK, VI. HA., *Nachlaß Althoff*, A II, N^o 18, vol. III, p. 44; B. Maydorn, *Zum 1. April 1909, "Die höhere Mädchenschule"*, Y. 22: 1909, vol. 12, p. 115.

a binding force. Its basis was the curriculum of 1883 of Augusta Higher School for Girls in Berlin. Unfortunately, this plan did not specify either the aims of education or give methodical or didactic instructions. It only specified the material to be tackled in individual forms, and contained remarks concerning the organization of work⁹⁶. This was a curriculum for a nine-form, three degree higher secondary school for girls. The lower degree (*Unterstufe*) embraced forms IX–VII, the middle degree (*Mittelstufe*) forms VI–IV, and the higher (*Oberstufe*) forms III–I.

A lack of a curriculum that would be generally binding on all the higher schools for girls in Prussia, as well as a lack of specific instructions concerning the scope of knowledge conveyed, aroused sharp criticism on the part of the pedagogues of those schools⁹⁷.

Work on the preparation of a generally applicable curriculum lasted very long⁹⁸. The first attempts to introduce some changes by way of legal regulations were made at the first conference of pedagogues of higher schools for girls in 1872. Further debates were held in 1873. In later years the issue was also moved at the governmental forum. Not until 1894, however, the long expected regulations were finally issued. The first ministerial regulation concerning higher German schools for girls — *Allgemeinen Vorschriften für die über das Ziel der Volksschule hinausgehenden Mädchenschulen*, binding for all the higher schools for girls since 1 Apr. 1895, appeared on 31 May 1894⁹⁹. This regulation discussed extensively the aims of the school, specified the tasks to be realized during individual classes and provided the schools with detailed didactic instructions. The chief aim was still to give the pupils a moral-aesthetic education¹⁰⁰, and not — as it was in the case of secondary schools for boys — to convey to them some solid knowledge. In line with this regulation the school was to prepare girls for their later social roles, of mothers, wives and

⁹⁶ See *Normal-Lehrplan für die höhere Mädchenschulen zu Berlin*, "Zentralblatt für die gestammte Unterrichtsverwaltung in Preussen", N° 7–8, Berlin 1886, pp. 495–496.

⁹⁷ SAG, call number 7/653, p. 42.

⁹⁸ Cf. *Allgemeiner Lehrplan für vollentwickelte höhere Mädchenschulen entworfen von dem Preußischen Verein für öffentliche höhere Mädchenschulen*, Leipzig 1892.

⁹⁹ Cf. GStAPK, I. HA, Rep. 89, N° 22315, p. 14; see K. Hessel, *Ein Lehrplan nach den preußischen Ministerialbestimmungen vom 31. Mai 1894*, "Die Mädchenschule", Y. 11: 1898, pp. 81–82.

¹⁰⁰ See SAG, call number 1/9/1970, p. 123; see *Die Berliner Frauen Vereins Konferenz am 5. und 6. November 1869*, p. 47.

household managers. An analysis of the curriculum and of the remarks on the methodology concerning each subject show that the school was to educate its pupils in the Prussian religious-patriotic spirit¹⁰¹.

Further transformations of the curriculum came only in 1908. The reform of 1908 not only introduced changes to the structure of those schools, but also new curricula for the higher schools for girls (later re-named as *lycées*), the training teachers' colleges as well as schools for women (*Frauenschulen*) and educational institutes (*Studienanstalten*). These changes resulted from a necessity to adjust to the current social and economic transformations¹⁰². Women now had to acquire concrete professional qualifications. It did not suffice to prepare girls for household tasks — the programme of education had to enable them to fulfil themselves not only in private, but also professional life. The curricula of 1908 were to satisfy these expectations. Although the main emphasis was still placed on religion and the German language, cultivation of aesthetic and emotional sensitivity was definitely dropped, which was clearly stressed in the introduction to the regulation of August 1908¹⁰³. However, the resignation from aesthetic and emotional education in favour of developing an ability of independent thinking was not tantamount to drop-

¹⁰¹ Among the educational measures of that character were the annual school celebrations, for example on the king's and the emperor's birthdays; there were also various jubilees connected with the emperor's family and days of tribute to the memory of men of merit to the German state; the pupils prepared special performances, composed of recitation, singing or short plays (*Kaiserin Auguste Victoria-Schule. Städtisches Lyzeum zu Dirschau. Bericht über das Schuljahr 1913/14*, Dirschau 1914, p. 21; *Bericht über die Städtische Höhere Töchterchule mit Lehrerinnen-Seminar zu Elbing für das Schuljahr 1891/92*, Elbing 1892, p. 4; SAG, call number 7/650, pp. 56, 122, 199; GStAPK, I. HA, Rep. 76-VI, Sekt. 1. Gen. ee, N^o 6 I, pp. 166, 184; *Höhere Mädchenschule in Danzig. Bericht über das Schuljahr 1910/11*, Danzig 1911, p. 14; SAG, call number I/10/5733, p. 483; call number 7/654, p. 54; call number 7/652, p. 357; call number I/653, pp. 141-143, 150; call number 508/2132, p. 35; SAM, call number 59-181/IIb/5522 (*Ordnung der Feier der Silbernen Hochzeit unseres Kaiserpaares in der höheren Mädchenschule zu Schwetz am 26. Februar 1906*).

¹⁰² *Das Mädchenschulwesen in Preußen*, p. 82.

¹⁰³ *Der Fortschritt und die Besserung wird zunächst von einigen Änderungen im Lehrplan der höheren Mädchenschule selbst ausgehen müssen. Es ist zu verhüten, daß die ästhetische und die Gefühlsbildung zu sehr überwiegen, daß hauptsächlich die Phantasie angeregt und das Gedächtnis in Anspruch genommen wird, während die Verstandesbildung sowie die Erziehung zu selbsttätiger und selbständiger Beurteilung der Wirklichkeit zurücktreten* (*Das Mädchenschulwesen in Preußen*, p. 77).

ping the education suitable for the weaker sex¹⁰⁴. Also an analysis of the contents of knowledge conveyed shows this polarity in women's education. On the one hand the curriculum was shaped so as to convey more extensive general knowledge than in the disposition of May 1894, on the other it also took into consideration the fact that a woman's education must be suitable for "her character"¹⁰⁵. A new subject was maths, taught together with arithmetic¹⁰⁶. A noteworthy detail is that needlework classes were not obligatory in the higher forms¹⁰⁷. Another novelty was that obligatory classes¹⁰⁸, apart from Protestant religion, included also those of the Catholic and Judaic faith¹⁰⁹.

* * *

The standard of women's education in the 19th century was to a considerable extent a result of the social status of women. At the turn of the 18th century the patriarchal model of the family was still universal. In accordance with the assumptions of patriarchy woman had no possibility of participating in public life; she was first subordinated to the will of her father, and after marriage — of her husband, which was fully sanctioned by the Prussian civil law. The patriarchal family was marked by stability and indissolubility of marriage and the unquestioned authority

¹⁰⁴ Cf. H. Philipp, *Der deutsche Unterricht auf der Oberstufe (und im Semtnar) nach der Neuordnung des höheren Mädchenschulwesens*, "Die höhere Mädchenschule", Y. 22: 1909, vol. 12, pp. 328–331.

¹⁰⁵ *Das Mädchenschulwesen in Preußen*, p. 93; *Bericht über die Hauptversammlung des Preussischen Vereins für öffentliche höhere Mädchenschulen und des Verbandes von Philologen an öffentlichen höheren Mädchenschulen Preussens*, "Die höhere Mädchenschule", Y. 22: 1909, vol. 12, pp. 8–11.

¹⁰⁶ See Dr. Steusloft, *Die Bedeutung der Mathematik als Unterrichtsgegenstand an den preussischen Lyzeen und die Lehrpläne von 1908*, "Frauenbildung", Y. 12: 1913, vol. 9/10, pp. 503–510.

¹⁰⁷ Not all the schools observed this regulation; while in Thorn and Elbing the time-tables included a note that participation in needlework classes in the forms of higher degree was voluntary, in Dirschau it was obligatory (*Städtische höhere Mädchenschule mit höherem Lehrerinnenseminar in Thorn*, *Bericht über das Schuljahr 1909/10*, Thorn 1910, p. 3; *Städtische höhere Mädchenschule (Kaiserin Auguste Victoria Schule)*, *Bericht über das Schuljahr 1910/11* erstattet vom Direktor Dr. Günther, Dirschau 1911, p. 3; *Kaiserin Auguste Victoria Schule zu Elbing*, *Städtische höhere Mädchenschule und Lyzeum*, *Bericht über das Schuljahr 1910*, Elbing 1911, p. 5; M. Hipp, *Reform der Handarbeitsunterrichts für Mädchen*, "Die höhere Mädchenschule", Y. 22: 1909, vol. 12, pp. 91–93; H. Pralle, *Matertal und Materialgestaltung im Arbeitsunterricht*, Hamburg 1911).

¹⁰⁸ See M. Hipp, *Die neuen Bestimmungen für den evangelischen Religionsunterricht*, "Die höhere Mädchenschule", Y. 22: 1909, vol. 12, pp. 338–346.

¹⁰⁹ See GStAPK, I. HA, Rep. 76–VI, Sekt. 1, Gen. ee, N^o 35, documents of 27 June 1910, 30 Aug 1912, 6 May 1914, 23 May 1914, 22 July 1914.

of the father — the head of the family, representing compelling power. A woman's situation depended also, of course, on her class. The position in the family of women from the upper classes, though not equal to men, was relatively high. The possibilities of women from the lower classes were much smaller, which resulted from their worse social status. The limitations to women's possibilities resulting from the fact that they were perceived as the ladies of the house (or housewives), wives and mothers, had a negative influence on the standard of education they were meant to acquire.

The structural transformations that had taken place in German society as a result of the Enlightenment, the French Revolution and the beginnings of industrialization in the first half of the 19th century, through the resulting cultural, social and economic changes, had also enforced deep transformations of the traditional picture of family life. The modernization of German society made women go beyond the area of household duties and take up professional work. This led to the rise of the so-called women's movement (*Frauenbewegung*) that was to improve the professional, educational and legal situation of women. It was only due to these transformations that the development of secondary schools for girls in the second half of the 19th century became possible. It cannot be questioned, however, that this process would have taken much longer if the activists of women's emancipation movement had not engaged in work aimed at the transformation of the system of women's education.

(Translated by Agnieszka Kreczmar)