Women in Educated Elites of Pre-Socialist and Early Socialist East Central European Societies

International Workshop organised in the frame of the European Research Council Project
Ethnically and Confessionally Composite Elites in East Central Europe (cc.1900-1950)

Institut européen, Geneva University, Switzerland, April 12-13 2013

The opening up to modernity of East Central Europe since the late 19th century was marked – among other things – by a triple process generating structural transformations of established post-feudal societies and affecting often radically the status of women.

Various movements of 'national awakening' and nation-building lead to the foundation of nation states during the decades 1878-1918 on territories of the former Ottoman, Russian and Habsburg empires. These societies, organised mostly in Western type parliamentary states (except for the later Soviet one), complied more or less reticently with Western patterns of socio-political modernization and cultural homogenization, including or leading to the abolition of feudal privileges. Modern nation states accomplished progressively the emancipation of hitherto socially bonded, dependent or dominated societal clusters (like serfs, Jews, ethnic marginals) among them, lately, women. The construction of modern schooling provision was an integral part of the modernization process, where the girls could usually take an ever growing share.

These transformations were concomitant with or accompanied by the birth of laissez-faire capitalism and the growth of new middle class clusters in charge of a number of intellectual services in the administration, the management of industrial, financial or trading entreprises, health care, law, public transportation, education, artistic activities. The ensuing socio-professional restratification of societies concerned was conducive to the emergence of the intelligentsia – a new stratum drawing its social and professional legitimacy from certified competences, its educational 'capital'. In some of its sectors – medicine, teaching, the creative and performing arts, etc. – women also started to be admitted since the late 19th century, though most of these markets of intellectual services remained for long largely dominated by male professionals.

Due to post-feudal conditions of competition for social standing, positions of influence and prestige, hitherto unknown forms of inequalities appeared in the very process of accumulation of political, economic, professional, cultural an educational assets henceforth necessary for the access to the elites. Female professionals, though they could rarely achieve advanced careers in the ruling elites in the old regime, so much so that they often encountered even various forms of public rejection and discrimination on intellectual markets, significantly participated in the framing of the way of life of the new middle class.

Herewith please find a (far from exclusive) roster of the main topical problem areas upon which the papers would mainly draw:

(1) The historical progress of the schooling of girls and boys in various countries. A (possibly comparative) overview of the development of educational investments granted to girls and boys in primary, secondary and higher education;
(2) The impact of the structure of the educational market on women’s education: the historical development of schooling reserved for women and the progress of coeducation as well as the general accessibility of the schooling provision for girls on different levels. Preferential or discriminative admission policies of educational authorities. Size, quality and outreach of school networks for girls.

(3) The same with reference to father’s profession (social selection of pupils and students), mother tongue, ethnicity, birth place, urbanization, residential and regional origins and ties of pupils and students concerned.

(4) Historical patterns of socio-professional mobility via education for men and women compared: differential strategies and attitudes following religious persuasion, family size, degrees of secularization, intellectual capital of the family, professional groups, economic standing, etc.

(5) Differential options for educational tracks and study branches for men and women with completed secondary education (medicine, law, arts and sciences, technical, artistic and other vocational studies).

(6) Qualitative educational inequalities and discrepancies between boys and girls concerned in their schooling trajectories: differences of academic performances, degrees and qualifications acquired, marks obtained in different study subjects (like at graduation from secondary schools), age of graduation, frequency of dropping out, foreign languages known, other certified skills.

(7) Differential uses of certified educational assets in professional careers: Male and female graduates in the free professions, civil service, politics, public industries, private intellectual employment (trade, banking, industries, agriculture, transportation, etc.) and in the artistic professions, especially in the latest periods of the pre-socialist old regime and in early communism.

(8) Men and women intellectuals in ‘reputational elites’ – people of fame: those cited in national biographies and encyclopedias, laureates of public distinctions for intellectual accomplishments (prizes, medals, titles, etc.), staff of universities and institutions of higher education, members of national academies, learned societies or public scholarly agencies (major libraries, museums, archives, research centers, etc.).

(9) Measures and indicators of possibly differential intellectual creativity between men and women and its recognition within the same professional clusters: number and quality of scientific, scholarly or artistic publications and other performances, invitations and careers abroad, participation in the management of professional journals, membership in boards of learned societies and professional agencies.

(10) Women professionals as affected by public policies of education and intellectual promotion: numerus clausus, segregation and discrimination in the educational market, differential availability of grants, scholarships or academic positions, etc., variation of tuition fees, schooling facilities or disabilities.

Workshop Program

Friday, April 12th 2013

9.30 Welcome greetings and introduction by the conveners, Prof.Victor Karady and Dr. Natalia Tikhonov Sigrist
SESSION 1
*Country reports : Austro-Hungarian Empire*

10.00 **Peter Tibor Nagy** (John Wesley College and Social Science Faculty, ELTE University, Budapest): *The educational mobility of women in pre-socialist Hungary: a methodological challenge*

10.45-11.00 : Tea / Coffee

11.00 **Zsuzsanna Hanna Biró** (John Wesley College and Institute for Education Research, ELTE University, Budapest): *Career chances of women in the Hungarian secondary school teaching profession (1900-1945)*

11.45 **Mátyás Erdélyi** (History Faculty, Central European University, Budapest): *Women in Economic Higher Education in Hungary, 1907-1946*

12.30 **Fabio Giomi** (Centre d’études turques, ottomanes, balkaniques et centrasiatiques, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris), *From mekteb to University. Educating middle-class Muslim girls in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1878-1941).*

13.15-14.30 : Lunch

14.30 **Victor Karady** (History Department, Central European University, Budapest): *Women students in pre-socialist Hungarian universities: some socio-academic characteristics*

15.15 **Nicolas Maslowski** (Department of Historical Sociology, Faculty of Humanities, Charles University, Prague): *Women in Czechoslovakian Pre-Socialist Reputational Elites*

15.45 **Dietlind Huechtker** (Geisteswissenschaftliche Zentrum Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas, University of Leipzig), *Claiming for Political Power: Women’s Reform Politics in Galicia (End of the 19th to the Beginning of the 20th Century)*

16.15-16.30 : Tea / Coffee

SESSION 2
*Country reports : Baltic countries*

16.30 **Martin Jaigma** (Peace Institute - Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies. Ljubljana): *From the imperial to national system: women’s pursuit of higher education in Tartu in the opening decades of the 20th century*

17.15 **Saulius Kaubris** (History Faculty, Vilnius University): *Women’s Educational Experience in Lithuania 1918 - 1940: The Experiment of the Analysis of Quantitative Changes*
18.00  Valters Ščerbinskis (Program of Political Science, Stradins University, Riga): Gender and the higher education. Female students at the University of Latvia during the Interwar period

Saturday, April 12th

SESSION 3
Country Reports: Transylvania and Balkans

9.30  Leonidas Rados (A.D. Xenopol History Institute of the Romanian Academy of Science, Iasi): A Rare Model of Acceptance without Convulsions. Female student admission in Romania: the Case of University of Iasi

10.15  Ana-Maria Stan (University Historical Museum, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca), Public roles and socio-cultural presence of women holding academic degrees and/or positions in Romania - first half of the 20th century

11.00-11.15: Tea / Coffee

11.15  Dragos Sdrobis (George Baritiu History Institute, Romanian Academy of Science, Cluj-Napoca), From the absences of history toward inequals of the equals. Women students in the Romanian universities during 1919-1939

12.00  Georgeta Nazarska (State University of Library Studies and IT, Sofia), Women Intellectuals within the Bulgarian Government Awards and Decorations System (1880s-1950s)

13.00-14.00: Lunch

SESSION 4
Country Reports: Russian Empire

14.00  Kateryna Kobchenko (Center for Ukranian Studies, Philosophy Faculty, Kiev National Taras Chevchenko University): Ways of Medical Education of Ukrainian Women in the Middle of the 19th-Beginning of the 20th century (on the example of Kyiv)

14.45  Alissa Tolstokorova (International School for Equal Opportunities, Kiev): Role of Academic Migration to West-European Academia in the Formation of Ukrainian Women Intellectual Elites (late 19th - early 20th centuries)
15.15-15.45 : Tea / Coffee

15.45 : General discussion, final comments and conclusion

- **Organisation and Coordination**

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- **Registration and Contact**

  Participants are asked to register for the Workshop by contacting one of the organisers:
  natalia.tikhonov@unige.ch

  For more information about the workshop (paper abstracts and full texts), see the conference web-site:


- **Location**

  Institut européen de l'Université de Genève
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  1204 Genève

Workshop Sponsors

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