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Polish Commission for National Education, 1773-1794: Its Significance and Influence on Russian and American Education

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POLISH COMMISSION FOR NATIONAL EDUCATION

1773-1794

ITS SIGNIFICANCE AND INFLUENCE ON

RUSSIAN AND AMERICAN EDUCATION

by

Leszek August Wolkowski

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
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VITA

The author, Leszek August Wolkowski, is the son of John Wolkowski and Halina (Wańkiewicz-Ponomarew) Wolkowski. He was born in Wilno, Poland-Lithuania.

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CHAPTER I

AN INTRODUCTION

Each period of human history works out its own educational system, perfects it, and constantly adapts it to the ongoing changes and requirements of its particular way of life. It works out a system that tends to equip the youngest generation with such characteristics which will further the nation's or group's political, economic, social, intellectual and psychological aspirations.

What is characteristic of any system of education is its tendency to reject, with the help of conservative elements, some progressive ideas of the society, even though social and economic transformation demands a total reevaluation and reconstruction of the existent educational system. The first large-scale antagonism between an obsolete school and a progressive society became evident in the transition period from the slave era to the feudal era, when the purpose of education drastically changed and had to satisfy the needs of the multi-class society of clergy, nobility, burghers and peasants.

The next large-scale antagonism between school and society took place during the transition period from the feudal to the capitalistic system in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the wealthy, educated Italian middle class accused the existing schools of being centers of ignorance, scholastic methodology, backwardness, useless

philosophical and religious concepts and nefarious ideas. The members of the middle class wanted a school which would offer literary Latin, propagate the intellectual and political freedom of man and teach love of life and of the human body. They criticized church education as totally irrelevant to their domestic, professional and civic responsibilities. They demanded a school system independent of the clergy. These tendencies received attention even in countries unprepared for the transition to a capitalist system. One of them was France. Poland was the other country, where tendencies for educational reforms were especially strong. Andrew Frycz Modrzewski (1503-1572), one of the most distinguished social and political thinkers of the Polish Renaissance, wrote a bold treatise, De Republica Emendanda (On the Reform of the State), considered the first in Europe to discuss comprehensively problems of the State. Published in 1554, it advocated a state-controlled educational system, and the native tongue, not Latin, as the language of instruction. He considered this matter to be the State's most important responsibility. He viewed education as one of the foundations of effective government, and insisted that schooling be provided for the lowest classes. Modrzewski was speaking out against the clergy and its all-engrossing control of educational matters. He urged the creation of a governmental commission totally responsible for the education of all youth.

¹Czeslaw Milosz, The History of Polish Literature (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1969), pp. 40-41.

In the sixteenth century, the development of crafts, trades, industry, mining, and the unprecedented growth of cities, made the English bourgeoisie a very influential and important class. Its political and economic significance was the result of practical know-how and of the technique of organization of mass production. The English middle class wanted an educational system which would respond to the needs of the economy, strengthen the new social order, and democratize the political system. The representative of this new nascent society was Francis Bacon (1561-1626), who in his literary work reproached the schools for their teaching of useless and impractical knowledge. He reproached them for not preparing people capable of taking part in the economic, social and political life of the country, of being unable to work for the material wealth of the nation. He wanted schools to teach observation of facts and experimentation - knowledge which would be useful in solving practical, every-day problems. He identified happiness with material security. The religious ethic of the Church was chiefly concerned with after-life and spiritual matters, all of which was insufficient to the developing practical and material world outlook. When the revolutionaries came to power in England, strong demands were made to deprive the Church of its control over education and of passing it to the State.

It was not until the latter half of the eighteenth century that the potent French middle class revitalized the forgotten demands of the English middle class. The former overtly began to criticize the French monarchy and clergy, who hand in glove, worked to maintain the status quo. They criticized the clergy for its role as supporter of the

monarchy and dispenser of education. Philosophy was criticized as impractical and obsolete, teaching of Latin as time-consuming and useless, and teaching of religion as incompatible with reason. Once again, it was emphasized that education should be the responsibility of the State, not of the Church.

The purpose for briefly recalling the educational reform proposals of the Italian cities, of England and of France, is to demonstrate that, demands for changes in government and economy lead inevitably to the necessity of adjusting education to the new social, economic and political needs. As the struggle against feudalism in favor of a nascent capitalistic system was very much similar in all European nations, so was their struggle for a new educational order. The latter system wanted to precipitate the downfall of feudal education and to implement an educational system which would further the needs of the developing capitalistic order.

In the context of European nations, there were two essential differences that were characteristic of the Polish Commonwealth. The first one was that, unlike other European states, Poland, as a result of the "Saxon Period", saw a complete collapse of its cities, which led to the total decline of the Polish middle class. Second, the originality of Polish education lies in the fact that it was the principal means of national regeneration.

In the beginning of the eighteenth century, the szlachta or nobility, was the dominant class in the Polish Commonwealth. The king was elected by the szlachta from among a number of foreign princes. Furthermore

The church, the law courts and even the executive were mainly in the hands of members of the szlachta. It had, with some exceptions, closed all entry to its ranks and continued to cling jealously to its privileges and to guard its "golden freedom". These privileges included exemption from taxation, dues and tariffs, freedom from military service, and complete control of the Legislature, the Judiciary and the power to paralyse the Executive. This was the ancient liberty enjoyed by the Poles in contrast to the autocratic or oligarchic interference in the affairs of the nobility of other states.²

The szlachta, therefore, was an important body, possibly numbering 725,000 individuals.² They consisted of an upper class, the magnates, and a great mass of gentry. The lower szlachta were mainly landowners. Land, however, was not their sole basis of status. When in the fifteenth century the szlachta consolidated their position, they not only enjoyed immunity from taxation, but also a number of privileges culminating in the famous act Neminem captivabimus nisi iure victum of the Polish Habeas Corpus. Using peasants as serf labor, the szlachta developed Polish agriculture for export which brought them considerable wealth. Eventually,

the predominant position attained by the szlachta, the privileges of its members and the equality between all sections of its class attracted the attention of neighboring nobilities. The Lithuanian nobles after the union were granted rights similar to those of the Poles. The same rights were extended to the Ruthenians of Galicia and Lithuania, while the gentry of Prussia, Livonia, Kurland and Moldavia were all attracted by the glamour of the Polish system as compared with the monarchical or oligarchic systems of other countries. The whole upper class of these countries tended to adopt Polish names and the Polish language.³

²Albert Goodwin, ed., The European Nobility in the Eighteenth Century (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 165.

³Ibid., p. 156-157.

The szlachta welcomed the Humanist culture and absorbed the revolutionary Hussite, Calvinist and Lutheran ideas.

The "golden age" of Polish literature, distinguished by its poets, its satirists and its constructive political and social theorists, was a great achievement by the new class, which not only held political power in its own countries, but exported, to England for instance, corn, reformers like Laski and ambassadors able to argue with Elizabeth in Latin, while they showed Europe an example of religious toleration and of a method of ruling a great state by a large representative body⁴ without recourse to autocracy or oligarchy.⁵

The reaction of the counter-reformation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries brought about a great change:

The Jesuits came to control education, and, by inculcating religious orthodoxy rather than free learning and citizenship, destroyed that individual sense of responsibility which was essential to maintain the free institutions of the szlachta. Without the collaboration of a large number of educated individuals with civic and moral standards, the Polish system of government could not be carried on successfully. Decline began, and the beginning of the eighteenth century saw the lowest point reached. The middle of that century saw the First Partition, but it also saw the turn of the tide - the beginning of a great revival.⁶

The following characterized the Polish szlachta: they were, as a class, entirely Polish in speech and sentiment, they were in the majority Roman Catholic, and were nearly all landed gentry; the law courts, church offices and the Legislature were entirely in the hands

⁴As stated by the Maly słownik historii Polski (Little Dictionary of the History of Poland) (Warsaw: Wiedza Powszechna, 1961), p. 286, in 1772 Poland had a population of 11,4-14,0 million, as compared with 29 in Russia, 24,1 in France, 20 in Germany, and 12,2 in Great Britain. According to Wielka Encyklopedia Powszechna (The Great Universal Encyclopaedia) (Warsaw: PWN, 1967), vol. 11, p. 233, the szlachta, at that time, comprised 8-10% of the Polish society, as compared to 1% in France, for example.

⁵Goodwin, The European Nobility, p. 157.

⁶Ibid., p. 157.

of the szlachta, all members of the class being equal before the law and in public life. "The title of szlachcic or "gentleman" was to a Pole the highest distinction attainable, and a family's dignity could be enhanced by the number of ancestors who had been senators."⁷

The "Saxon" period of Polish history, 1697-1763, was a time of ultimate deterioration in all domains of the Polish life. Wars and invasions of the latter half of the seventeenth century brought destruction to the economic life of the country, caused a considerable decrease in Poland's population, and eventually a total decline of towns and cities. The corvee exploitation added to the tragic political situation. The concentration of great tracts of land in the hands of a small number of super-powerful aristocratic families, their hold on village and town production, as well as over the political structure of the whole country, brought about a situation in which the mechanism of the Polish feudal system became totally inoperative. The few magnate families holding tremendous wealth dominated the peasant, the burgher and the landless szlachta. Furthermore, the danger of the Polish elective monarchy was becoming visible when aggressive neighbors began to interfere in Polish affairs. As there was no strong middle class which could counterbalance the szlachta's carelessness, it was left to the small but influential group of enlightened Polish magnates to launch the movement of political and economic reforms. Due to their extensive travels abroad, they perceived Poland's backwardness and weakness as compared with politically and

⁷Goodwin, The European Nobility, p. 160.

economically strong nations of Europe, such as Prussia, France and England. The imminent threat of Poland's immediate imperialist and expansionist neighbors, who energetically got on the road of political, military and economic early capitalist modernization, created a pressing urgency of paralleling them in all these domains.

The party that took the lead in the reform movement was the Czartoryski Reform Camp of enlightened magnates, or the "Family", who announced a comprehensive program of economic, social, cultural and political reforms tending to launch Poland on the road to capitalist modernization. They demanded a new patriotic attitude, political alertness, economic reconstruction and a modernizing expansion of towns, trade, commerce and manufacture industries. As the quickest way to enriching the country, this program was to provide employment for large masses of people. This also was to bring a drastic change to the nobiliary segment of the Polish population, who, from a passive feudal landlord, would be transformed into an entrepreneurial leader of modern economy actively engaged in politics. The progressive party of the Czartoryskis decided to introduce into Polish production a number of efficient capitalistic methods and organizational patterns. The philosophy of the Enlightenment and the physiocratic doctrine were at the basis of proposed reforms. Physiocracy made agriculture the source of national wealth, in that it supplied both sustenance and raw materials. The advancement of agriculture was considered the most important responsibility of the society. The reformers hoped to attain this objective through the development of science which would raise the output of the soil. They wanted science

to be partially accessible to all peasants, who were immediately responsible for the agricultural yield. An enlightened peasant would improve his own material standing, and would also contribute to the wealth and welfare of the whole country.

The philosophers of the Enlightenment representing the interests of the bourgeoisie supported the slogans of physiocracy. They declared education an indispensable condition in building a better future. The partisans of the movement for comprehensive reforms in Poland considered national education essential to the success of their reforms aimed at saving the declining Polish Commonwealth. As the Church-controlled schools were totally unable and incapable of fulfilling the demands advanced by the Czartoryski Reform Camp, these leaders demanded that the State take full supervision of all educational matters.

The Commission for National Education, established in Warsaw, Poland, on October 14, 1773, was therefore an expression of long, progressive tendencies of the enlightened sector of the Polish society to ensure for the young generations an education adapted to the changing conditions of economic, social and political life, and to make accessible to the young of all social strata the latest achievements of knowledge, regarded as essential for the modernization of the obsolete system of economy. Two great shocks: the election of King Stanislaw August Poniatowski in 1764 by Russian intrigue and the tragedy of the First Partition of 1772 showed the unscrupulous character of the Great Powers and the total inability of a once militant people to make the slightest resistance. This inspired the necessity of comprehensive reforms, of reeducation of the szlachta and of educating

the remaining classes of the Commonwealth, and made education a priority and a sine qua non reason of State. It is the author's contention that, in these conditions, the Commission for National Education became one of the earliest state educational authorities in Europe, directing the whole school system of the nation.

This study presents a history of events leading to the creation of the Commission, and demonstrates that, in the context of European education, the Commission became de facto the first ministry of education of its kind, in that it was a separate, autonomous body directing the education and teaching of the young of the entire nation. It also demonstrates that the Commission not only legislated the idea of equality, social justice, and the understanding of the universal right to education, but that it also made compulsory universal education a reality. It further demonstrates that, first in Europe, it broke the educational monopoly of the Church, secularized the schools, established a State supported and controlled educational system, introduced modern uniform curricula and methods of teaching to advance educational efficiency, gave schooling a national character, published modern textbooks, organized girls' education, established teacher training colleges, created a professional teaching class and tended to minimize the social differences in education. The Commission demonstrated the relationship between liberty and universal education by affirming that a nation's social and political liberties could be secure only if its citizens were educated to make the right decisions. It made general education accessible in Poland to all three estates and raised the intellectual level of the country's

population. A great many of the Commission's reforms were way ahead of similar reforms propagated a number of years later by the French Revolution.

The establishment of the Commission for National Education is an event without precedence, the study of which will lead us to an understanding of its achievements, and of its unique contribution in the domain of organizing a modern, democratic national system of education, which, having power over the entire gamut of educational matters, made it the principal means of national regeneration, could efficiently establish and promote education in the interest and progress of the whole nation, and serve as an example to other European states.

The author hopes the investigation will be a contribution to comparative history of education in that it treats a topic that has been neglected by American historians of comparative education.

CHAPTER II

ORIGIN OF THE COMMISSION FOR NATIONAL EDUCATION

The Polish reformers, who in the eighteenth century initiated a strong movement to save the Polish Commonwealth from the Saxon decline, having fresh in mind the tragedy of the First Partition of Poland, intensified their efforts to prevent the country from losing her independence. These people realized that the most efficient means for preserving the country's sovereignty was to strengthen all her sectors of public life. To achieve this goal they decided to solve a number of crucial problems. Furthermore, aware of the fact that strength and wealth are inseparable, and that high economic potential is indispensable for the country's security and military power, they undertook the task of improving and modernizing the national economy. To attain this, it was necessary to liquidate or minimize the old class conflicts disrupting the country from the inside, which seriously trammled all economic initiative and progress. Solving class conflicts would create favorable circumstances for efficient cooperation between the three estates, and for building a sound economic potential for the entire nation.

To improve the obsolete and inefficient system of Polish life, the reformers decided to reorganize and modernize the governmental apparatus, so that it would allow a consistent enforcement of laws and

regulations, which, hitherto, were flagrantly ignored by the overwhelming majority of the powerful Polish nobility. The Poles' fondness for travel and their acute sense of observation allowed them to see clearly, against the background of foreign nations, the real position of the Polish Commonwealth in Europe and her internal shortcomings. Western European examples were therefore helpful in accurately assessing Poland's situation, and in finding ways and methods for improvement. France, especially, appealed to the Poles, who found her to be a source of fashion, refined manners, viable economic doctrines of physiocracy and capitalistic methods of production and division of labor.

The creation of a new system of economic, social and political conditions in Poland, and the implementation of salutary reforms in these domains, required the involvement and participation of people belonging to all strata of the population. These reformers demanded a drastic change in the existing method of thinking and the elaboration of new standards. Although reform involved the entire society, it especially concerned the nobility, who had the most decisive voice in shaping the destiny of the Commonwealth.

The transformation of the szlachta's mentality involved a change of its passive, consumer attitude into active, producer attitude, which would integrate the preoccupation with personal profit with that of civic and patriotic concern for building a solid political, economic and social national organism, one that would best guarantee the security of the Commonwealth. This required the abolition of class prejudices, ineffective economy, and many pernicious aspects of the governmental system, particularly the liberum veto.

The liberum veto was the destructive principle of unanimous consent which had paralyzed every single effort to reform and strengthen the Polish system. It gave a member of the Polish House of Deputies the right to stop all public business. This old principle of unanimity worked quite well when it was exercised with judgment and wisdom, but not in the latter half of the eighteenth century, when all political activity had been reduced to a farce through bribery, corruption and the intervention of Partitioning Powers. The nobility needed to be reeducated in the proper scientific, economic and political awareness, which would permit them to accurately appraise the situation, and which would give them a modern view of a new national organization and of new laws capable of halting the country's growing disintegration. The changes to be effected in the remaining classes were to consist mainly in their understanding of the need for cooperation with the nobility, in view of strengthening the country and working for the country's economic potential and development.

Recognizing education and science as the principal means of rectifying the destructive politico-economic system, a strong enlightenment campaign was launched mobilizing all possible mass media of communication and propaganda: the press, brochures, translations of influential Enlightenment literature, journalism, correspondence, domestic and foreign literature. Aware of the deep-rooted traditional way of thinking of the adult generation, the reformers placed the main emphasis on young people, who, according to their plans, were to continue the work of reconstructing the Polish State at a later time.

The traditional Polish school, product of the "Saxon Period" and Jesuit cosmopolitanism, divorced from national influence and overwhelmingly religious, was incapable of educating the needed progressive generation, and was insensitive to the demands of the country's national interest. There was an urgent need for a new national school, co-creator of a modern political and economic system, a school controlled by the state, capable of carrying out its postulates and decrees. Such a school, under the jurisdiction of the State, was long ago advocated by Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski in the sixteenth century, by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in his Considerations on the Government of Poland, by Louis-René de la Chalotais and by Bartholomew Rolland d'Erceville in their respective proposals on education.

The secondary schools of the "Saxon Period", intended mainly for the sons of the nobility, were almost completely in the hands of the Jesuit and Piarist Orders. The curriculum of these schools, established in the sixteenth century, remained unchanged and alien to the times. Philological education, the teaching of Latin, laborious rote memorization, grammatical rules and vocabulary, constituted the learning matter. The Latin taught in these schools bore little resemblance to classical Latin, reflected poor style and bad taste. The obsolete memorization method of teaching, slogging away at Latin, and the overall impractical aspect of Jesuit education, caused many students to leave school. The Jesuit schools of rhetoric concentrated on suave phraseology and speeches glorifying the magnates and their ancestors. The eulogies of the Jesuit schools had dangerous political and social implications. The students praised

their forefathers, who conquered and converted the pagans of the Baltic coastland, saved Europe from the Tartars and Turks, and even in the last century had driven from their land the invading Swedes, Brandenburgers, Muscovites, Cossacks and Tartars. Though conscious of their glorious military past they believed that the days of peace had come, and were too remote from realities to realize the need to relearn the art of war. They had a fatal belief in the goodwill of the Great Powers, though they also believed that their system of government was superior to the autocratic and materialistic ideals of their neighbours.¹

The enlightened representatives of the szlachta and magnates reproached the uselessness of clerical education, outdated teaching techniques, and false political assumptions. Joseph Wybicki, author of the Polish National Anthem, wrote the following words concerning his Jesuit education:

They (the Jesuits) did not teach to think, thinking was forbidden . . . they wanted to transform youth into shadows and spectres, free people into yoked animals . . . It was they who cast the seed of our national destruction which gave us the fruit of disgrace and bondage . . . We were not told to think and act.²

It is generally estimated that in the beginning of the eighteenth century "28 percent of all magnates and wealthy nobility were illiterate. The illiteracy rate among the middle nobility was 40 percent, among the lower nobility 92 percent, and among the middle class about 44 percent. Illiteracy among the peasants was of course complete."³

All these circumstances urgently called for corrective measures. The man who took the first step toward the modernization of Polish

¹Goodwin, The European Nobility, p. 167.

²Joseph Wybicki, Życie moje (My Life) (Krakow: Biblioteka Narodowa, 1925), p. 9.

³Łukasz Kurdybacha, Historia Wychowania (History of Education) (Warsaw: PWN, 1967), vol., 1, p. 575.

education, and who was directly responsible for the reforms that took place in the domain of culture and politics, was Stanisław Konarski (1700-1773), a Piarist monk. He was thoroughly convinced that further improvement of national education should be the responsibility of neither the monastic orders nor church authorities, but of the State. He demanded the establishment of "a special office extending supervision over schools and teaching, responsible for the direction of education."⁴ Demands for general education of the people under the auspices of the national state were advanced in Poland long before de la Chalotais's Essay On National Education, 1762, in the already mentioned Andrew Frycz Modrzewski's De Republica Emendanda (On the Reform of the State), 1554, and Stanisław Anthony Szczuka's Eclipsis Poloniae orbi publico demonstrata (The Eclipse of Poland Demonstrated to the Whole World), 1709, where the author anticipating Poland's decline, demonstrated preventive measures, among which he advanced a plan of a state authority taking charge of educational matters of the nation. One of the chief reasons responsible for Konarski's demands of subordinating education to the control of the State, was his fervent desire of making education patriotic and civic in character. State authorities were alone capable of assuring the proper direction of education, for they were immediately responsible for the country's future.

⁴Stanisław Konarski, Pisma pedagogiczne (Pedagogical Writings) (Wrocław: Biblioteka Klasyków, 1959), pp. 193-194.

After a two-year teaching activity in Rome, Konarski traveled to France, Venice, Austria and Germany. Upon his return home he plunged into politics. The failure of his political ambitions, however, steered him to education. Konarski's decision to return to pedagogy coincided with an incredible activity taking place in favor of the political and social reforms. The precursor of these reforms, the King of Poland and Duke of Lorraine, in France, Stanisław Leszczyński, in his famous political tract under the crafty title of Głos wolny wolność ubezpieczający (A Free Voice Assuring Freedom), 1749, demanded the abolition of the liberum veto, the organization of a powerful army, reform of the Sejm (Parliament) and courts, the strengthening of royal authority, and the conversion of peasants' serfdom into tenancy.⁵

The establishment of the Collegium Varsaviense in Warsaw and of King Leszczyński's Knights' Academy in Lunéville, France, both in 1737, spurred Konarski to intensify his efforts for reforming the Piarist educational system in Poland. Working closely with the progressive Czartoryski Reform Camp, Konarski obtained permission of the Piarist authorities to establish a modern aristocratic secondary school - the Collegium Nobilium, in 1740. Later, he was entrusted with the reform of the entire Piarist educational system in Poland. He introduced new pedagogical methods, such as friendly relations between

⁵Kurdybacha, Historia Wychowania, vol. 1, p. 581.

teacher and student and the spirit of camaraderie among students. The new curriculum consisted of natural sciences, physics, mathematics, geography and Polish as the language of instruction gradually superseding traditional Latin. His Gramatyka Łacinska (Latin Grammar) was made interesting by arranging it into questions and answers. Konarski gave fuller meaning to Latin inflections by supplying them also in Polish. Thus the manual of Latin grammar became a manual of grammar of the Polish language. He gradually introduced Polish in lectures and exercises. Desirous of transforming rhetoric, considered the queen of all sciences, into a powerful weapon of political reforms, Konarski wrote a textbook O poprawie błędów wymowy (On Correcting Errors in Speech), 1741, where he criticized the loquaciousness of speeches, their lack of deeper meaning, artificiality, affectation and the vague expression of thoughts. Rhetoric was to serve the dual purpose of subject matter and become a formidable weapon for reforms.⁶

The purpose of the Collegium Nobilium, as reflected in Konarski's Ordynacje (Regulations), was the political and moral reeducation of the magnates and their sons, indispensable for carrying out the reforms needed to preserve the Commonwealth from imminent decline. The aristocratic character of the Collegium Nobilium constituted the price which Konarski had to pay in exchange for the magnates' trust and permission to educate Poland's most illustrious young generation of magnates. Desirous to train an elite of reformers, Konarski

⁶Ibid., pp. 587-588.

stressed such virtues as obedience, justice and love of country. The first would teach the young nobles to obey the laws of the country, the second would help them to view properly the remaining social classes of the Commonwealth, the third, love of freedom in Poland, would teach them that it was not to be identified with anarchy, insubordination, personal gains or profits.

Konarski recommended the teaching of Latin by means of two of Komenski's textbooks: Janua linguarum reserata (The Gates of Tongues Unlocked), and Orbis sensualium pictus (The World of Senses in Pictures) to prove that the teaching of Latin in the Collegium Nobilium was not oriented toward literature alone, but toward practical knowledge of life also. Konarski's reduction in the hours of teaching Latin was the direct result of the importance which he attached to the role of Polish in the school's curriculum. His efforts to secure for it the place it rightfully deserved in education could be seen by the fact that he included into the curriculum the greatest possible number of subjects which would give education a national character. The prime manifestation of these tendencies was the study of Polish history, whose objective was to develop the student's patriotic feelings, and to make him aware of his role as a Pole.⁷

Although the Czartoryski Reform Camp -- concerned mainly with the reform of the political system: restriction of the liberum veto, abolition of szlachta's privileges in the domain of taxes and tariffs,

⁷Ibid., pp. 591-594.

and the development of cities -- did not come up with plans for improving the condition of the Polish peasant, Konarski did, calling for the exemption of the peasant from taxation, the abolition of the jurisdiction of the nobles over the peasant, and for making him directly responsible to the State. Furthermore, he wanted the corvee replaced with tenancy.⁸

A bold innovation in Konarski's curriculum was the teaching of the foundations of natural sciences, especially of experimental physics, which not only stimulated the young minds into inquiry, but turned them away from futile and useless scholastic issues and pointed out to them the unlimited cognitive capacities of the human mind.

One of the most characteristic traits of Konarski's Regulations, governing the Piarist educational system, was their base of scientific literature. Behind each regulation or advice there was the authority of a famous writer-pedagogue. The Regulations displayed deep concern for the proper education of teachers. To protect them from unjust situations, Konarski developed a set of teacher's rules regulating their duties and conduct. The first of its kind in Poland, and one of the first in the World, they discussed the teacher's education, training, school work, responsibilities and privileges, unified methods of grading and grading procedures. The most striking characteristic differentiating Konarski's Collegium Nobilium and the Piarist public schools from the remaining secondary schools of the time was

⁸Ibid., pp. 595-596.

. . . the close link which they had with the most progressive tendencies for reform in Poland towards the end of the "Saxon Period". It can truthfully be said that Konarski's educational activity was as much a struggle for improving the public, economic and social life, as was that of Leszczyński, Poniatowski and Czartoryski in the domain of politics. Konarski having placed his educational talent in the service of the progressive reform movement, not only propagated it among the students and parents, not only educated his students to become able reformers of Nobiliary Poland, but also with his own example, with the efforts of his collaborators and former students, precipitated the implementation itself. Public displays of rhetoric and oratory, organized by the school, were to serve this purpose. The most important ones taking place in 1757 and 1758 were entitled: Rozmowa na czym dobro i szczęście Rzeczypospolitej zaległo (Conversation On Why Prosperity and Happiness Were Lacking in Poland), and O co najbardziej i najpierwej w edukacji starać się potrzeba (What Should be Strived for First and Most in Education).⁹

Konarski consistently demanded that schools come under the jurisdiction and direction of the government. The Commonwealth, in order to cope efficiently with political, economic and educational problems, had to establish a special state educational authority responsible for the sum total of educational matters.

Konarski's tremendous educational activity came to an end, when he died August 3, 1773, and was not around to witness an event that was the dream of his life: the establishment of the Commission for National Education on October 14, 1773. Even though fate prevented him from being there, supreme honor was bestowed upon him, however, when King Stanislaw August presented him in 1771 with a medal struck in his honor bearing the inscription: SAPERE AUSO - to him who dared be wise.

⁹Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 597-598.

Following the reform of the Piarist network of schools and some Jesuit schools, which constituted the first step on the road to secularization and modernization of the Polish educational system, new, bolder, more efficient steps were undertaken. Cognizant of the puissant role of teaching and education, a breach was effected in the heretofore clerical monopoly over education. Upon the recommendation of King Stanislaw August, it was agreed to establish in 1765 a school, that was a step forward in comparison to Konarski's schools, one that did not come under the authority of a monastic order or church. This was the Szkoła Rycerska or Knights' School, the first totally secular educational institution in Poland. It had lay teachers, offered natural sciences, foreign languages - all in the context of the Enlightenment philosophy. This particular school, although only one, with an enrollment of under a hundred, did more to set a standard and promote a new outlook in education, than all the schools established by Konarski. It bore a national, patriotic and civic character, whose main objective was the education and training of enlightened architects of a prospective democratic Poland. Prince Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski, its commandant, made patriotic and civic education its credo, pointing out that contempt for non-nobiliary segments of the population was groundless, for fame and origin were not hereditary. The objective, therefore,

of the Knights' School was to educate dependable citizens, ardent patriots and exemplary soldiers.¹⁰

Andrew Zamoyski, Grand Chancellor of the Crown (Poland), one of the many enlightened magnates, was thoroughly convinced that, in order to bring up obedient citizens capable of loving and defending the country, it was necessary to establish the office of a minister of education. Schools, controlled, directed and funded by the government, would be able to enforce more efficiently the new educational requirements and precipitate the regeneration of the Commonwealth.

Journalism, and the progressive segment of the public opinion, expressed approval and appreciation for the proposed reforms in all divisions of education. Among them were magazines such as: Zabawy przyjemne i pożyteczne (Pleasant and Useful Pastimes) and Monitor (The Monitor). The latter advocated a school that would teach students Polish culture, Polish history, Polish language. It called for a school that would nourish a thoroughly patriotic attitude and a practical curriculum needed to develop Polish agriculture, commerce and

¹⁰Among its graduates was Tadeusz Kościuszko, key figure of the American Revolution, a military engineer, whose fortification of Saratoga and West Point had been one of the decisive events in the victory of the American colonies. He declared his progressive social views when he liberated the Negro slaves he had received along with an estate in the United States. In May 1794, Kosciuszko issued a declaration abolishing the personal serfdom of the Polish peasant.¹⁰

industry.¹¹ Curiously enough, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in his Considerations on the Government of Poland, published in 1772 - on the eve of the Commission's activity - stressed identical recommendations:

It is education that must give the souls of the people a national form, and so shape their opinions and their tastes that they become patriots . . . a Pole ought to be a Pole and nothing but a Pole. When he is learning to read, I want him to read about his own country. At ten, he should be acquainted with all its productions; and at twelve, with all its provinces, highways and towns. At fifteen he should know all its history; at sixteen, all its laws.¹²

King Stanisław August, anticipating the approach of favorable circumstances for the reform, requested the entrusted people of his entourage to immediately supply him with proposals for a new educational system of a national character. Out of thirteen presented, eleven were for entrusting the State with educational matters. One was for transferring the authority to the Sejm, and the other to the King. This, however, was of minor importance. Of greater concern was the problem of management of post-Jesuit estates, whose revenues and income were to be the sole material base of the newly nationalized educational system. According to papal brief, Dominus ac Redemptor Noster, of July 21, 1773, the administration of these estates was to be left to the bishops. Such solution, however, would be synonymous with depriving the educational authority of all material bases necessary for its function. The

¹¹Łukasz Kurdybacha, Komisja Edukacji Narodowej (Commission for National Education) (Warsaw: PWN, 1973), p. 41-42.

¹²Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne (Considerations on the Government of Poland) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), p. 97.

King and his close collaborators firmly took the stand that the post-Jesuit endowments and assets constituted public property and rightfully belonged to the State, which alone had the right to dispose of it as it pleased. The King, however, in exchange for support given by the Church in favor of the Commission, compromised, and accepted the clerical position for the time being. On October 14, 1773, the Sejm approved the establishment of the Commission for National Education.

Established by the Sejm (Parliament) as an independent legal and administrative branch of the government, responsible only to the Sejm, the Commission had all the characteristics of a ministry of education, and was the first of its kind in modern times in Europe. Being a joint executive organ for both the Crown (Polish Kingdom) and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania - contrary to other branches of the government functioning separately, it became an important bond integrating the two parts of the Polish Commonwealth. The reformers had to constantly overcome the hostile attitude of the backward segment of Polish nobility, the papal legate, and the suspicious representatives of the Partitioning Powers, fearful of the least constructive change in the Polish governmental system.

It was an arduous task for King Stanisław August to choose the eight people of the governing body of the new magistracy. It was necessary to appoint men who would be able to assume the responsibility for the reconstruction of the existing educational system. They would have to be capable of steering the new generation, and entrusting them with the continuation of modernizing the republican system. Enlightened people of integrity were needed. The King appointed four commissioners

of education for the Crown, and four for the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. These were: Ignacy Massalski - bishop of Wilno, Prince Michael Poniatowski - bishop of Płock, Prince August Sułkowski - voivode of Gniezno, Joachim Chreptowicz - vice-chancellor of Lithuania, Ignacy Potocki, Prince Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski, Andrew Zamoyski and Antoni Poniński.

Ignacy Massalski, talented, educated, active, knowledgeable of the World, was a devout physiocrat. Committed to popular education, he established parochial schools, set up the first Polish Teachers College in Wilno, was the author of parochial school regulations and held the office of the first chairman of the Commission for National Education.

Prince Michael Poniatowski, the King's brother, had a pragmatic mind and was an organizational leader. Responsible and objective, he supported anybody who was devoted to the Commission and her cause. He generously gave help to the Kraków Academy, the parochial schools and the Teachers College in Łowicz. He demonstrated great dedication to the educational cause and was the second chairman of the Commission for National Education.

Prince August Sułkowski, thoroughly acquainted with the Western theoretical and practical achievements in the field of education, spent most of his lifetime abroad. He founded a school for the nobility in Radzyn. He was the author of proposals for establishing professional schools, for making the convents responsible for educational expenses of the poorest nobles, and for making compulsory education accessible to the lowest classes.

Joachim Chreptowicz, one of the King's most trusted friends, an economic and legal expert, gained the respect of the Commission for

solving the Commission's legal difficulties. He was one of the first to abolish serfdom.

Ignacy Potocki, member of a family that was the rival of the Czartoryskis, pupil of Konarski, proved indispensable to the Commission in the field of didactics and curriculum. His unlimited dedication to the Commission's cause made him a man of high civic and patriotic principles.

Andrew Zamoyski, former Grand Chancellor of the Crown, resigned his position in protest of Russia's interference in Polish internal affairs, when she kidnapped a group of Polish senators in 1767. He was the author of a progressive code of law, recommending a substantial improvement in the lot of the lower classes, which was rejected by representatives of a backward nobility. Like Chreptowicz, he introduced in his estates the principles of physiocracy, established the rent-basis of tenancy for the peasants, and founded a number of schools. He attracted a great number of people willing to work for the Commission.

Finally, Antoni Poniński, unworthy of his colleagues, was forced to resign for embezzling part of the funds which belonged to the Commission.

These people, enlightened intellectuals, holding high State offices and commanding great material means as owners of large estates, efficiently carried out the undertaken projects of reforming the schools. Although they differed in family interests, political views and ideas, they all remained true to their pledge of "friendship" and "unanimity" for the good of the Commission and of her cause.

The Commission for National Education proceeded to structure a new educational system utilizing the experience and practical achievements of the preceding period of educational modernization reflected by schools reformed by Konarski, devoid of religious character, where education was based on the principles of secular morality and social needs of the country. The new schools taught contempt for personal interest, insubordination, dissention, anarchy - all those factors responsible for the gradual destruction of the Polish Commonwealth. They taught the young nobles that there is natural equality among people, that justice is a supreme civic virtue, that it guarantees the country's law and order, and prevents social inequities.

The Commission's first public act was the Proclamation of October 24, 1773. Drafted by Gregory Piramowicz, it informed the nation of the Commission's objectives and of its members. In the name of national interest and welfare, it requested that the academic faculty work for the betterment of instruction and civic education of the Polish youth. It proclaimed that:

Henceforth, all academies, gymnasia, academic colonies, public schools, not excluding any of those educational institutions whose objective is the perfection of sciences and practice in the minds of nobiliary youth, are placed under the supervision and control of the Commission.¹³

The final paragraph of the Proclamation read:

¹³Stanisław Tync, Komisja Edukacji Narodowej - Wybór Źródeł (Commission for National Education - Documents) (Wrocław: Ossolineum 1954), p. 27.

Furthermore, we entreat them (the academic faculty) to declare to us, as they best know, their thoughts concerning the improvement of sciences, assuring them that, whatever we find in their counsel useful, indeed, to civic education, we will remain grateful and will not fail to use it.¹⁴

The Proclamation constituted the first official document of an educational magistracy in Poland, which was to bring about the transformation of traditional class education into progressive national education. The far-reaching achievement that was to be brought about by the Commission for National Education was that:

the Polish szlachta at the end of the century had been transformed into a body of well-educated and patriotic citizens with restored prestige as soldiers, men of learning and strong in every department of administrative, social and political life, destined to play a great part in the events of the next century.¹⁵

¹⁴Ibid., p. 30.

¹⁵Goodwin, The European Nobility, p. 165.

CHAPTER III

PROPOSALS OF EDUCATIONAL REFORMS AND OF NEW SECULAR EDUCATION

After the Commission for National Education had been established, its followers had hoped for a swift reform of the traditional curriculum. The members, despite their thorough intellectual background, were not prepared to work out single-handedly the main lines of reform. This is seen in the Regulations, where they earnestly sought all worthwhile pedagogical help that might be offered them, and promised to avail themselves of it, if it proved to be useful.

The thorough transformation and reconstruction of the educational system envisaged by the Commission was to be the result of a concerted effort of all the enlightened segments of the society, not of some autocratic authority. The appeal for suggestions and proposals was ample proof thereof. It met with extraordinary response on the part of many eminent pedagogues and educational theorists, and proposals started pouring in.

Among the many proposals presented, those of Antoni Popławski, Adolf Kamieński, Franciszek Bieliński, Ignacy Potocki, Prince Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski and the Frenchman, Pierre Samuel Dupont de Nemours, were the most valuable on account of their sobriety, practicality and applicability to the particular situation.

The proposal of Antoni Popławski (1739-1786) was distinguished for its thorough knowledge of educational matters and its progressive

character. Popławski -- educator, writer, economist, priest of the Piarist Order, professor of Collegium Nobilium, and advocate of physiocracy -- presented a program and methods that were innovative and prepared the ground for the reforms of the Commission for National Education. His proposal, O rozporządzeniu i wydoskonaleniu edukacji obywatelskiej (On the Organization and Perfection of Civic Education), was widely discussed by members of the Commission. Popławski, theorist and practitioner, revealed in the first part of his proposal the problems and issues concerning the general foundations of education. The second part dealt with curriculum and methodology, and the third with the role of parent and the structure of school life. He identified three types of education: physical, intellectual and moral. Although the shaping of the mind has primarily an educative character, Popławski was more concerned with the aspect of moral education, which to him was of prime importance. He saw a close relationship between customs and politics, and stressed the necessity of coordinating the process of education with the social and political climate of the country based on the principles of justice and prosperity of the people. Discussing the school subject matter, he strongly recommended those that are practical and useful to the student. Popławski's observations relating to so many timely educational topics, carefully analyzed, based on Western European and Polish educational literature, place him among the leading pedagogues of the European Enlightenment.

To begin with, Popławski considered education as a political matter, closely linked to the country's system and government. Education was the only means of acquiring individual and social well-being.

Popławski recommended teaching through senses, later through words, for the child learned first through its body and needs, later through mind and morality. By means of experience acquired through observation the child obtained the first pieces of information. Later he or she analyzes and rationalizes. Popławski also substantiated the need for moral education, which consisted in teaching the child an honest attitude toward people, the respect for property and for personal freedom.¹ An important factor within moral education was to early accustom the child to work so that it could become a natural habit. It was furthermore important to explain to the child that whatever he receives from the parents -- food, shelter, clothing, is not because he deserves it, but because he works for it.²

The teaching of morality was to prepare the citizen to fulfill properly his everyday life responsibilities. Religion, on the other hand, was to serve his after-life needs. The latter one, instead of teaching dogmas and abstract concepts, should teach the proper cooperation of the individual with his entourage and environment, it should teach to perform one's duties, and to have a kind attitude for people. The teaching of religion was to be synonymous with lay teaching of morality. The only difference was that its motives would be spiritual.

¹Antoni Popławski, Pisma pedagogiczne (Pedagogical Works) ed. S. Tync (Wrocław: Biblioteka Klasyków Pedagogiki, 1957), pp. 21-22.

²Ibid., pp. 26-28.



Popławski recommended three types of schools: small schools (parochial), public schools (secondary) and four central schools (universities). The small school resembled today's elementary school. Its purpose was to furnish the child with the necessary educational bases and to prepare the gifted to continue further their studies in higher schools. Popławski courageously broke the barrier of tradition which divided people according to the principle that made education a function of duty and obligation, making it separate for the children of each estate. He abolished it asserting that it was totally wrong to assign one type of school to any particular child and to forbid him to pass to another on the basis of his parents' social origin. It was imperative that each child have free access to all schools. The only legitimate barrier could be the lack of talent.³

Popławski recommended that up-to-date textbooks be published for each subject matter. The manuals were to be carefully prepared, adapted to the child's vocabulary and mentality. He urged to prepare two versions of the textbooks, one for the student, the other for the teacher, containing the necessary didactic and methodological suggestions. This innovation was a great step forward in pedagogy.

The public or secondary school would accept any student with two years of small school attendance and would last eight years, from ages ten to eighteen. In the domain of liberal arts Popławski urged, in addition to rhetoric and Latin of the traditional curriculum, the teaching

³Popławski, Pisma pedagogiczne, p. 40.

of Polish history, geography, political economy, morality, political statutes of Poland, statutes of other nations and laws of nature. In the domain of sciences, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, agronomy, horticulture, zoology, anatomy and physics were to be part of the curriculum. The teaching of morality deserved special attention as it was most influential for the education of a good citizen, patriot and political activist.⁴

The school and faculty was to be an extension of the home and it would be their duty to clarify to the children their responsibilities toward their parents and their immediate entourage and environment. Another characteristic trait of Popławski's proposal was his belief that the secondary school not only had to offer general education, but to spark their interest in the domain of intellect.

Adolf Kamiński (1737-1784) in his proposal Edukacja obywatelska (Civic Education) recommended a system where work would be everybody's duty. For him the nation's wealth consisted of the income of each individual citizen. His ardent desire to make education universal and accessible to all citizens, regardless of their origin or financial base, was the driving force behind his proposal. Stated succinctly in Kamiński's own words: "All owe their country their life and possessions, and the country owes them education, protection and security."⁵

⁴Popławski, Pisma pedagogiczne, p. 25.

⁵Adolf Kamiński, Edukacja obywatelska (Civic Education) (Warsaw: 1774), p. 81.

Kamieński considered it quite natural to direct the gifted peasant children into secondary and higher schools, or to direct them into the teaching profession or other institutions serving the country. In his opinion Kamieński was ahead of similar theories which, in the rest of Europe, surfaced toward the middle of the nineteenth century. An improvement to Konarski's reform was the suggestion to curtail considerably the teaching of Latin which he considered of little practical value and use. A bold recommendation of Kamieński's was that the school take charge of the education of poor nobility, the gifted peasant and the middle-class youth, by preparing them for the teaching profession, the military, commerce or industry. The most original part of Kamieński's proposal was that in which he demanded the establishment of compulsory school attendance for all secondary school graduates, and directing them to special interim vocational schools. Seeing how complex the new social conditions were, he recommended that the Commission create a system that would be useful to the whole country. He saw a definite role for the farmer, the merchant, the soldier. There was, however, no place for the szlachta in Kamieński's prediction for the future. The social structure he envisaged consisted of close cooperation of all segments of the population. Finally, Kamieński warned that if Poland did not carry out a thorough reform of its social system the country will fall.⁶

⁶Kamieński, Edukacja obywatelska, p. 161.

Franciszek Bieliński (1740-1809), author of Sposób edukacji w XV listach opisany (Method of Education in XV Letters Described), was the first to send the Commission his proposal. He enthusiastically recommended a State supported and controlled educational system for both public and private schools, and, for the first time in Poland, demanded universal education, arguing that all people have a natural right to it. This education, however, ought to have a class character and should be adapted to the way of life and activity of each estate. Schooling was to be separate for peasants, the middle class, the nobility and clergy -- all within the realm of universal education. The seven-year secondary school accessible only to the nobility was further subdivided into a three-year school of languages, and a four-year school of mathematics and natural sciences. According to Bieliński's proposal next to the three foreign languages, Polish, for the first time in history, would become in addition to being a subject matter, the language of instruction. The nationalization of schools of all levels in regard to Polish was, in the enlightened circles, so much a matter of fact that the Commission did not even deem it necessary to justify officially this tremendously important turning point in Polish education. Bieliński further emphasized the importance of modern languages and a utilitarian curriculum.⁷

⁷Stanisław Tync, Komisja Edukacji Narodowej (Commission for National Education) (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1954), pp. 146-149.

Ignacy Potocki (1750-1809) in his Myśl o edukacji i instrukcji w Polsce ustanowić się mającej (A Thought on Education and Instruction to be Instituted in Poland) stresses the importance of securing the educational system with the proper material base and of winning over the hostile segment of the parent population. In his Zdanie o szkołach i naukach (Opinion on Schools and Sciences) Potocki presents his curriculum and discusses the significance of subject matter. His proposal attaches great importance to sound and up-to-date textbooks based on the most recent pedagogical achievements. Learning should resemble play, something both Pestalozzi and Froebel recommended at a later period. Potocki saw the possibility of improving education on condition that the Commission for National Education have full authority over educational funds and the appointment of its commissioners. Potocki recommended a tri-level educational hierarchy: elementary, secondary and higher schools. He discusses the school hierarchy and a number of pedagogical matters. Potocki finally recommends the creation of an educational body of experts responsible for the preparation and publication of uniform manuals for all schools, and proposes the elaboration of school statutes.

Prince Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski (1734-1823) in his Przestrogi (Admonitions) professes the principle of equality of all people, but at the same time stresses the leading role of the nobility responsible for the destiny of the Polish Commonwealth. His proposal is important primarily for the twenty four commandments relating to the homeland. There he discusses the responsibility of children toward parents, toward the other classes and the mother country.

The three proposals submitted by the Frenchman, Pierre Samuel Dupont de Nemours (1739-1817) in his Education Nationale (National Education),⁸ stressed, in addition to education, key social and military aspects. These proposals will be discussed in Chapter XI, where a comparison of Dupont's recommendations for the Polish Commonwealth and the United States of America is offered and analyzed.

⁸Pierre Samuel Dupont de Nemours, Education Nationale (National Education) (Biblioteka im. Czartoryskich, Kraków, manuscript number 818).

CHAPTER IV

THE SOCIETY FOR ELEMENTARY TEXTBOOKS

From its very beginning the Commission for National Education was perfectly familiar with the academic and organizational level of the post-Jesuit schools. The outdated curricula of the Jesuit and other secondary schools reflected the discrepancy between what was offered and what was needed. The two universities of the Commonwealth, those of Kraków and Wilno, were in a sorry state of decline. With the suppression of the Jesuit Order the Jesuit curriculum lost its authority. The Commission had a clear view of the difficulties related to educational aspects. The difficulties consisted in the lack of qualified pedagogues and specialists capable of writing and editing new textbooks that could satisfactorily do justice to the new curriculum. Ignacy Potocki, on May 14, 1774, came up with a proposal for creating in Warsaw a Pedagogical Academy with the purpose of implementing and popularizing an education decreed by the Commission. He recommended the following people for the Pedagogical Academy: Gregory Piramowicz, Jan Albertrandi and the Frenchman, César Pyrrus de Varille, author of the Réflexions politiques sur la Pologne (Political Reflexions on Poland) 1772, and of a treatise on the education of the Polish noble.¹

¹T. Wierzbowski, ed., Protokoły posiedzeń Komisji Edukacji Narodowej (Minutes of Meetings of the Commission for National Education) (Warszawa: 1910-1915), no. 37, p. 19.

The concern with the level of instruction, expressed at each session of the Commission, was manifested further by the unrealistic proposal of Prince Czartoryski to establish a Teachers College in Paris, France, funded by the Commission.²

The Commission was hard pressed when at the beginning of the 1774/75 academic year news arrived of the shortage of textbooks and qualified teachers, necessary to fulfill the Commission's injunctions. A fact, characteristic of the Commission, is that, in its worst predicament, when it could easily suffer disaster, it categorically refused any foreign assistance. A brief note of the Minutes of the Commission for National Education reveals that, when chairman Ignacy Massalski addressed the Commission's secretary Pierre Samuel Dupont de Nemours seeking information on the cost of bringing from Paris textbooks and teachers, the majority of the commissioners took a negative stand and made the necessity of developing a love for pedagogy among Poles imperative. As an incentive and to encourage the writing of textbooks, the Commission promised remuneration and awards.³

The advice, instructions, and directions relating to the organization of a new, lay Polish school contained in the many proposals were taken into account when the new school regulations, pedagogical principles and modern methodology were being elaborated. The commissioners, however, realized that their bold aspirations surpassed their possibilities. Nonetheless they were able to legislate the main guidelines of

²Ibid., p. 27.

³Ibid., p. 49.

educational transformation, attract influential people, and secure the king's full support. Aware of their shortcomings in pedagogy proper, the decision was reached to establish an executive organ of the Commission for National Education-- the Society for Elementary Textbooks, Towarzystwo do Ksiąg Elementarnych, which was called into existence on February 10, 1775, and was made responsible for all matters relating to educational reforms. In all its actions the Society was responsible to the Commission for National Education. Ignacy Potocki became its chairman, and Gregory Piramowicz its secretary. Its prime objective was the writing, editing and publication of modern textbooks for both secondary and elementary schools. It soon became the actual Ministry of Education, without whose opinion and advice the Commission would not proceed to make any decisions. The following became active members of the Society for Elementary Textbooks: Gregory Piramowicz, Jan Albertrandi, Joseph Koblanski, Adam Jakukiewicz, Gregory Kniaziewicz -- all ex-Jesuits; Antoni Popławski, Piarist; Casimir Narbutt, Piarist; Szczepan Hołłowczyc, priest; Christian Pfleiderer, director of Knights' School; Hugo Kołłontaj; Felix Łoyko; Joseph Wybicki; Andrew Gawroński, ex-Jesuit; Joseph Bogucicki, professor of Kraków University; Stefan Roussel, ex-Jesuit; Sebastian Sierakowski, canon of Kraków; Jan Dubois, librarian and professor of Knights' School; Humphrey Kopczyński, Piarist; Paul Czempiński, medical doctor; Simon L'Huillier; Francis Zabłocki, poet; Simon Piattoli; Felix Oraczewski.⁴ It can readily be noticed that the majority of the Society's members were church people.

⁴Tync, Komisja, pp. 70-71.

The nineteen-year activity of the Society for Elementary Textbooks can be divided into five periods contained by dates significant of events that precipitated or retarded the progress and development of the Society. The dates 1776, 1780, and 1788 stand for important Sejm (Parliament) sessions, and 1783 refers to the proclamation of the Statutes of the Commission for National Education.

The first period (1775-1776) is characterized by the establishment of educational objectives, the selection of subject matter, the organization of textbook operation and by a vigorous defense against the hostile attacks of the backward, conservative elements. The 1776 Sejm session made the Commission victorious in that it was finally given official and legal authority over post-Jesuit estates, endowments and assets.

The second period (1776-1780) is an especially productive one for the Society due to the rise of favorable circumstances. The Society worked out and published a number of textbooks, set up school plans and conducted a number of school inspections. Many outstanding people joined the Society in this period.

The third period (1780-1784) begun with the defeat in Sejm of the progressive Zamoyski Code, retarded the further publication effort of the textbooks and checked the development of the reform of curricula. The outstanding event of this period is the publication in 1783 of the famous Statutes of the Commission for National Education.

The fourth period (1784-1788) brought an economic revival and a reinforcement in the interest for practical knowledge in agriculture,

commerce, industry and mining. This in turn created favorable circumstances for the activity of the Society. People started to accept more and more the fact that schools were to serve the social and economic needs of the country. The Society doubled its efforts in the elaboration and publication of textbooks, especially those intended for elementary schools.

The fifth period (1788-1794) coincides with the Four-Year Sejm, known in history as the Great. To secure the passage of reforms and to promote a sound foreign policy, it was organized into a confederation.⁵ Joined by the King, the Sejm had attracted a great many members of the Commission and the Society for Elementary Textbooks-- men with high ideals devoted to the national cause. For the Society this was the least productive period of all. Deprived of leadership and of its active members, the Society fell when "at Moscow's instigation, a few Polish magnates in 1792 formed the Confederacy of Targowica, turning to Catherine the Great for protection against the 'tyranny' of the Diet which threatened Polish 'golden freedom' and gave a death blow to an institution that was the brain behind the educational reform in Poland."⁶

⁵To escape the pernicious effects of the liberum veto, Polish ingenuity had developed the institution of the Confederation. A Sejm could be temporarily converted into a Confederate Sejm making the liberum veto inoperative, where the decision of the majority prevailed.

⁶Milosz, The History of Polish Literature, p. 166.

The program of the Society for Elementary Textbooks brought about a radical change in the existing system of education. The condition for the implementation of this modern and revolutionary educational transformation was to be found in the right textbooks. This was to be the Society's primary task. Its other responsibilities were: the elaboration of curriculum, educational legislation and the propagation of the Commission's objectives.

Among the members of the Society, Gregory Peramowicz (1735-1801) was its heart, soul and mastermind. Writer, reformer, pedagogue, Piramowicz, an ex-Jesuit, deprecated the Jesuit educational system, and was an intransigent advocate of extending education to all classes, particularly the lower ones. He saw the responsibility of the Polish school toward the szlachta, the middle class and the peasants. During the entire term of the Commission for National Education (1773-1794), Piramowicz served as its secretary, held the post of school inspector, and, in the years 1775-1787, was also secretary of the Society for Elementary Textbooks. After the failure of the Kościuszko Insurrection of 1794, Piramowicz left for Germany. Upon his return to Kraków, he was imprisoned by the Austrians and died a year after being released.

This prodigiously prolific and active reformer, together with Ignacy Potocki and Hugo Kołłontaj, reformer of higher education, was the actual mastermind behind all reforms and innovations of the Commission, and its branch, the Society. His consistent and unyielding struggle to inspire the szlachta with an understanding for the necessity of

economy, and to direct their interest to natural and mathematical sciences, was dictated by his fervent desire to demonstrate the tremendous benefits that these would bring for both the citizen and the country.

The Society for Elementary Textbooks was responsible for preparing the ground for educational reform, and for laying the foundations of an altogether revolutionary program of teaching, training, and upbringing. Its goal was to transform the Pole into a knowledgeable and entrepreneurial citizen involved in the affairs of the State and of the economy. This entailed a consistent enlightenment of the szlachta and a consistent struggle for effecting a change in its mentality, so it could, with full understanding, support the educational endeavor of the Commission.

The Society worked for a curriculum which geared civic education to the existing development of sciences. A balance in instruction between sciences and humanities was to be characteristic of the new curriculum. For the first time natural sciences were introduced, and a wide basis was given to the rudiments of medicine and hygiene. The transformation and reorganization of curricula pointed to new values in instruction which were to be reflected in up-to-date, brand-new, modern textbooks.

In its arrangement of school subject matter, the Society based it on Francis Bacon's classification of sciences which broke it, according to the characteristics of the human mind, into memory, reason and imagination, to which corresponded the three domains of knowledge: history, philosophy and poetry.

The success of the reformed curriculum would depend on appropriate textbooks which, so far, were non-existent. The Proclamation Regarding the Writing of Elementary Textbooks for Provincial Schools (Obwieszczenie względem napisania książek elementarnych do szkół wojewódzkich) which explained and clarified the assumptions, objectives and the program of a thoroughly reformed Polish school, attracted Polish and foreign scientists and scholars. The Latin translation of the Proclamation sent to these scholars prompted their eager involvement in the discussion on the new Polish ideas of educating, teaching and upbringing the young generation of all three estates in both theory and practice. The Polish project reached beyond the frontiers of the Commonwealth, and the matter assumed a supra-national importance. The representatives of the educational and scientific circles in Paris, Berlin, Mannheim and Leipzig circulated copies of the Proclamation into other countries and thus disseminated the Polish educational undertakings.

Among the scholars who enthusiastically responded were: Jean Phillippe de Limbourg, member of the London and Paris Medical Association; Jean Alexis Borelly, professor of the Berlin Knights' Academy; Jean Henri Formey, secretary of the Berlin Academy; Andrew Lamey, member of the Mannheim Academy of Sciences; Charles Andrew Bel, director of the Actorum Lipsiensium. The French philosophers: d'Alembert, Condorcet, Rousseau and Condillac took active interest in the

Commission's enterprise, and for many years remained in close contact with its members.⁷

The foregoing scholars expressed their unreserved admiration for the unparalleled educational undertakings of the Commission, something no other country in Europe dared undertake. They were astonished to see these radical educational reforms taking place in a country that was not only one of the most backward nations economically, but which in a visible way, was being steadily annihilated by the three Partitioning Powers, and was doomed to lose her political sovereignty and Statehood within two decades.

The cooperation with foreign scholars demonstrates the Society's open and democratic approach. These scholars not only participated in supplying the Commission with suggestions and comments, but also actively were involved in the preparation of school textbooks itself. The Society decided to entrust foreign scholars with the writing of textbooks relating to non-Polish matters.

Etienne Bonnot de Condillac (1715-1780), the eminent French Sensationalist philosopher, commissioned by the Society, wrote a handbook of logic for Polish national schools. In a letter addressed to Potocki, the Society's chairman, Condillac responded:

Indeed, how can I refuse to work for a nation whose destiny should be of concern to each one who in these times can say to possess a soul characterized by good citizenship. As to the recompense, I have already received it: it is for me the summons of the Illustrious Commission, it is your letter. If I succeed, I shall say that

⁷Władysław Tatarkiewicz, Historia filozofii (History of Philosophy) (Warsaw: 1970), vol. 2, p. 185.

you have commissioned this work, that you have praised and accepted it, that it was useful. What else can I wish? Is it not evident for free nations that the finest of all rewards is to serve them?⁸

The French naturalists Jean Philippe Carosi and Jean Baptiste Dubois worked out an outline of natural history, the Swiss mathematician Simon L'Huillier wrote textbooks of arithmetic, algebra and geometry, the French economist Etienne de Rieule wrote a handbook of agricultural economics.

The elaboration of textbooks with subject matter relating to Polish and domestic matters, such as culture, history and the Polish language, was entrusted to Polish scholars. The following were among the most active members of the Society: Jan Albertrandi, an ex-Jesuit, contributed a textbook of Polish history and an agricultural work where he presented ways of improving Polish agriculture, and alleviating the plight of the peasant. Gregory Kniaziewicz, an ex-Jesuit and mathematician, served in the fields of history, economics and mathematics. Antoni Popławski, after Piramowicz, held the second most important position in the Society. Author of one of the more important proposals of a national system of education, of a significant proposal on civic education, and a textbook on moral education, became one of the most respected Polish educators. Casimir Narbutt published in 1769 the first textbook of logic in Poland, elementary school regulations and school inspection instructions. Szczepan Hołłowczyc, future primate of Poland, worked out the administrative regulations for schools.

⁸Tync, Komisja, p. clviii.

Christian Pfeiderer, director of studies at the Warsaw Knights' School, was the only Protestant member of the Society. The fact that a Protestant scholar was able to work on education in a Catholic group was a sign of progress made by Polish religious society, as compared to the backward traditionalism and religious fanaticism of the not so distant "Saxon Period". A further sign of progress was the Commission's decisions of 1774 to entrust Catholics and Protestants with the direction of schools for students of both religions.⁹

Hugo Kołłontaj took charge of the organization of higher schools and of the professional teaching class. The Society could especially take pride in such textbooks as Humphrey Kopczyński's excellent textbook on Polish grammar, Antoni Popławski's handbook of moral science for national elementary schools, and Gregory Piramowicz's Teacher's Duties (Powinności nauczyciela), a handbook for elementary school teachers, one of the first in Europe.

The Society placed high demands on both contents and methodology of each textbook. This, in turn, made the job long and meticulous. The evaluation itself of incoming outlines and proposals was undergoing a number of stages ranging from group assessment to individual examination by competent professionals. There were four basic requirements for the writers of textbooks: (1) they had to be written in Polish (those written by foreign authors were translated into Polish), (2) the contents of the textbook had to be practically useful in every day

⁹Kurdybacha, Komisja, pp. 122-123.

life and to the society, (3) the textbook's prime objective was to teach to think, not to list or enumerate truisms, accepted maxims and slogans, and finally, (4) the textbook had to be adapted to the student's mentality so that he would want to refer to other sources and be able to undertake further research.

Until 1782, the year when the Kraków Academy took charge of the editing and printing of textbooks, most of the textbooks were printed by the well-established and famous editor and printer, Michael Groll. Out of twenty-seven textbooks edited and printed by the Society for Elementary Textbooks, twenty-two were carefully researched and written by Polish scholars.

The members of the Society conscientiously studied public opinion, the needs of citizens, the school and school reports -- all of which became an excellent basis for the drafting of a document of the utmost importance, the Statutes of the Commission for National Education (Ustawy Komisji Edukacji Narodowej) published in 1783. Gregory Piramowicz was indeed right when he saw Popławski as the author of these Statutes. The job of codifying lasted six months. Piramowicz edited the didactic matters, Koźłontaj a number of aspects concerning university education and the state of pedagogy. It was again Piramowicz, the secretary of the Society, who developed Popławski's project, and gave the Statutes its final version.

The Commission's key document, The Statutes of the Commission for National Education Written for the Faculty and Schools of the States of the Polish Commonwealth (Ustawy Komisji Edukacji Narodowej dla stanu akademickiego i na szkoły w krajach Rzeczypospolitej przepisane),

published in 1783, are impressive for the wealth of didactic, administrative, educational and legal questions considered. The Statutes definitively established the curriculum and the pragmatic teaching methodology. By these Statutes, also, all Polish schools were organized on the same principles according to an administrative ladder which connected all grades of the unified educational system. According to the reorganized administration elementary schools were directed by District School Headmasters, District Schools by Provincial School Rectors, and the latter by the Rector of the university of their State: University of Kraków for the Crown (Poland proper) and University of Wilno for the Principality (Lithuania).

The formation of a framework for new schools and society strikes with deep humanitarianism, progressivism and an open patriotic awareness. The Commission, undertaking the transformation and reorganization of education in the Polish Commonwealth, pointed to new liberalizing civic and patriotic values of instruction contained in brand new, totally practical modern textbooks.

The first task of the Society was to decide which subject of study should become part of the curriculum taught in the schools of the Commonwealth. Only an education that was useful and practical for the country would allow the youth of the nation to serve it efficiently. Therefore, the basis for selection of subject matter was a function of pragmatic usefulness in both public and individual life.

The Commission took into consideration the multi-religious and multi-national composition of the Polish Commonwealth, and in its Statutes of 1783 ordered that in the regions of the Commonwealth inhabited

by Byelorussian and Ukranian population, children should be taught the Old Slavonic language, and those inhabited by Lithuanians - taught Lithuanian. This demonstrates that the Commission did not tend to denationalize the young of other ethnic groups. It was difficult to encounter in eighteenth century Europe similar examples of democratic tolerance for other nationalities. It was a curiously interesting fact that, in a Francophile Poland, the Commission recommended the teaching of French at the university level only.

The Society now demonstrated its utilitarian approach to education and curriculum in a more decisive way than ever before. Each subject, before it was included in the curriculum, was examined for its practicality and utility to every day life, in agriculture, in trade and in industry. Each subject matter was also examined from the angle of national utility. Biology, mineralogy, mining, the practical application of chemistry and physics-- all were looked upon as powerful and potential developers of Polish economy.

The Society for Elementary Textbooks recommended that authors be constantly aware of the fact that these textbooks are written for young students, and that contents and methodology of the textbooks should be adapted to the intellectual and mental level of the student. Teaching was to be based on the inductive method and was to proceed from the simple to the complex, from the easy to the difficult and from the concrete to the abstract.

When the Society issued its Proclamation Regarding the Writing of Elementary Textbooks for the Provincial Schools, its most vital and ever valid recommendation was that the textbook be divided into two

parts: the first part, reserved for the student, the second, containing advice and didactic pointers, for the teacher.

As the responsibilities imposed on the Society grew with time, a slowdown in the preparation and publication of textbooks became evident. This was due to the myriad of other responsibilities that the Commission placed upon the Society. These other responsibilities included the coordination of all the educational matters relating to the tri-level educational hierarchy. The Commission's Statutes, the legal basis for the Society for Elementary Textbooks, proved to be an exceedingly bold and innovative set of rules and regulations reflecting the most progressive educational achievements which no other European country of the time possessed. These Statutes have formally created a legal base for the teaching profession, placing it high in the public opinion as one of the most needed, respected and useful professions in the Commonwealth, remunerated by the State. The teacher was made aware of the tremendous responsibility of his professional qualifications, of staying abreast of new teaching methods and of imbibing his students with patriotic feelings. We can understand the preeminence of his role when we realize that the preservation of the country's political sovereignty and the modernization of all its sectors of life was understood to be the function of the teacher's efficient pedagogical activity in upbringing a patriotic generation. The Statutes finally created a robust modern system of school administration by the State, based on a school hierarchy with definite competency for each educational level. Consistent school supervision was established, and eminent pedagogues

and practitioners were entrusted with the implementation of all the measures relating to the unprecedented educational reforms of the Commission for National Education, and of its executive organ, the Society for Elementary Textbooks.¹⁰

¹⁰Kurdybacha, Komisja, p. 138.

CHAPTER V

REFORM OF PAROCHIAL ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

The prime concern of Polish reformers was the strengthening of the Commonwealth, which, in their understanding, could be effected through a consistent modernization and intensified economic development. The program of economic modernization called for the necessary theoretical and practical education for both those in charge of the organization of such instruction and those directly involved in the production process itself. The latter consisted of a large body of peasants and, to a lesser degree, of the middle class. Although the Commission for National Education was initially concerned with the education of the nobiliary segment of the population, it did not, however, neglect the far more complicated problem of educating and upbringing the middle-class and peasant population. The belief that an educated middle class and peasantry with knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic, together with the fundamentals of agricultural knowledge, would raise the capacity for work and output, and would speed up the conversion of the corvee into tenancy, brought a genuine interest in the education of the country and town masses. Although the proposals of education for the people differed in scope and details, they all shared the consensus of establishing it in the shortest time possible. The Commission set out to organize an elementary school system called, at the time, parochial.

The organization of a national elementary school system was indeed a novel undertaking. Among the many difficulties working against such an enterprise were (1) a complete lack of experience, or any precedence, in this domain, (2) widespread hostility on the part of the szlachta to educating peasants, based on the assumption that, enlightened peasantry would want to avoid the corvee responsibilities, (3) a total lack of funds for elementary education, and (4) an almost total lack of teacher cadres.

The Commission, however, could avail itself of some propitious factors which manifested themselves in Western European philosophy, and could use its theoretical and practical achievements when it was organizing the foundations of education for the people. The Lockean "tabula rasa" theory afforded the belief that, people belonging to the lower classes were just as capable of learning as were the elite nobility. The most decisive factor that helped convince the Polish society was the already mentioned physiocratic doctrine, which considered agriculture to be the foundation of the country's prosperity and welfare. Physiocracy further demonstrated that an industrious and wealthy farmer is more useful to the State, than a discouraged and despondent one. The condition, however, for a peasant becoming wealthy was to be found in the necessary educational training. Education would bring the peasant farmer order, productivity and security. The famous French physiocrat, Nicolas Baudeau, who spent some time in Poland as guest of Ignacy Massalski, was thoroughly interested in the Commission's venture,

and upon his return to France translated and popularized many of its publications and ideas.¹ He compared the State that was not based on education to a pyramid resting on its top. In addition to improving the process of production, the economy needed healthy individuals. The ruling class, therefore, demanded higher health standards among the poorer classes and the dissemination of knowledge pertaining to physical education and hygiene.

In addition to the foregoing support, the Commission found a favorable base in the fact that parishes did have schools of its kind, and that a certain material base was to be found in the form of grounds and buildings. There were also isolated individual experiments of some wealthy szlachta and magnates in extending education to the people. All this created a favorable climate for educational reform, which, in conjunction with the country's overall tendency to economic and political transformation, made the reformers' job a lot easier.² In these circumstances the Commission decided to organize elementary education with the participation of monastic teachers, and, temporarily, solved the question of training elementary school teachers. Before the monks would assume this responsibility, the Pope's permission was necessary,

¹Tadeusz Mizia, Szkolnictwo parafialne w czasach Komisji Edukacji Narodowej (Parochial Education at the Time of the Commission for National Education) (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1964), p. 13.

²Ibid., p. 51-53.

and in December 1773, the Commission addressed a memorial to Garampi, the papal nuncio in Warsaw. The Commission stressed the fact that the new elementary schools would work according to the Commission's reformed curriculum and would be adapted to the lay needs of the nation.³

The memorial presented to Garampi contained three basic points: (1) it expressed the Commission's wish to establish elementary schools next to every monastery, (2) it demanded that monks be prepared to travel, should the need arise, and, finally, (3) it recommended that depopulated monasteries be turned into girls' schools.⁴ Garampi was against monks teaching school which propagated progressive, lay ideals, and was hostile to the fact that monks were to fulfill the Commission's regulations. He was also against turning convents and monasteries into girls' schools, and wanted to retain supervision over all schools taught by monks. In his letter to the Pope, Garampi suggested that the Pontiff give his permission on condition that the nuncio have a decisive voice in the Commission's affairs.⁵

The Commission, eagerly awaiting the Pope's response, forwarded

³T. Wierzbowski, ed., Protokoły posiedzeń Komisji Edukacji Narodowej (Minutes of the Commission for National Education) (Warsaw: 1910), p. 9.

⁴Ż. Kurdybacha, Kuria Rzymska wobec Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w latach 1773-1783 (The Roman Curia and the Commission for National Education) (Kraków: 1949), p. 25.

⁵Ibid., pp. 27-28.

a second memorial on January 14, 1774, reiterating its request.⁶ When no answer came, the Commission decided to act on its own, and, as the first step, Massalski promised to set up in the Wilno diocese one school for every three parishes. He was furthermore instructed to work out rules and regulations for the proposed elementary school system.⁷

Three tendencies can be distinguished in the body of proposals relating to elementary education. The first recommended to gear it to the needs of the indigent szlachta, the second to the needs of the middle class and peasants, and the third, to the needs of children of all three classes. Otherwise, all tendencies shared the consensus that church should be deprived of its influence over this particular education, that it be entirely State directed and controlled, and that educational objectives be geared to lay values and national needs.

The following three regulations are indicative of these tendencies. Ignacy Massalski's Code for Elementary Schools (Przepis do szkół elementarnych) of 1774, Prince Michael Poniatowski's Regulations for Elementary Schools (Przepisy dla szkół parafialnych) of 1780, and the twenty-second chapter of the Commission's Statutes of 1783 entitled Parochial Schools (Szkoly parafialne).

The Commission, in its initial enthusiasm, intended to set up 2500 parochial schools for all three estates, maintained by the governmental educational fund.⁸ The lack of necessary funds, however,

⁶T. Wierzbowski, Protokoły, p. 12.

⁷Wierzbowski, ed., Protokoły, p. 16.

⁸Mizia, Szkolnictwo parafialne, p. 51.

prevented the Commission from carrying out its initial plans, and although it had to seek assistance from church authorities and wealthy landowners, it did not abandon its initial concept of an elementary school that was to be the first degree foundation in a tri-level educational hierarchy of the Polish Commonwealth. Its most valuable ideological achievement was the regulation stipulating equal treatment of students regardless of their class affiliation.⁹

Ignacy Massalski in his Code for Elementary Schools, which is more of a didactic than curricular nature, anticipated the creation of Teacher Colleges and insisted on a period of special training for teachers as a condition and first step in their career, whether it be elementary, secondary or university education. Massalski recommended that the Commission give its special attention to parochial schools and primary education, for it constitutes the most formative period in the child's upbringing, and the impressions that it receives then will form his future thought and behavior patterns. He further stressed the importance of home, making it equally important with school, as an educational agency. He recommended physical hardening, and attached great importance to plays and games which develop the child's sensorimotor skills. Finally, the child's character and moral attitude were to be developed from his very early years. Reading, writing and arithmetic were to be taught through the object-lesson

⁹J. Lewicki, ed., Przepis do szkół parafialnych (Code for Elementary Schools) (Kraków: 1925), p. 21.

method in a visual and demonstrative way. The child was to start school at age five. His education was to last twelve years. The Code insisted on social equality, admitting intellectual difference as the only source of inequality.¹⁰

The papal brief that reached Warsaw in August 1774 in response to the Commission's memorial acknowledged the monks' importance for education, and recommended their involvement in the Commission's parochial school system. It passed over in silence, however, the Commission's request of establishing girls' schools in monasteries. Garampi promised to circulate the papal brief together with his own letter in every monastery. His letter, written in the form of an appeal, not of order, weakened the intentions of the papal brief, and left the elementary school matter entirely to the discretion of monastic authorities. The Commission's plans of recruiting teachers from among the monks were thus only partially carried out.¹¹

Of the many monastic orders, only the Basilians and the Piarists responded favorably to the nuncio's letter, as did a number of Jesuits -- members of the Commission and the Society for Elementary Textbooks. All remaining orders took a negative attitude to an involvement in the enterprise of parochial education. Such stand was taken by the Cameldolite order. The two most frequent excuses were that monastic regulations forbade teaching school, and that there were no qualified candidates for this position. When Massalski submitted to Garampi

¹⁰Lewicki, ed., Przepis do szkół parafialnych, pp. 12-21.

¹¹Kurdybacha, Kuria rzymska, pp. 27-29.

the Cameldolite response, the nuncio prevailed upon the Cameldolites to open a number of parochial schools. This was the nuncio's only known intercession in favor of the Commission.

The Commission stood firm and did not relinquish its plans of developing the parochial school network. It wanted to include in its system not only the Polish segment of the population, but also the Ukranian, Byelorussian and Lithuanian ones. It therefore decreed on September 14, 1774 that parochial schools be established in these states of the Commonwealth.¹² The Old Slavonic and Lithuanian was to be taught in these schools. The Commission also instructed its secretary, Dupont de Nemours, to work out a parochial school manual.¹³ The final achievement of this period was the proposal, approved by the Commission, to establish a Teachers College in Wilno for parochial school teachers. It would educate and train fifty candidates yearly, recruited from among the peasants, the middle class and the szlachta.¹⁴

The Commission started to put pressure on Garampi asking him for a formal order to be given to all monastic congregations in the Commonwealth, obligating them to turn over buildings, and designate a contingent of monks for parochial school teaching activity. Garampi's refusal to take any positive action on behalf of the parish school cause prompted the Commission to make one final appeal to the Pope,

¹²Wierzbowski, ed., Protokoły, p. 32.

¹³Ibid., p. 34.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 47-48.

requesting him to issue a formal injunction in this matter. The Pope answered by responding that he issued such an order to Garampi, and that he would reiterate it to Garampi's successor, Archetti, with a request that the latter reexamine it again. Archetti, also, took a passive stand.¹⁵

A sincere concern for the Commission's enterprise was demonstrated by the majority of Polish bishops, who stood up to the nuncio's attempts to thwart the Commission's effort at educational reform. It is necessary to point out that, at that particular time, the Polish society was divided into patriots and opportunists, rather than into laymen and clergymen. After three official and unsuccessful attempts at winning over the Church to its all-national cause, the Commission abandoned further effort in this matter, and decided to work on the parochial school system without the assistance of the church. At the same time, a sizeable group of magnates, theoretically favorable to the elementary school cause, demonstrated their reluctance and hostility when it came to funding such schools.

Prince Michael Poniatowski's Regulations for Elementary Schools of 1780 reflect a nobiliary-middle-class character. The broadening of the curriculum favorable to the middle class indicates the importance which this class was rapidly acquiring in the society. This demanded that schools, responsible for the education of the middle class, raise their teaching standards. The large body of petty szlachta, for whom

¹⁵Kurdybacha, Kuria rzymska, pp. 33-34.

Latin was an attribute of power and authority, demonstrated its hostility to removing it from the curriculum. The reintroduction, therefore, of Latin was dictated by the Commission's fervent desire of winning over to its side these masses of szlachta. The defeat of the Zamoyski Code¹⁶ at the Sejm of 1780, constituted a turning point in the Commission's overall attitude toward elementary education. Facing the necessity of compromise the Commission wanted to solve the matter by creating a fund for the education of children of the petty szlachta, who would be taught in free boarding schools, reserving the parochial school for the children of the middle class and the peasants only.

The foregoing attempt at organizing elementary education brought about a radical change in the curriculum. From a general one, preparing for secondary education, the curriculum was transformed into a practical one, combining elements of general education with those of professional education, stressing commerce, crafts and agriculture. Physical education and hygiene became an integral part of it. Its structure and character is reflected in the Commission's twenty-second chapter of the Statutes of 1783 entitled Parochial Schools (Szkoły

¹⁶Zamoyski Code (Kodeks Zamoyskiego) was a proposal of legal reforms by Andrew Zamoyski, ex-chancellor of the Polish Crown, containing proposals for the improvement of the legal status of peasants through the reduction of serfdom, for the strengthening of the middle class and towns, proposals of introduction of modern commercial and industrial procedures, and demanded greater freedom from Rome by weakening the State's dependence upon the Vatican. The Zamoyski Code was an attempt at legalizing the nascent nobiliary-middle-class compromise, and reflected the developing economic and social transformation of the Commonwealth.

parafialne). All efforts devoted to the parochial school matter tended to work out a unified program and system of parochial schools.

Unlike Ignacy Massalski's Regulations for Parochial Schools which anticipated one school in every parish for nobiliary, middle-class and peasant children, the Statutes of 1783, although equally concerned with burgher and peasant education, divided the elementary school into two separate schools: the greater school (*szkoła większa*) and the smaller school (*szkoła mniejsza*). The first one reflected a broader curriculum and was intended for the middle-class children, the second one, with a less extensive curriculum, for the peasant children. The Statutes made no mention of elementary education for the children of the nobility.¹⁷

The foregoing concept of parochial school was the direct result of the hostile attitude of the nobility, who for many years consistently boycotted the Commission's efforts of educating the nobiliary children together with those of the middle class and peasants. The Commission, through its Statutes, made it a point of convincing the szlachta of the benefits derived from the education of the lower classes. The second paragraph of Chapter twenty-two of the Statutes of 1783 proclaims:

The education of the people in respect to religion, responsibilities, work and trade of that estate is the goal of such schools. Each one will perform his duties more willingly and accurately, each one will perform his work and trade better, when, as an intelligent man, he can be directed in them, when he is taught how and why he must remain subordinate. . .¹⁸

¹⁷Tync, Komisja, p. 700.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 699.

The Statutes committed the new parochial schools to teaching the burgher and peasant children three major duties: the obligations of their class, work responsibilities and religion. The class character of parochial school could be best seen in its curricula with a definitely practical array of subjects in the greater school for the middle class, and an undecided general education curriculum for the peasant children.

Of great humanitarian and progressive value are the recommendations of the Statutes concerning the attitude toward, and the treatment of, peasant children. The Statutes recommended that teachers treat peasant children with respect, gentleness and avoid corporal punishment.¹⁹

An intensive press propaganda campaign encouraging the szlachta to get involved in commerce, trades and finances gave results. A number of szlachta bought up estates putting them in tenancy, turned capital to profit and set up workshops. Due to the gradual development of workshops, trade and commerce, towns began to develop and prosper. Warsaw, from a predominantly magnate and nobiliary center, was rapidly becoming a center of big business, with large burgher workshops, banks, stores and trading centers. The city, with an ever growing middle-class population of bankers and merchants, reached a hundred twenty thousand inhabitants, and was becoming an important center of business. Entrepreneurial nobility was eager to work with the middle class on account of their financial and organizational experience. The middle class, on

¹⁹Ibid., p. 701.

the other hand, aspired for the szlachta's privileges and social status. The common economic interest of both the nobility and the middle class permitted the two classes to form a powerful block capable of challenging the magnates and their political superiority. These two classes, maturing in their social and economic views, perceived the most efficient economic development through the education of the lower classes in the multifaceted aspects and processes of agriculture, commerce and industry. In these circumstances the Commission decided to give the parochial school a unique role in the transformational process of the Polish Commonwealth. All publications intended for the parish schools would reflect the Commission's concern at developing the national interest, without which the modernization of the economy and of the educational system would have been incomplete and only partially successful. The Society for Elementary Textbooks, therefore, worked out two significant books: the Primary for the National Parish Schools (Elementarz dla szkół parafialnych narodowych), 1785, and the Teacher's Duties in the Parochial Schools (Powinności nauczyciela w szkołach parafialnych), 1787, both the work of the already mentioned Gregory Piramowicz.

Piramowicz's Teacher's Duties, which develops the rather succinct regulations on the parish schools found in the Statutes of 1783, conceived of the parish school in modern and progressive terms. The handbook demonstrated the extent to which the Commission made the teacher responsible in his work and duties. It was to be an educational guide for elementary school teachers, the majority of whom was unprepared for their work and duties. It discussed the objectives and duties

of teachers and of the educational process itself. Physical upbringing, educational, moral and religious issues, as well as problems of methodology of instruction were discussed. Analyzing the qualities of the teacher, Piramowicz presented an ideal picture of the pedagogue, possessed of high personal values, tactful, respectful of students, with a great sense of responsibility and pride in the duties performed. Stressing the dignity and role of the teacher, Piramowicz saw him as a leader and defender of the people, their spokesman and friend, not only ready to assist them, but also ready to check any rebelliousness on their part. Love for teaching must be a prerequisite for any pedagogue. Recommending a climate conducive to natural development, he stressed the role of psychological observation. He also stressed the social importance of people and recommended friendliness and assistance to the needy and unfortunate.²⁰ This practice of utilitarian humanitarianism is expressed and illustrated with actual situations presented in the last part of his books. He closes it with rules and regulations for educating and examining future teachers. The Teacher's Duties became a practical pocket encyclopaedia of pedagogical knowledge for teachers.²¹

In view of the rapidly growing agricultural production, workshops, trades and commerce, Piramowicz, in his handbooks, advised the

²⁰Mizia, Szkolnictwo parafialne, p. 132.

²¹Grzegorz Piramowicz, Powinności nauczyciela (Teacher's Duties) (Warsaw: PZWS, 1958), pp. 37-40.

teachers on methods and means of stimulating and developing these sectors of economy.²² Piramowicz advocated professional integrity in commerce, trade and industry.²³ Dishonesty in these domains caused disharmony in the society and a lack of confidence. Honesty in business, as was advocated by the Physiocrats, constituted the main slogan of the Western middle class, in whose eyes a good merchant or artisan served well both God and country.²⁴ In order to efficiently expand Poland's main economic sector - agriculture, the handbook recommended special methods in developing this sector, such as on the job training and scientific improvements. Concerned with the development of workshops and trades, the handbook recommended technical training, trainee periods in workshops, and close observation of mechanical devices in action.²⁵ Commerce, on the other hand, directed Piramowicz's attention in advising the teachers to supply their students with all kinds of practical information relating to merchandise, marketing, supply and demand, and financial operations.²⁶

²²Piramowicz, Powinności nauczyciela, p. 73.

²³Z. Kukulski, ed., Elementarz dla szkół parafialnych narodowych (Primary for the National Parish Schools) (Lublin: 1930), p. 21.

²⁴R.F. Butts, A Cultural History of Western Education, (New York-Toronto-London: 1955), p. 293.

²⁵Piramowicz, Powinności nauczyciela, pp. 71-73.

²⁶Kukulski, Elementarz, p. 6.

Practical knowledge, of a natural and experimental character, demanded a visual method, and constituted the most efficient prime source of knowledge. The teacher was forbidden to instruct on objects from books, if these objects were not presented to the student beforehand. What made the visual method truly genuine, was the stipulation that objects presented by the teacher be in their natural environment, perform their proper function, and be in action. This fact demonstrated the importance of experiment and practice in teaching, and stressed the materialist theory of knowledge. This epistemology taught students that it was possible for man to master the forces of nature.²⁷

Piramowicz further recommended that the teacher familiarize himself with the psychology of the child, without which he would not be able to assist the child in his natural development. The teacher was to encourage the development of the child's natural curiosity, his questions, create an unrestrained learning situation and answer all questions truthfully.²⁸

The proper physical development and health care of the child was another important factor in the Commission's overall concern for its students. It not only constituted an indispensable condition of individual and societal happiness and well-being, but was equally

²⁷Piramowicz, Powinności nauczyciela, pp. 71-73.

²⁸Ibid., pp. 38-46.

important to a healthy growth of the economy, where healthy workers would form a more dependable base for higher productivity.²⁹

The involvement of peasants and the middle class in the common effort of reforming the Commonwealth, required the elaboration of new moral norms, other than those traditionally taught by the church. Moral education became an important discipline in the parish schools. The Commission chose norms of lay morality, which conformed with the objectives of lay education. The basis for such morality were the laws of nature. Personal and social profit was a condition of an individual's terrestrial happiness.³⁰

The school's responsibility was to teach students these duties and to develop a receptive attitude in them. It was a matter of forming in them a number of "virtues", such as "economic virtues", "political virtues" and "social virtues". The teacher's duty was to inculcate "economic virtues" in the young minds, which stood for the enrichment of the country and the individual citizen, and which were synonymous with hard work, thrift and initiative. "Political virtues" developed a readiness of service for the country, loyalty for its laws and offices, and an absolute love of one's country. "Social virtues" developed readiness for cooperation, understanding, kindness and respect for people. The teaching of these virtues could be reinforced by proper religious prescriptions and commands, and in these circumstances, religion, which was part of the parochial school curriculum,

²⁹Kukulski, Elementarz, p. 30.

³⁰Piramowicz, Powinności nauczyciela, pp. 54-56.

assumed an ancillary function, and served to further the national interests of the country. It remains a curious fact that Teacher's Duties, written by a clergyman, was approved by the Society for Elementary Textbooks, which also, in ninety percent, was made up of clergymen. It became a sort of religious sanction for the implementation of lay goals. The parochial school teacher's activity was to go beyond the school itself, in that he was to be a social activist and a bearer of progress and culture. His motto was to be that "education of the people is necessary for their genuine happiness as well as for that of the country".³¹

Due to the fact that the fast developing commerce and trades employed women, the Commission tried to extend elementary education to girls also. Therefore, the role of the mistress, responsible for the education of girls, assumed an importance without precedence. Her duty was to transmit to young girls the necessary knowledge of home economics, to teach them practical knowledge, thrift, cleanliness and order. They further had the responsibility of becoming exemplary wives, mothers and housewives.³²

For reasons aforementioned, the parochial school was rapidly changing from a thoroughly religious school into an educational center independent of the manor and parish. This school, directed by a lay teacher, who, naturally, in the social aspect was closer to the common people than the vicar or landlord, was acquiring greater prestige and

³¹Piramowicz, Powinności nauczyciela, p. 57.

³²Tync, Komisja, p. 634.

confidence. This school was gradually assuming the functions of the presbytery, and introduced the crucial factor of cooperation with the people on an equal to equal basis, eliminating the time-sanctioned traditional servility and subservience. The new school, scientific, secular, and utilitarian in nature, was becoming a pioneer of progress by directly influencing the everyday life of the village and town. The new school was thoroughly unconventional and projected far into the future. Due to shortage of governmental funds, the expansion and development of parochial schools proceeded at an uneven and slow pace. According to Wierzbowski,³³ the number of parochial schools in the Crown (Poland proper) in 1783 came to 190, while in the Principality of Lithuania in its peak year of 1777 to 330.

The period of the Four-Year Sejm (1788-1792) was an important one for parochial school development. In 1789 a statute was passed, which contained a paragraph obligating the vicars to establish and maintain parochial schools, and making the Regulatory Commission responsible for the enforcement of the said paragraph.³⁴

On April 18, 1791, the Sejm passed the law entitled Miasta nasze królewskie wolne w państwach Rzeczypospolitej (Our Royal Cities Free in the States of the Commonwealth), which made the holding of a

³³T. Wierzbowski, Szkoły parafialne w Polsce i na Litwie za czasów Komisji Edukacji Narodowej (Parochial Schools in Poland and Lithuania at the Time of the Commission for National Education) (Kraków: 1921), p. 106.

³⁴Volumina legum, IX, (Petersburg: 1899), pp. 142, 156.

municipal office a function of the completion of elementary education. A number of towns introduced measures of compulsory elementary education.³⁵

The cooperation between the Commission for National Education and a number of municipal authorities constituted the beginning of an integration of school authority with governmental administration. This integration project, however, was not practically carried out until during the period of the Kościuszko leadership in 1794. Were it not for the decline of the Polish Commonwealth, the implementation of this idea would bring about a situation wherein all the people "would know black on white".³⁶

A number of factors contributed to the decline of parochial schools. The main two were the peasants themselves, and the backward, conservative landowners. The peasants, on the one hand, deprived of the right to education and schools until 1773, viewed them as useless and as another burden on their responsibility towards the landowner, and were totally distrustful of them. Very frequently it was necessary to use force to get them to school, and when it ceased to be applied, the peasant children abandoned them. On the other hand, the landowners also were overtly hostile to educating the peasant child.³⁷

The term "parochial school", as was already mentioned, survived on account of tradition, and did not reflect in any way its new

³⁵Mizia, Szkolnictwo parafialne, p. 186.

³⁶Ibid., p. 191.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 154-161.

function and objectives, which consisted in educating peasant children for the sole purpose of developing and raising the country's economic potential. The latter purpose became an indispensable basis for the creation of a larger, well-equipped and modernized army corps, urgently needed to safeguard the country's sovereignty. Elementary education, which reflected the political and economic needs of the nation, had nothing in common with church parochial education based on Medieval traditions, save for its name. The village had the responsibility of maintaining the school, but according to the Regulatory Commission, the vicar was the school's actual organizer due to his above average educational training and his traditional authority, which he enjoyed with the local people. The number of elementary parochial schools grew and was the result of the Regulatory Commission's organizational efficiency, which consisted in vigorous enforcement of the Commission's regulations, and the imposition of severe fines and penalties for not carrying out its ordinances. The loss and destruction of the majority of the Regulatory Commission's files and documents prevents one from assessing the extent of its educational achievement. However, on the basis of the existent ones, it can be concluded that its achievement was impressive.³⁸

The Regulatory Commission's aim of providing the school with a supraclass character evidenced itself in efforts of not only educating peasant children, but nobiliary children of indigent szlachta

³⁸Mizia, Szkolnictwo parafialne, pp. 161-169.

also. Massalski's idea of transforming the old, church parochial school into an elementary school for all children, capable of preparing them for a vocational field, or affording a preparatory step towards higher education, contained in his Code for Elementary Schools, became finally victorious, by which fact the declining Nobi- liary Poland handed over to the entire nation the tradition of a modern, democratic elementary school.³⁹

The attitude itself of the peasant population toward the school gradually grew positive, and efforts tending to organize and establish schools with individual private funds were becoming com- mon. The understanding of the role of education by and for the lower classes of the population was becoming more and more visible and its value appreciated by all the traditional segments of the population. The understanding given to this matter was, perhaps, the most far-reaching contribution of the Commission for National Education, one that brought educational enlightenment and national awareness.

³⁹Lukasz Kurdybacha, Komisja Edukacji Narodowej (Commission for National Education) (Warsaw: PWN 1973), p. 172.

CHAPTER VI

REFORM OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS

In the midst of heated debates and discussions centering on the elaboration of a new educational system, the personality and desired qualities of a modern and progressive Polish citizen took shape, which for the Polish reformers seemed indispensable to the successful transformation of the country's traditional way of life. The ideal of this modern Pole became a model for a large segment of nobiliary youth.

Ignacy Potocki clearly defined this model at the opening session of the Society for Elementary Textbooks on March 7, 1775. The model was comprised of three elements: those of a good Christian, good human being and good citizen.¹ This division demonstrates that, in the eyes of the Commission, the notion of a good Christian was not synonymous with good human being or good citizen. It made clear that the traditional one-sided religious education was insufficient for the multifaceted responsibilities of the modern Pole involved in politics, social life and other secular activities.

This homo novus was to have an open mind, an inquisitive attitude, was to be free from intolerance and fanaticism and possess humane

¹Wierzbowski, ed., Protokoły (Minutes), p. 1.

and patriotic qualities. The notion of "good human being" referred to the private sphere of the Polish nobleman's life, and was synonymous with being a wise and a good landowner concerned with his estate. The wise nobleman-landlord was one who not only had a good knowledge of agricultural matters, but who also understood the significance of commerce and industry -- something the traditional Polish nobleman-landlord disdained and deemed unworthy of his social position and reputation. The last element of the Polish homo novus was the concept of "good citizen" which integrated a positive approach toward a new governmental system and the necessary new laws and regulations needed to make the new system operative and efficient. The new enlightened Polish nobleman had to acquire a solid basis for understanding government affairs, without which the transformation would not be able to take effect. In order to educate such a citizen, the Commission for National Education proceeded to organize the secondary educational system, which, in the beginning, was intended mainly for the nobiliary segment of the population.

The principal task of the Commission was to assume the supervisory responsibility over the Academies (universities), academic colonies (secondary schools under the direct authority of the Academy of Kraków), gymnasia (remaining secondary schools), and all public schools. To avoid possible misunderstanding as to the scope of authority and the schools involved, the Commission, according to the Proclamation of October 24, 1773, was to assume responsibility over ". . . all academies, gymnasia, academic colonies, public schools, not excluding any

of those educational institutions whose objective is the perfection of sciences and practice in the minds of nobiliary youth"2

The members of the Commission, headed by King Stanisław August, proceeded to debate matters concerning the reform of the curriculum and teaching methodology.³ In reality, the Commission's reformed educational system was to introduce an element of progress, innovation and modernity into the civic, economic and scientific sector of Polish life. The King further demonstrated the need for preparing and editing modern textbooks for every subject matter -- ". . . elementary books, especially for moral education, which ought to be instilled in the young minds and recommended to their memory."⁴ It should be pointed out that it was the King who introduced the concept of secular moral education at the session of the Commission, which in turn made it a compulsory subject of study at every school level.

When the matter of thorough reform of secondary education kept recurring, the Commission instructed Ignacy Potocki to prepare a proposal for the reform of secondary education. Potocki, within three weeks, on June 14, 1774, presented the Commission his Przepis Komisji

²Tync, Komisja, p. 27.

³G. Piramowicz, Mowy miane w Towarzystwie do Książ Elementarnych w latach 1776-1788 (Speeches Held at the Society for Elementary Text-books in the Years 1776-1788) (Kraków: 1889), p. 13.

⁴Wierzbowski, Protokoły, p. 4.

Edukacji Narodowej na szkoły wojewódzkie⁵ (Code of the Commission for National Education for Provincial Schools).⁶ The urgency with which he wrote his proposal was the direct result of two factors. First, the existing post-Jesuit and clerical curricula were totally useless. Second, no European country, prior to the establishment of the Commission, had developed a thorough nation-wide reform capable of becoming a model to other nations. Although many European politicians, philosophers and writers made strong demands to reassess values, they had been unable to present tangible didactic, psychological, and methodological guidelines for such a transformation. The Commission for National Education, headed by King Stanisław August, made the breakthrough when it consciously gave priority to the following two objectives and demanded their implementation. The first was to salvage the country from general backwardness. The second was to offer to the young generation the most recent achievements in the experimental sciences and mathematics, indispensable to the country's economic transformation. These two objectives would further help the Polish gentry to understand the pernicious effects of the Polish system of government with its "free election", and its disastrous pseudo-democratic liberum veto.

⁵Szkoły wojewódzkie (provincial schools) -- a term initially used for secondary schools, was later replaced by szkoły wydziałowe (departmental schools). Both terms denote the provincial school and refer to the secondary school.

⁶Wierzbowski, Protokoły, pp. 19-22.

The Commission, seeking a practical approach to the transformation it desired, relied on the authority of Francis Bacon, who had argued that the useless Latin and Greek be replaced by natural sciences and mathematical subjects. The school was to offer subjects capable of facilitating man's everyday life, satisfying his needs, and raising the standard of his material life. This was exactly what the Commission had in mind, and what made Bacon and his educational philosophy especially acceptable to the Commission.⁷

Bacon's classification of sciences was made on the basis of three fundamental characteristics of the human intellect: memory, reason and phantasy, to which corresponded three domains of science: history, philosophy and poetry. Each was further subdivided. Bacon gave most attention to sciences dealing with nature, society and man. He insisted that they remain independent of theology, empty philosophical speculations, and abstract scholastic reasonings. Their proper development could be assured through consistent observations and conclusions based on induction.⁸

The decisive factor in the transformation of the traditional secondary school curriculum was the principle of absolute separation of all secular sciences from theology, and a strong recommendation that they develop in their own right. Mathematical and natural

⁷J. Lubieniecka, Towarzystwo do Ksiąg Elementarnych (Society for Elementary Textbooks) (Warszawa: 1960), p. 64.

⁸Ibid., p. 65-66.

sciences were to become the bases for new curricula in the Commission's reformed school system. Ignacy Potocki's Code for Provincial Schools, approved by the Commission in 1774, discarded rhetoric, grammar, metaphysics and poetics in favor of moral education, mathematical and natural sciences.⁹

Moral education, introduced into the secondary school curriculum in addition to the teaching of religion, was to make available to the young generation a set of moral principles for social and political life as well as the basic teachings of the ideology of the Enlightenment. In the context of Enlightenment ideology, the political, economic and social order proceeded from human nature and its needs, not from some abstract speculations or religious teachings.¹⁰ Man's natural needs were to be at the basis of operative moral laws and principles. Human affairs that operate in harmony with natural laws were moral and good, those contrary to such laws-- morally evil.¹¹ The main reason for transgression against the laws of nature was an inadequate knowledge of these laws and of the responsibilities of man towards man. Ignorance lead to inequitable laws, which wronged the underprivileged classes and demoralized the privileged, ruling class. The Commission,

⁹J. Lewicki, ed., Ustawodawstwo szkolne za czasów Komisji Edukacji Narodowej (School Legislation at the Time of the Commission for National Education) (Kraków: 1925), p. 26

¹⁰Lubieniecka, Towarzystwo, p. 80-81.

¹¹Hieronim Stroynowski, Nauka prawa przyrodzonego, politycznego, ekonomii politycznej i prawa narodów (The Study of Natural Laws, Political Law, Political Economy and the Law of Nations) (Wilno: 1785), p. 15.

therefore, declared that the fundamental responsibility of the supreme governmental authority was the establishment of a "universal national system of education", which would allow the citizen to be aware of his responsibilities and privileges in relation to other citizens and to the State.¹² In the context of moral education, the relationship of the individual to the society assumed prime importance and referred to the right to personal freedom, property acquired through work, and to the satisfaction of one's natural needs. Out of these rights came man's duties and obligations, his responsibilities toward other men and the society. Among some of the important teachings was the student's duty to respect and to help his family, to, as adults, honestly pay taxes, become law abiding citizens, whose actions would be dictated by a concern for the public good. To assure that every citizen acquire a thorough knowledge of laws and regulations, Potocki's Code made certain that moral education included the study of natural law, economics, and politics.

The first, natural law, was to familiarize the students with man's obligations based upon natural order. It was imperative to show the students by way of practical, not theoretical, examples that the faithful fulfillment of duties toward others, and the observance of the principles of justice was to their own advantage and benefit.

¹²Z. Kukulski, ed., Pierwiastkowe przepisy pedagogiczne Komisji Edukacji Narodowej z lat 1773-1776 (Fundamental Pedagogical Regulations of the Commission for National Education in the Years 1773-1776) (Lublin: 1923), p. 39.

When given proper explanation referring to man's need for a happy life, property, freedom, and security, the students would fully understand the mechanism of natural law.¹³

The second, economics, was to familiarize the student with his obligations relating to his private household affairs. It was important to convince students of nobiliary background that it was improper and unseemly to use material goods without fully understanding their origin and agency of production. The Commission wanted the students to understand that without the dedicated work of peasants and artisans the szlachta would not have been able to survive, and therefore owed respect to the working sector of the population. It was imperative for the gentry to understand that it could not exist alone, and that all citizens, regardless of class, were dependent on each other. The Code recommended: "Let the children know their land which nourishes them, let them know the house where they live, the bread which they eat. Let them go, when free, visit the artisans. . . let them enter the merchant shops" ¹⁴

The third, politics, referred to internal political affairs of social and governmental nature. Potocki's Code demonstrated the urgency of a thorough knowledge of civic obligations and responsibilities toward other citizens and the State. When discussing the political system of a neighboring country, the teacher's responsibility was

¹³Lewicki, Ustawodawstwo, p. 28.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 29-30.

to demonstrate the degree to which it was consistent with the country's felicity. Due to such advice, moral education had nothing to do with abstract considerations, and was becoming an exchange of ideas on real, everyday problems of life.¹⁵

The principal objective of every school established by the Commission was to educate a righteous, patriotic and law-abiding citizen, a homo novus, needed for a new Polish Commonwealth. The Commission, therefore, saw a greater guarantee in the down-to-earth secular moral education, than it did in the abstract Christian teachings. It left the teaching of religion in school, but made secular, moral education the cornerstone of educational regeneration. The Commission viewed the role of religion as a complementary one, and considered it practically useful as long as it reinforced the teachings of moral education, and strove towards making man and society happy. It strongly differentiated between sincere religiousness and superstitious fanaticism.¹⁶

History was to have a complementary role also in moral education. The Code recommended the introduction of Polish history from the very first grade and made Poland the principal topic of interest with the student. The main purpose for teaching history was to familiarize the student with, and make him understand, the country's past,

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 30-31.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 39-40.

its natural traditions, which, if adequately related, would inspire the student with genuine love for his homeland. History, an example of moral conduct, was to teach moral, common sense. It also recommended giving priority to Polish history when discussing the history of other European nations, and placing it in the proper European context. The Commission, once again, instructed Ignacy Potocki to prepare a draft of a Polish history textbook, which was shortly presented to the Society for Elementary Textbooks for approval.¹⁷

The other set of sciences intended for the reformed secondary schools consisted of mathematical and natural sciences. These sciences had an important role in the transformation of Polish economy, as moral education had in the transformation of Polish traditional ideology into a modern, national, secular, experimental and practical world outlook. Arithmetic, algebra and trigonometry was singled out as indispensable to both the "refinement of the human mind, as well as to the need and comfort of life itself."¹⁸ There were those in the Commission who emphasized mathematics for its practical values, and those who emphasized its educational values. Piramowicz represented the first group and pointed out to the various domains of material life, where it proved indispensable, especially to the needs and conditions of Polish agriculture and construction. The second group, headed by

¹⁷Lubieniecka, Towarzystwo, p. 98.

¹⁸Lewicki, Ustawodawstwo, p. 27.

Popławski, pointed to educational and didactic values of mathematics, especially in logic.¹⁹ The Code made an attempt to reconcile both views.

Mathematics became the basis for natural history. The Commission introduced horticulture, zoology, botany and mineralogy. The country's low agricultural yield, criticized by both the enlightened Polish gentry and by foreign observers, triggered an interest in modern agricultural methods of economy. The Commission wanted the new generation of Polish gentry to launch progressive reforms in agronomy. Piramowicz maintained that agriculture contained the most suitable information for people, especially those who owned land.²⁰ The Commission insisted that all reforms in agriculture and farming be considered, bearing in mind the specific situations and needs of the country, discarding all those which were not able to meet the Polish conditions. One way of modernizing farming was to break the gentry's traditional conservative indifference to all sorts of improvements. This could be done by furnishing the students with practical agricultural information, knowledge and instruction.

The remaining segments of the mathematical and natural sciences were physics and chemistry. The Polish reformers felt very strongly about these sciences and demanded that students be taught them. The Wilno Jesuits turned to King Stanisław August with a

¹⁹Lubieniecka, Towarzystwo, pp. 145-146.

²⁰Kukulski, Pierwiastkowe przepisy pedagogiczne, p. 147.

request for permission to found in Wilno a Scientific Society which would meet the needs of the Polish Commonwealth, and be responsible for the propagation of physical sciences. The Society would consist of forty members, and would conduct research in mechanics, geometry, economy, medicine, agriculture, and other related fields.²¹

The most influential individual working for the promotion and development of mathematics and physics was the bishop of Wilno -- Ignacy Massalski, at whose suggestion the ex-Jesuit Joseph Mickiewicz set up a laboratory of experimental physics. The Commission held that scientists had to take active part in solving agricultural and industrial problems and provide the national economy with educated and trained professionals capable of modernizing the existing methods of production. In short, the scientist's duty was to transcend theory and step into the practical sphere of national production. The Commission, once again, recommended the teaching of physics and chemistry by means of the inductive method, emphasizing efficiency and practicality.²²

In stressing the material usefulness of education, the Commission emphasized its practical application, and insisted that the knowledge of trades and crafts encourage the alumni to set up workshops, manufacturing and handicraft centers.²³

²¹Biblioteka Czartoryskich (The Czartoryski Library) manuscript 818, p. 99-101.

²²Lewicki, Ustawodawstwo, pp. 36-37.

²³Kukulski, Pierwiastkowe przepisy, p. 149.

It should be remembered that the Commission's principal objective was to create a brand-new system of education and instruction that would satisfy the needs of the multi-class, multi-ethnic population of the Polish Commonwealth. The new system had to be based on the country's own educational and cultural traditions, incorporating its own political, social and economic needs, which it had to reflect. The Commission recommended that each innovative feature be applied to the political and social sector of life, and that it be able to raise the economic standard of Polish life, and satisfy the needs of the country.

Of all the problems confronting the Commission, perhaps the most challenging one was that of the function and role of the Polish language. What was supposed to be its place within the reformed educational system? Held in contempt, totally rejected by religious schools, Polish was supposedly unfit for literary expression, and was considered to be the language of the lower uneducated segment of the population. It reached its worst predicament, when the Jesuit schools peremptorily precluded its teaching and development by imposing penalties on those students who used it.²⁴ These were finally revoked by the Commission, when the Code unequivocally proclaimed that "Henceforth students in schools will speak in the Polish language."²⁵ The same concern is voiced by Hugo Kołłątaj in his Prawo polityczne narodu

²⁴Miłosz, History of Polish Literature, p. 154.

²⁵Lewicki, Ustawodawstwo, p. 47.

polskiego (Political Laws of the Polish Nation), 1790, where the author in his proposal for a new governmental system wrote: ". . . the Polish language will be universal in all the states belonging to the Polish Commonwealth . . . in schools all subjects without exception ought to be taught in this language" ²⁶

Because of the traditional hostility and animosity of the backward elements in the Polish szlachta, the Commission was not in the position to outright introduce Polish as a separate subject matter. It introduced into the curriculum in a veiled form the subject matter of "grammar," which was a means of teaching Polish and Latin. The proof of the Commission's steady and consistent polonization of the teaching process in its schools is the three-volume textbook Gramatyka dla szkół narodowych (Grammar for National Schools) written and edited by Onufry Kopczyński. In its preface the author states that "in the grammar written for Poles, the Polish language has priority over Latin, for knowledge of the native tongue is generally of greater need than that of a foreign tongue." ²⁷

The gradual substitution of traditional Latin textbooks with textbooks for all subjects edited and published by the Society for Elementary Textbooks, which were Polish not only in language but also in meaning, for they referred to the nation and to the problems of

²⁶Hugo Kołłątaj, (Listy Anonima i prawo polityczne narodu polskiego) (Anonymous Letters and Political Laws of the Polish Nation) (Kraków: PWN, 1954), vol. II, p. 246.

²⁷Onufry Kopczyński, Gramatyka dla szkół narodowych (Grammar for National Schools) (Warszawa: 1778), p. 8.

national reform, was the cause that education and instruction of youth became, with the effort of the Commission, thoroughly Polish in character. The Code attempted to confer upon the school both an intellectual and applied character. Metaphysics, rhetoric and poetics lost its privileged status, and became adjuncts to other practical subjects. Rhetoric was limited to the art of speechmaking, and poetics to the theory of verse writing.

When the Commission started establishing the network of secondary schools, it decided to avail itself of the already existing network of post-Jesuit schools, which were evenly distributed throughout the Commonwealth. It established two types of secondary schools: higher in each province, and lower in each district. The Piarist Order immediately joined the Commission's network of schools, and began enthusiastically cooperating with the new system to such an extent that the papal nuncio in Poland complained to the Pope that the Piarists were far more concerned with fulfilling the instructions of the Commission, than those of the Church.²⁸

In the years to come, the administrative division underwent a change, and the provincial (wojewódzkie) and district (powiatowe) schools were replaced by departmental (wydziałowe) and sub-departmental (podwydziałowe) schools.²⁹

²⁸Mizia, O Komisji, p. 72.

²⁹Regardless of the difference in Polish terminology, wojewódzkie and wydziałowe refer to provincial, and powiatowe and podwydziałowe refer to district schools.

According to the Statutes of 1783, the Commonwealth was divided into ten departments -- six within the Polish Crown, and four within the Grand Principality of Lithuania -- and was given the following structure:

The Polish Crown: (1) Department of Great Poland with a departmental school in Poznań, (2) Department of Little Poland with a departmental school in Lublin, (3) Department of Mazovia with a departmental school in Warsaw, (4) Department of Volhynia with a departmental school in Krzemieniec, (5) Department of Ukraine with a departmental school in Winnica, and a separate (6) Piarist Department with schools all over the country.

The Grand Principality of Lithuania: (1) Department of Lithuania with a departmental school in Grodno, (2) Department of Samogitia with a departmental school in Kroże, (3) Department of Nowogródek with a departmental school in Nowogródek, and, (4) Department of Polesie with a departmental school in Brześć.

The faculty of the provincial (wydziałowa) school included: the rector,³⁰ in charge of the school and responsible for all the schools in the province, the prefect,³¹ assistant to the rector, six professors,³² a preacher, and two lecturers of foreign languages. The faculty of the District (podwydziałowa) school consisted of a pro-rector

³⁰Tync, Komisja, pp. 628-38.

³¹Ibid., pp. 652-6.

³²Ibid., p. 677.

(deputy rector) in charge of the school, six professors, a preacher, and a lecturer of foreign languages.

The Commission assigned an important role to physical education, considering it an indispensable element in national education. It maintained that physical education " . . . had a greater influence, than was commonly accepted, on objects of mind and heart and on the character of the human soul."³³ Learning itself was useless when health was neglected. The following, in fact, is the closing sentence of the Statutes: "Moral and physical education, intimately connected, will be able to offer the society a virtuous individual, and the Country, a good citizen."³⁴

The unique situation of the Polish Commonwealth, wherein the enlightened segment of the nobiliary class, not the middle class, was the operating force behind the reform of the educational system, initiated a class-oriented educational program, which, due to its strong, capitalistic, middle-class character, came to satisfy the needs of the Polish middle class also. This curriculum attracted more and more of middle-class youth to these schools, which, even though officially intended for the nobility, put no restrictions on middle-class attendance or enrollment. There were 14,465 students studying in the Commission's

³³Tync, Komisja, p. 718.

³⁴Ibid., p. 723.

new secondary schools in both Poland and Lithuania in the 1788/89 academic year.³⁵

The foregoing analysis demonstrates that the Commission sought to transform the nobiliary youth into open-minded, enlightened individuals, cognizant of the social, political and economic obscurantism and predicament of the Commonwealth, eager to salvage the country through decisive political and economic reforms based on a program of modernization. The alumnus of the Commission's secondary school was expected to be a capable administrator of his own estates, willing to espouse progressive social reforms and to abolish serfdom. Most of all he was expected to be an enlightened, patriotic citizen, totally committed to the cause of, and work for, the good of the Country.

The educational reforms introduced into the schools of the Commission, initiated a growing trend of social and democratic awareness. This was reflected in the fact that the secondary school was gradually losing its nobiliary character -- which it had in the beginning -- the moment the Commission decreed a uniform educational program for young citizens, to whom, in addition to the young gentry, was added the growing and rising middle-class youth.³⁶

³⁵Mizia, O Komisji, p. 87.

³⁶Lubieniecka, Towarzystwo, p. 114.

CHAPTER VII

REFORM OF UNIVERSITIES AND TEACHER-TRAINING COLLEGES

Immediately after the Commission for National Education was established, special concern was given to the question of a reformed university. However, the reform of the elementary and secondary school and the preparation of new curricula and textbooks prevented the Commission from devoting its entire effort to the university matter. Of the four universities of the Commonwealth -- those of Zamość, Lwów, Kraków and Wilno -- only the last two became the target of the envisaged reform. The Commission, which was highly concerned with the training of secondary school teachers, was reluctant to entrust this matter to the declining universities. The Commission refused to allow the Kraków Academy to take charge of national education, because it rejected the medievalism of the institution, its low prestige, and especially its domination by the powerful Department of Theology, the seat of traditional conservative backwardness. The Commission declined the proposal of the Kraków Academy to take charge of all elementary and secondary schools and commissioned Prince Adam Czartoryski to examine the matter. The Prince came up with a proposal for establishing a teacher training college in Paris to be funded by the Commission.¹

¹Wierzbowski, Protokoly, Section 37, p. 27.

King Stanisław August received a number of proposals concerning a modern, progressive university; among them was that of Joachim Chreptowicz, who recommended that both Academies be made responsible for all the schools of the Commonwealth.² Another proposal, submitted to the King by Józef Załuski, suggested the creation of a modern university bearing the King's name.³

The Commission's ambitious plan of establishing a network of modern universities was ruined through a lack of the necessary funds. In these circumstances Ignacy Potocki's proposal proved to be most realistic when he suggested to first reform the university, which presented the least difficulty, and only then proceed to establish a new one. He also underscored the necessity of establishing teacher training colleges.⁴

The Commission finally acknowledged the necessity of turning to the University of Kraków for the formation of a reformed cadre of pedagogues. This task fell to a young Cracovian canon -- Hugo Kołłątaj, a former alumnus, recently returned from Italy. Kołłątaj (1750-1812) -- writer, philosopher, politician, educator, patriot, reformer of schools -- belongs to the intellectual elite of the Polish

²Joachim Chreptowicz, Plan de l'Education Nationale, (Plan for a National Education) in J. Lewicki, Geneza Komisji Edukacji Narodowej (Origin of the Commission for National Education) (Warszawa: 1923), p. 63.

³Ibid., pp. 76-77.

⁴S. Kot, A. Czartoryskiego i I. Potockiego Projekty urządzenia wychowania publicznego (A. Czartoryski's and I. Potocki's Proposals of Public Education) (Lwów-Warszawa: 1923), p. 20.

Enlightenment. Graduated from Kraków Academy with the degree of a doctor of philosophy, he studied in Italy where he earned the degree of doctor of theology. A keen observer and analyst, Kołłontaj vowed to work for the social, political and economic regeneration of the Polish Commonwealth. When he offered his services to the Commission, Kołłontaj presented a consistent plan of thorough reorganization of the country's educational system. He was to become the rector of the reformed University of Kraków. His activity connected with the Commission is but one of the many facets of his versatile and extraordinary life. Involved in all the decisive events that were to shape the eighteenth-century Polish Commonwealth, Kołłontaj was the coauthor of the famous Constitution of May 3, 1791, which was the first Constitution in Europe, and second in the World -- after the 1789 Constitution of the United States -- to formulate democratic principles of government in written form.⁵ Kołłontaj traveled to Germany. After returning to Poland, he took active part in the Kościuszko Insurrection of 1794. He was imprisoned by the Austrians for eight years, served Napoleon I, was again imprisoned, this time by the Russians in Moscow, and finally spent his last years in the Grand Duchy of Warsaw -- as Poland was then termed -- writing on economics, philosophy, but mainly on education.⁶ Kołłontaj's proposal of reforming the Kraków Academy and of

⁵Poland - A Handbook (Warsaw: Interpress, 1974), p. 55.

⁶Miłosz, History of Polish Literature, pp. 188-90.

adding to it a Teacher Training College was readily accepted by the Commission.⁷

Koźłontaj's view of the role of national education is succinctly expressed in his Speech of 1776 where he praised the Commission for extending, under difficult circumstances, educational opportunity to all classes, "from the peasant cottage to the palace", and considering it a prerequisite for the country's prosperity and progress.⁸

Koźłontaj's initial proposal calling for reform, O wprowadzeniu dobrych nauk do Akademii Krakowskiej (On the Introduction of Worthy Studies into the Kraków Academy), and the founding of teacher training colleges for secondary schools, indicates his desire of integrating education with the needs of the country, and of making the school the means of its regeneration.⁹ Accordingly, the Academy's prime objective of training teachers was entrusted to the newly founded College for the training of national teachers, organized in agreement with Popławski's proposal. The College opened its doors with the beginning of the 1780/81 academic year.¹⁰

An unprecedented event took place when the Statutes of 1783 created a new academic hierarchy called "academic estate" (stan akademicki), which consisted of a separate body of teachers, distinct

⁷Kurdybacha, Kuria rzymska, p. 68.

⁸Hugo Koźłontaj, Wybór pism naukowych (Selection of Scholarly Works) K. Opalek, ed., (Warszawa: 1953), pp. 131-2.

⁹Kurdybacha, Kuria rzymska, pp. 68-86.

¹⁰Popławski, Pisma pedagogiczne, pp. 231-242.

in attire and life style, all being university graduates.¹¹ As decreed by the Statutes, the Kraków Academy or Royal Principal School, was given supreme authority over all schools in the Crown, and the Wilno Academy or Principal School of the Principality of Lithuania, over all those in Lithuania. The professors of these academies became general inspectors of schools.¹²

The period of modernization of the Kraków Academy, running from 1777 to 1781, had a number of phases. Kołłontaj's reform of the Academy centered on people, the modernization of administrative and instructional systems, and finances. The department of philosophy, being the most numerous one and serving as a teacher training school, presented the greatest concern. Its graduates were often called upon to assume teaching positions in other departments of that school. Kołłontaj eliminated the dominance of Aristotelian philosophy and introduced numerous divisions in the domain of mathematical and natural sciences. For Kołłontaj, the modernization and reformation of the universities was but a tool in the preparation of a capable segment of young people, whose prime duty would be to become competent educators. In its final stage of reorganization, the Academy consisted of two Colleges: Moral College and Physical College, subdivided into six schools. The first

¹¹Tync, Komisja, pp. 576-580.

¹²Ibid., pp. 605-606.

included the School of Theology, Law and Literature; the second, the School of Physics, Mathematics and Medicine.¹³

Eager to modernize subject-matter methodology so that it could reflect national needs, Koźłontaj emphasized the natural and mathematical sciences, economics, law, organized laboratories and provided for teaching aids and materials. Indicative of these efforts was the activity of professors Jan Jaśkiewicz and Paweł Czenpiński, who studied minerals and mineral springs in Southern Poland.¹⁴ The need for social usefulness and the desire to train experts and specialists were responsible for the building up of the departments of hydraulics and mechanics. The reform of the School of Medicine was to raise the country's health standards, and the reform of the Law School was to bring clarity and order to national laws. Such knowledgeable professors as Rafał Czerwiakowski and Jędrzej Badurski modernized the methods of teaching medicine, organized an anatomy laboratory and a medical clinic.¹⁵ The personal involvement of King Stanisław August himself in his Proclamation of April 11, 1784, made it possible for one hundred fifty students to obtain scholarships from different municipalities.¹⁶

¹³Tync, Komisja, pp. 589-590.

¹⁴J. Kołodziejczyk, Nauki przyrodnicze w działalności Komisji Edukacji Narodowej (Natural Sciences and the Activity of the Commission for National Education) (Warszawa: 1936), pp. 115-120.

¹⁵W. Szumowski, Krakowska Szkoła Lekarska po reformie Koźłontaja (The Kraków Medical School after Koźłontaj's Reform) (Kraków: 1929), pp. 23-49.

¹⁶Tync, Komisja, pp. 251-261.

Koźłontaj also proposed the establishment of a department of military science at the Royal Principal School of Kraków. Koźłontaj wrote: ". . . the country cannot be orderly as long as it is not strong . . . Let our education prepare young Poles to be citizens and soldiers, holding in one hand the torch of truth, in the other the sword of national defense" ¹⁷ There was furthermore a growing interest in the development of national industry ¹⁸ and in natural resources. ¹⁹

Koźłontaj, recalling his work for the Commission, stated that his greatest satisfaction was the fact that the Commission, eager to raise the standard of education, did not resort to foreign intellect, and found the people, necessary for the job, right on the native soil. ²⁰

The nationalization of science and education was one of Koźłontaj's dearest concerns. When, later, the Commission assessed Koźłontaj's work, it expressed its gratitude for his involvement and dedication to the cause of national education. ²¹ Koźłontaj's election to head the Kraków Academy, succeeding Antoni Popławski, who was its rector

¹⁷Tync, Komisja, pp. 251-261.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 234.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 246-248.

²⁰M. Chamcówna, Uniwersytet Jagiellonski w dobie Komisji Edukacji Narodowej (The Jagiellonian University at the Time of the Commission for National Education) (Wrocław: 1957), p. 128.

²¹Hugo Koźłontaj, Raporty o wizycie i reformie Akademii Krakowskiej (Reports Concerning the Visit and Reform of Kraków Academy) M. Chamcówna, ed., (Wrocław: 1967), pp. 73-82.

from 1780-1783, reflected the Commission's confidence.²² As head of the Royal Principal School, Kołłontaj was automatically in charge of all the schools within the Crown of the Polish Commonwealth. As part of his concern for the reform of the Kraków Academy, Kołłontaj emphasized the importance of training qualified teachers, without whom there could be no efficient national program of education. Reminiscing, Kołłontaj wrote: "The entire educational structure had to begin with the reform of the universities . . . with the improvement in training of university candidates for the teaching profession."²³

Kołłontaj's successors, Felix Oraczewski and Józef Szabel, who headed the Royal Principal School from 1786-1790 and 1790-1795 respectively, continued Kołłontaj's program of development, modernization and teacher training. The gradual social transformation, affecting the country and the university, was responsible for a noticeable internal struggle within the school between the administration and the new intelligentsia of professors who sought greater rights for themselves and for the school.²⁴

Concurrently with the reform of the Kraków University, the University of Wilno, or as it was called, the Wilno Academy -- the second oldest university of the Polish Commonwealth founded in 1579 by King

²²Ibid., p. 249.

²³Ibid., pp. 17-18.

²⁴Chamcówna, Uniwersytet Jagielloński, pp. 53-63.

Stefan Bathory -- was also reorganized and reformed in 1780-1781 by its rector, the famous astronomer, Martin Poczobutt-Odlanicki. The reformed university, called Principal School of Wilno, opened its doors in 1781, in an atmosphere of festive celebration and joy. Martin Poczobutt-Odlanicki, member of the London and Paris Academies of Sciences, reorganized and expanded the astronomical observatory, and created a new department of medicine.²⁵ Jean Gilibert, head of the department of natural history, organized the Botanical Gardens.²⁶ A number of distinguished scholars and scientists were closely connected with the reform of the University of Wilno, among them: John George Forster -- natural scientist, and Joseph Sartoris -- natural scientist and chemist, both of whom worked assiduously between 1784-1787 to raise the standard of natural sciences. Working for the department of Medicine were such famous foreigners as: Nicolas Regnier -- organizer of the gynecological section, Jacob Briotet -- professor of anatomy and head prosector, and Stefan Bisio -- professor of physiology

²⁵M. Baliński, Dawna Akademia Wileńska, Próba jej historii od założenia w roku 1579 do ostatecznego jej przekształcenia (Ancient Academy of Wilno. An Attempt at its History from its Founding in 1579 to its Final Transformation) (Petersburg: 1867), p. 266.

²⁶W. Sławiński, Dr. Jan Emanuel Gilibert, profesor i założyciel Ogródu Botanicznego w Wilnie (Dr. Jan Emanuel Gilibert, Professor and Founder of the Botanical Garden in Wilno) (Wilno: 1925).

and anatomy. Among the famous Polish scholars were: Hieronim Stroynowski (future co-reformer of the Russian educational system) -- rector of the University of Wilno,²⁷ David Pilchowski -- professor of literature,²⁸ and Józef Mickiewicz -- professor of physics.²⁹

While Kołłontaj was giving priority to young Polish scholars and scientists, Poczobutt-Odlanicki brought foreigners to run his university. The Universities of Kraków and Wilno were officially renamed the Principal Royal School and the Principal School of the Grand Principality of Lithuania.³⁰ The Statutes of 1783 made the Principal Schools responsible for the entire network of national schools and delegated to its professors the responsibility of their inspection. Chapter four of the Statutes decreed two types of inspections: inspection of the province by the rector, and inspection of individual schools of the province by general inspectors (chosen from among the professors) including provincial, district and elementary schools.³¹ Furthermore it was the inspector's responsibility to bring all existing private schools under the Commission's supervisory authority and

²⁷K. Opałek, Hieronim Stroynowski, przedstawiciel postępowej myśli prawniczej polskiego oświecenia (Hieronim Stroynowski, Representative of Progressive Legal Thought of the Polish Enlightenment), Państwo i Prawo (State and Law), 1952, No. 1, pp. 9-33.

²⁸W. Januszkiewiczówna, Dawid Pilchowski, (Wilno: 1929).

²⁹Baliński, Dawna Akademia Wileńska, p. 529.

³⁰Tync, Komisja, p. 581.

³¹Ibid., p. 605.

to shut down all those functioning without the Commission's authorization.³² The Statutes spelled out in detail the procedures of the school inspectors conduct, their attitude toward administration, the faculty and the student body, the assessment of textbooks, teaching methods and academic results. They especially recommended to the inspector the training and education of young, needy szlachta, who would hold offices of governmental and economic importance.³³ All contact with school officials and the student body was to reflect dignity, kindness and discretion.³⁴

The Commission was well aware of the importance and recognized the sensitive function of the school inspector's role, of his potential power of winning over the society to the cause of national education, and of conveying the Commission's gratitude and appreciation for its involvement.

The inspector's task was an extremely difficult one. Working under adverse climatic and topographic conditions, he had to demonstrate a good deal of endurance and dedication. The reports and manuscripts of the many school inspectors of the period remain not only an excellent document reflecting the cultural habits of the time, but also a tangible proof of the inspectors' efforts and dedication to the cause

³²Tync, Komisja, p. 609.

³³Ibid., p. 609.

³⁴Ibid., p. 607.

of modern educational supervision and a reformed and nationally efficient educational system.

As far as the student body is concerned, the tables furnished by Mirosława Chamcówna demonstrate that in the 1790/91 academic year both colleges had 244 students, in addition to nine women studying obstetrics.³⁵ The most positive and conspicuous expression of the involvement of the university in the process of nationalization of Polish life-style was the introduction of Polish as the language of instruction, similar to English and French universities, but unlike many German universities, where Latin persisted well into the middle of the nineteenth century. The man, who most consistently and intransigently fought for the priority of the Polish language in the context of Polish life, was none other than Hugo Kołłątaj himself.³⁶

The scientific and didactic activity at that time reflected two trends. The first was theoretical and emphasized research, the second practical with stress on the immediate and future needs of the

³⁵M. Chamcówna, Dzieje Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego (History of the Jagiellonian University) (Kraków: 1965), Vol. II, Part I.

³⁶M. Borecki, Hugo Kołłątaj jako miłośnik i obrońca języka polskiego (Hugo Kołłątaj - Proponent and Defender of the Polish Language) in Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Filologia. (Scientific Pamphlets of the Jagiellonian University) (Kraków: 1956), bulletin 2.

country. Although the raison d'être of the country demanded the furthering of the practical one, a considerable effort was made to create, among other things, a modern Polish scientific terminology,³⁷ and a modern, up-to-date Polish civil and criminal code -- named after the King -- the Stanisław August Code.³⁸ However, the most significant influence these schools had was the fact that they became the source of new national values, of an all-national patriotism and national revival.

The Commission, organizing the first secular, national, uniform for the whole country, educational structure in Europe, was in urgent need of a new cadre of pedagogues-teachers. The clergy, and the monks, were simply not able to spread the Commission's innovative, secular and patriotic concepts for two simple reasons: their traditionally deep-rooted limited mediaeval pedagogy, and their outright reluctance and animosity for secular-national values. They would not espouse the new educational program based on the knowledge of the child's psychology, the new educational objectives and the new methodology. The importance of the new teaching manpower was succinctly expressed by Joachim Chreptowicz, when he affirmed: "The country is what its

³⁷W. Hubicki, Księga pamiątkowa dziesięciolecia Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej w Lublinie (Commemorative Book of the Tenth Anniversary of the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University of Lublin) (Lublin: 1956).

³⁸Kodeks Stanisława Augusta (Code of King Stanisław August) S. Borowski, Ed., (Warszawa: 1930).

citizens are. Its citizens are what the education of the youth is."³⁹ Kołłontaj, on the other hand, wrote: ". . . the best regulations of the Commission and elementary textbooks will be meaningless until the teachers will be able to express the Commission's intentions."⁴⁰ The reform of the Kraków and Wilno Academies created the necessary conditions for the training of the teaching cadre. A distinct, autonomous,⁴¹ "academic estate" (stan akademicki) was established, uniform for the whole country. The opening paragraph of the Preface to the Statutes of 1783 defines the goal of the "academic estate":

In the need of further providing the school youth with proper teachers, we have most appropriately decided to establish in the Crown and the Grand Principality of Lithuania, an estate of vocation, chosen and dedicated to this sole end, so that it constantly be able to provide the Nation with people, who, through enlightenment, virtue and devotion, would be capable of transmitting public education.⁴²

The Statutes defined the character of this unique institution, found nowhere else in Europe. They emphasized the role and duties of

³⁹J. Chreptowicz, Mowa do rektorów szkół wydziałowych na Litwie w dniu 30 VIII 1781 (Speech Addressed to Rectors of Provincial Schools in Lithuania on August 30, 1781) Prace Naukowe Oddziału Warszawskiego Komisji Badania Dziejów Wychowania i Szkolnictwa w Polsce (Research of the Warsaw Section of the Commission for the Study of Education and Schooling in Poland) Bulletin, 1925, 1926, pp. 44-48.

⁴⁰Kołłontaj, Raporty, p. 15.

⁴¹Tync, Komisja, Chapters II, VIII.

⁴²Ibid., p. 571.

the teacher, the privilege of shaping a new Polish citizen, and the spreading of knowledge needed by the nation and necessary for the "public good".⁴³ The Preface, further, sought to demonstrate that the teaching profession, held in contempt by the szlachta, brought honor and constituted a privilege. It recalled the many ancient royal decrees which raised the dignity of the teaching profession by bestowing upon the teachers privileges, which made academic distinctions or diplomas equal to the possession of a nobiliary coat of arms.⁴⁴

Monastic teachers — Dominicans, Basilians, Piarists -- who had not completed their studies in Kraków or Wilno, were excluded from the "academic estate", but could enter it after the completion of three full years of university studies, and a few years of student teaching internship. A very special case was that of the Piarist Order. On account of their enthusiasm for the Commission's reforms, a concession was granted to the Order, according to which a separate Piarist

⁴³Ibid., p. 571.

⁴⁴Among the many privileges conferred upon the academic profession, the two most important ones were those of King Zygmunt I of August 11, 1535, conferring nobility upon professors with twenty years of teaching, and constituted a sort of "nobiliary tenure," and of King Zygmunt August, who in his Codex diplomaticus Studii Generalis Cracoviensis, pars I. II, of March 7, 1570, confirmed and clarified the existing privileges. The Academy of Wilno received similar privileges from King Stefan Batory. Tync, Komisja, p. 573.

Department was created, with the provincial, as rector, responsible for the department.⁴⁵

The Commission, as supreme educational authority, became, indeed, the coordinating force. The two universities shared the responsibility of training candidates for the "academic estate" as well as the responsibility of inspecting the network of schools in the Commonwealth. They were responsible for the teaching process and standards, the selection of faculty, textbooks and teaching materials. The supervision of education became the responsibility of the highest echelon in the educational hierarchy. This state of affairs wherein the academic estate took charge of educational administration and supervision constituted a unique precursory achievement in Europe.

The pressing need for a modern teaching force required an organized system of teacher training institutions. Popławski, in his On the Organization and Perfection of Civic Education of 1774, emphasized the significance, and the far-reaching influence of the national teacher.⁴⁶ He considered national education to be the only means capable of saving the country. The significance of the teacher could be raised through proper remuneration and educational preparation. Popławski's Proposal for a Teacher-Training College, which later became part of the Statutes of 1783, recommended a two-year practical

⁴⁵Wierzbowski, Protokoły, Section 39, p. 41.

⁴⁶Popławski, Pisma pedagogiczne, pp. 149-225.

preparation period, followed by a three-year sequence of studies at the university. Upon the completion of his course of studies, the teacher was required to offer his services to his school district. Popławski was instructed to organize a teacher training college, and became its rector. It remained for awhile the only teacher training college in the country.

The candidate to the "academic estate" took a solemn oath affirming that he voluntarily chose the academic estate, and that he would faithfully fulfill its regulations together with those of the Commission. He also pledged himself to serve the compulsory six years as educator, and to spread and uphold the authority and dignity of educator and the "academic estate".⁴⁷

Competitive examinations, dedicated supervision, a diversified and versatile curriculum expressed the concern the school gave to the prospective teacher, who was to "create and educate worthy citizens for the Nation".⁴⁸ A special concern was to be given, however, to Polish -- the national language.

All educational activity had to integrate the laws of nature, of physiocracy, and especially the needs and love of the country. The

⁴⁷K. Mrozowska, Walka o nauczycieli świeckich w dobie Komisji Edukacji Narodowej na terenie Korony (The Struggle for Lay Teachers at the Time of the Commission for National Education Within the Crown) (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1956), p. 37-43.

⁴⁸Tync, Komisja, Chapter XIV, p. 656.

alumni of the Teacher Training College of Kraków contributed substantially to the teaching manpower of the nation. In the final period of the Commission's activity lay teachers constituted 62 percent of the total teaching force.⁴⁹

The concept of "academic estate" was for a long time an alien one to a large segment of people in the eastern part of the Polish Commonwealth -- Lithuania. People were generally suspicious of the concept of lay teachers, and the results of teacher training in Wilno were less successful. The secularization of the teaching force in Lithuania was much slower than in the Crown.⁵⁰

The Commission's achievement, in the domain of teacher training and in the clarification of the teacher's role, remains a milestone in not only Polish, but European, education. The humane qualities of the teacher practically enhanced -- wisdom, friendliness, dignity, responsibility and creativity -- together with an awareness of working for the good of the Country, constitute a lasting value, and an inspiring legacy. The abundant documentation consisting of regulations, codes, rules, reports, minutes, letters and memoirs of former alumni, provide us with a detailed picture of the model pedagogue, elaborated in detail by the Commission for National Education. This model, without doubt, could serve as an example for any modern system of education.

⁴⁹Mrozowska, Walka o nauczycieli, p. 242.

⁵⁰I. Szybiak, Szkolnictwo Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim (School System of the Commission for National Education in the Grand Principality of Lithuania) (University of Warsaw: 1971), Chapter viii.

CHAPTER VIII

CIVIC, PATRIOTIC AND GIRLS' EDUCATION

IN THE SCHOOLS OF THE COMMISSION FOR NATIONAL EDUCATION

The year 1764 constitutes a decisive date in the history of the Polish Commonwealth. It closes a long period of frustrating confusion of the so-called "Saxon Night" under the rule of two Saxon electors -- Augustus II and Augustus III -- who, although ruling as Kings of Poland, were totally disinterested in Polish affairs. The year 1764, therefore, ushers in a new period of purposeful activity with the election of King Stanisław August Poniatowski, who became king by the grace of his former mistress, Catherine II of Russia.¹ Not until after his accession to the throne did "the first Polish insurrection against Russia"² take place when in 1768

a league of Catholic nobles -- the Confederation of Bar -- resentful of this foreign domination of their country, began to agitate for independence and constitutional reform. Young Casimir Pulaski (c. 1748-1779), one of its leaders, was to meet death as an American cavalry general in the war for American independence. Unfortunately these Polish noblemen who raised the standard of rebellion against a ruler imposed by

¹Szymon Askenazy, Die letzte polnische Königswahl (The Last Polish Royal Election) (Göttingen: 1894).

²Radzinski, Masks of Moscow, p. 79.

foreign powers found little support among the peasantry, especially among the minority of Protestant and Orthodox peasants³

At that particular time circumstances began to favor a national regeneration, and allowed the enlightened Polish intellectuals and patriots to form a very clear idea of the process by which the reform of the Polish system would be achieved. Although posterity never forgave the King for having sided in 1792 with the traitors,

his knowledge of Poland's limitations was taken for weakness, his pliability for pusillanimity His co-authorship of the 1791 constitution and his brave efforts to promote industry are often overlooked and his moral stature is much reduced by his endorsement of two ignominious treaties of dismemberment. But while the political events of his reign go under the melancholy name of "the period of the partitions", the spectacular artistic and intellectual revival stimulated and tended by the king himself bears his own name -- epoka Stanisławowska, a fitting if somewhat oblique tribute to his efforts.⁴

The essential feature of this reform was that it was not only designed to transform the traditional system but also to strengthen it against hostile foreign pressures. The design of working out a new civic and patriotic model of citizen was its key element.

The new generation, educated in the Commission's national schools, would knowingly reform the existing system of government and its laws, and work to eradicate the pernicious traditional privileges

³Louis Gottschalk, Toward the French Revolution (New York: 1973), p. 84.

⁴Albert Goodwin, ed., The New Cambridge Modern History (Cambridge: University Press, 1965), vol. viii, p. 337

of the Polish nobility and transform the szlachta -- who was traditionally "proud of its birth and jealous of its privileges, touchy on a point of honour, pugnacious, unruly, devoutly Catholic, backward-looking and contemptuous of foreigners, heretics and traders"⁵ -- into open-minded, ardent patriots. Civic and patriotic education became the basic element of the national educational reform. Its task was to teach students the knowledge of handling civic responsibilities. The awareness of an underdeveloped economy and of a dangerously liberal governmental system brought about a concerted desire for reforming the traditional Polish state of mind making the "love of country" the cornerstone of the new patriotic structure. Discussing the task and objectives of national education, Joachim Chreptowicz said the following in a speech delivered to a group of rectors of the Commission's schools in August of 1781: "Civic education constitutes the moulding of patriotic hearts and minds, and is a slogan sacred to the country" ⁶

The love of country, thus conceived, integrated both an emotional and practical approach, in the interest of the individual citizen and the country. The term "national" reflected the growing sense of national identity and cohesion. This, in conjunction with national

⁵Ibid., p. 336.

⁶Mowa J. Chreptowicza do rektorów szkół wydziałowych 30 sierpnia 1781 (J. Chreptowicz's Speech to Rectors of Provincial Schools on August 30, 1781) in Prace Naukowe Oddziału Warszawskiego Komisji Badania Dziejów Wychowania i Szkolnictwa w Polsce, Bulletin, 1925 and 1926, p. 42.

pride, was intimately tied to the use and respect for the national language, which had to be an efficient tool of expression, in literature and in science. In this respect, the Commission, fighting the cosmopolitan character of traditional schools, and introducing Polish as the language of instruction, made the task of nationalization of domestic culture victorious. The awakening of patriotic pride and the understanding of Poland's glorious past cruelly contrasted with the country's politically tragic reality. A special emphasis in national education was placed on Poland's literature, history, natural sciences, economy and laws, with the purpose of shaping an enlightened citizenry, unified in their desire of rectifying the political and economic predicament of the Commonwealth. In Kołłontaj's own words: "A unified educational system became the guarantee of greater governmental stability and greater unity in the government."⁷ History became the chief factor in fostering a militant and patriotic national involvement. The King himself encouraged the revival of glorious milestones in Poland's history by means of poetry, stage plays, paintings and the commemoration of national holidays, which all focused on great men and events.

⁷Kołłontaj, Listy Anonima, vol. 2, p. 85.

An event that both revived national pride and taught patriotism, was the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the victory of King John III Sobieski over the Turks.⁸ Sobieski, Commander in Chief of the combined Christian forces, scored a magnificent victory over the forces of the Grand Vizier, Kara Mustafa, on September 12, 1683. The Polish relief of Vienna, in which Polish heavy cavalry had a decisive role, was the last great military success of the Commonwealth. Having saved Europe and Christianity he was hailed by kings, princes and people as "Unser brave König!" (Our good King).⁹

The two great events of the period was the new Sejm (Parliament) of the Commonwealth, known in history as the Great, or Four Years' Parliament, which assembled in Warsaw in 1788, and the adoption of the Constitution of May 3, 1791. The leaders of these momentous events were none other than the masterminds of the Commission for National Education themselves -- Ignacy Potocki, Hugo Kołłątaj, Adam Czartoryski, Joachim Chreptowicz, Julian Niemcewicz and Stanisław Małachowski. Many other members of the Commission and the Society for Elementary Textbooks joined forces contributing to the success of the Great Sejm.

⁸J. Leniek, Obchód stoletni odsieczy wiedeńskiej urządzony przez szkoły w Koronie i Litwie z polecenia Komisji Edukacji Narodowej (Hundredth Anniversary Celebration of the Relief of Vienna Organized by Schools in the Crown and Lithuania Upon the Recommendation of the Commission for National Education) (Kraków: 1883).

⁹Ambroise Jobert, Histoire de la Pologne (History of Poland) (Presses Universitaires: 1965), p. 30.

The members of the Great Sejm, realizing the crisis of the Commonwealth and eager to avert the impending catastrophe, solemnly adopted the Constitution of May 3, 1791. The Constitution declared:

" . . . having recognized the immemorial flaws in our government, and eager to avail ourselves of the situation Europe finds itself in and of the moment of decline which brought us awareness and unity, free from infamous commands of alien forces, treasuring political existence, external independence and internal freedom of the nation, whose destiny is entrusted into our hands, far more than life or personal felicity . . . for the common good, to strengthen freedom, to salvage our country and borders, with absolute firmness in mind, we pass this Constitution . . . and declare it unfringeable.¹⁰

The moment it was adopted it became a landmark of bold, progressive reforms and announced a new type of democracy. The Constitution was a matter of consequence and precedence for the entire Continent. It became the first constitution of Europe, and second in the World -- after the 1789 Constitution of the United States -- to formulate democratic principles of government in written form.¹¹ The Constitution

abolished royal elections, the liberum veto, and the right to form confederations. It declared the throne to be hereditary . . . It increased the royal powers and created an executive council composed of the Primate and five ministers. Deputies became representatives of the whole country and not merely of their individual districts. Towns received representation in the Diet. A majority of two-thirds of the senate and the lower chamber was required to force the resignation of the council

¹⁰Henryk Mościcki, ed., Trzeci Maj (May Third) (Ustawa rządowa: 1916), p. 59.

¹¹Poland - A Handbook, p. 55.

of ministers. The burdens of the peasants were not alleviated but the peasant class was placed under the protection of the law.¹²

Immediately,

the reaction of the contemporary world to the Constitution was on the whole favorable. The Pope, Kaiser Leopold of Austria, the Elector of Saxony, even Frederick Wilhelm II gave their blessings to the document. Thomas Payne in America and Edmund Burke in England praised and eulogized it.¹³

Russia's reaction was violent. Catherine II expressed her disdain declaring that "the Poles have exceeded all the follies of the French National Assembly," and Catherine's henchman, Prince Potemkin, advised the Poles to be sure to place a few forget-me-nots¹⁴ under the picture of their constitution. On May 14, 1792, at Moscow's instigation, the Polish conservatives formed a confederation (ostensibly at Targowica but in fact at St. Petersburg), turning to Catherine II for protection against what they called the revolutionary conspiracy of May 3, 1791, threatening their "golden freedom" -- złota wolność. A Polish-Russian war ensued. When King Stanisław August received on July 23 an ultimatum from Catherine II to break with the "Revolution of the Third of May," and acceded to the Targowica Confederation, the army surrendered with consternation, and many officers, including Prince Joseph Poniatowski and Thaddeus Kościuszko resigned. The

¹²Radzinski, Masks of Moscow, p. 89

¹³Ibid., p. 89.

¹⁴Władysław Konopczyński, Dzieje Polski Nowożytnej (History of Modern Poland) (Warsaw: Gebethner & Wolff, 1936), p. 387.

aftermath followed. The second partition took place in 1793, the treaties of the partition were ratified, and the May 3 Constitution laws abolished.¹⁵ Russia, Prussia and Austria, acquired a common interest -- the repression of Polish resistance, which became the earliest example of modern revolutionary nationalism in Europe.

The ardent, patriotic attitude toward the Great Sejm and the May 3 Constitution was manifested by both the enlightened nobility and the middle class. A great celebration took place in Wilno in honor of the Constitution soon after it was passed. On May 17, 1791, the city feasted the event and hailed the reforms. Unity was manifested through inscriptions that read: "Król z narodem, naród z królem" (King with the nation, nation with the King) and "Życie nasze i majątki dla króla i ojczyzny" (Our life and possessions belong to the King and Country). Hieronim Stroynowski, professor of law, in a speech closing the Wilno University academic year, proclaimed: "We are now a nation that will not be a toy but an example to other nations." He further urged to respect and defend the new government at all cost, without whose independence there would be no prosperity for the nation.¹⁶ A similar celebration took place in Cracow.

An indispensable element of civic education was to be the student's responsibility to defend his country. The Statutes made already mention of it, when they decreed that youth undergo army training which

¹⁵Radzinski, Masks of Moscow, pp. 91-92.

¹⁶Tync, Komisja, pp. 216-219.

would develop courage, firmness and virtue.¹⁷ Immediately after the Targowica Confederation was formed, and the Russian armies entered the Commonwealth, the Commission launched an appeal to the entire student body of national schools. The Uniwersał Komisji Edukacji (Proclamation of the Educational Commission) of May 31, 1792, written by Piramowicz, called upon students of national schools to offer prayers "to avert the calamities and disasters that befell our country."¹⁸ The students responded spontaneously. Their representative, a certain Antoni Grabowski, declared that, although the goal of the enemy is to destroy the country's independence, the nation has the courage to preserve it. The student's optimistic faith was declared in the following statement:

The long line of descendants will avenge the crime perpetrated on our fathers; if they cannot today rescue the greatness of the nation, the nation will retain confidence in the generations to come.¹⁹

The direct involvement of youth in the country's political struggle demonstrated the Commission's success in the domain of civic education and upbringing, that provided leaders and patriots for such all-national events as the Kościuszko Insurrection of 1794, and the

¹⁷Ibid., p. 722.

¹⁸Lewicki, *Ustawodawstwo*, p.

¹⁹A. Jobert, La Commission, pp. 446-447.

Dąbrowski Legions (1797-1801), which gave rise to the Polish National Anthem.²⁰

During the term of the Great Sejm, emerged the matter of reassessment of the Statutes of 1783, in view of improving the educational organization structure. The Statutes were slightly revised and adopted on February 2, 1790. The new Statutes recommended the revival of the ancient privileges which conferred the nobility on professors with a twenty-year teaching tenure, and called for a tighter cooperation between

²⁰The Polish National Anthem, or the Dąbrowski Mazurka, emerged in 1797, outside the frontiers of Poland, at the time of the formation by General Jan Henryk Dąbrowski of the Polish Legions attached to the French Army in Italy. In an atmosphere of enthusiasm and of hopes for a prompt return to Poland, it was written (to the tune of a popular mazurka) by Józef Wybicki, a distinguished leader and publicist of the patriotic camp. The simple, heart-moving lyrics and the familiar tune caught on and were soon widely accepted by the soldiers. The song of the Legions soon reached the country and was received with sincere enthusiasm.

The extraordinary popularity of the song can be explained chiefly by its opening words: "Poland has not yet perished as long as we are alive." These words evoked the conviction that the nation might survive in spite of enslavement if the people retained their national consciousness and were ready to fight for independence. The remaining words of the anthem expressed faith in the nation's own strength ("What alien force took away from us, we will take back with our swords") and in the future victories of the Poles ("Bonaparte gave us a good example how to win"). The chorus ("March, march, Dąbrowski") repeated after every verse was a profession of faith on the part of the Polish emigres in the possibility of realizing their chief aim: "to become reunited with the nation".

The Song of the Legions became at once the symbol of Poland's indestructibility and hope in her rebirth, a symbol rallying all Poles, with no distinction as to social rank, in the struggle for the nation's freedom, Poland -- A Handbook, p. 17.

secondary schools and the universities.²¹ Kołłontaj, discussing the importance of the teaching estate, placed it on a par with the clergy and the military,²² and recommended that it be respected and protected by the government, and be accessible to all citizens.²³

The great social and political transformation that took place in the Polish mentality -- of which the Constitution of May 3 was its best index -- resulted in broad laws and educational opportunities granted to the middle class. Demands for municipal elementary education and girls' education were firmly advanced.²⁴

Girls' education, which for centuries remained an exclusive right of the family and had no definite system of education, was given special attention. The daughters of powerful families were educated either at the royal court or by private teachers. The less well-to-do of the nobility and middle class acquired their education in convent

²¹T. Mizia, ed., Protokoły posiedzeń Komisji Edukacji Narodowej (Minutes of the Commission for National Education) (Wrocław: 1969), p. 221.

²²Kołłontaj, Listy Anonima, vol. 2, p. 207.

²³Ibid., pp. 286-291.

²⁴J. Ender, Sprawy oświatowe w okresie Sejmu Czteroletniego (Educational Matters during the Great Sejm) in Rozprawy z dziejów oświaty (Papers on the History of Education) (Wrocław: 1961), vol. 4, p. 35.

schools. The belief in the uselessness of feminine education was widespread, and feminine illiteracy was a matter of fact.²⁵

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries prepared the bases for the women's emancipation movement. This period saw the rise of girls' boarding schools in towns and cities throughout the country, established by foreigners whose forte was the knowledge of the highly fashionable French language and social etiquette. One of such first boarding schools was that of Mrs. Strumle in Warsaw in 1750.²⁶ The belief that woman was a necessary condition for the family's happiness, that she was the soul of the household and a source of good breeding and patriotism, prompted many outstanding intellectuals to espouse her cause, and make girls' education a key issue in national education.

When the Commission was established, Bishop Ignacy Massalski made the "education of women in the Polish Kingdom" a part of its program.²⁷ Prince August Sułkowski, in his petition of November 23, 1773, demanded the establishment of schools for young girls of noble descent in larger cities. In 1785 Sułkowski proposed to set up in Radzyn a school for young noblewomen, offering free education to those who could not afford it, under the supervision of his wife. The school

²⁵H. Kołkontay, Stan oświecenia w Polsce w ostatnich latach panowania Augusta III (State of Education in Poland in the Final Years of the Reign of Augustus III), J. Hulewicz, ed., (Wrocław: 1953), series I, no. 144.

²⁶Klementyna Hoffmanowa, Dziennik Franciszki Krasickiej (Diary of Franciszka Krasicka) (1825) (Warszawa: 1961), pp. 82-86.

²⁷J. Lewicki, Geneza Komisji Edukacji Narodowej (Origin of the Commission for National Education) (Warszawa: 1923), p. 73.

was to offer a four-year education and program in languages, geography, history, natural sciences, music and dance. Sułkowski's death brought an end to the project.²⁸

Franciszek Bielinski in his O sposobie edukacji (Method of Education) presented a broader treatment of the matter. He called for a unified system of girls' education for the whole country. He proposed a comprehensive curriculum for young girls, and discussed the purpose and the objectives of girls' boarding schools.²⁹

The Commission approached the problem of female education by first concentrating on private boarding schools. Prince Adam Czartoryski, commissioned to codify the rules and regulations of the convent and private schools, was given absolute authority over all private schools in Warsaw. In 1775 he presented his Przepisy Komisji Edukacji Narodowej pensjonarzom i mistrzyniom dane (Regulations of the Commission for National Education Given to Administrators of Boarding Schools) which applied to all private schools in Poland. These regulations discussed the organizational, administrative and didactico-methodological aspects of schools. They were published in Polish, French and German.³⁰

The Regulations placed the country's boarding schools under the authority and supervision of the Commission. The licensing procedures established, among other things, teachers' qualifications, qualifying

²⁸S. Truchim, Szkice z dziejów szkolnictwa i kultury (Studies in History of Education and Culture) (Poznan: 1930), pp. 7-16.

²⁹Bielinski, Sposób edukacji, letter 11.

³⁰Lewicki, Ustawodawstwo, pp. 69-82.

examinations, hygiene, period of studies, and, excluded co-education. Czartoryski emphasized the Commission's new goal in education centering on patriotic responsibility. According to him, women had to be active in national affairs and exert a patriotic influence on their husbands. Finally, from all foreigners in charge of boarding schools, Czartoryski demanded respect for the language and for the country which welcomed and offered them their daily bread.³¹ The curriculum was drastically changed in favor of Polish language, Polish history, and practical subjects. French and German became complementary features of this educational program; and French lost its traditional priority of being the unique goal of education. The importance of physical education and of final examinations was discussed. A catalogue of books recommended for young girls was added.

Inspections of the Warsaw girls' boarding schools, the majority of which were run by foreigners, were carried out by Czartoryski. On the fifteen schools it was proved that only a few carried out the Commission's instructions. Out of these schools only two, those of Mrs. Kowalska and Mrs. Ledwońska, earned special mention due to high instructional level and adherence to regulations.³²

Definitive regulations concerning the girls' educational program were established in the Statutes of 1783. The Statutes decreed

³¹Lewicki, Ustawodawstwo, p. 70.

³²T. Wierzbowski, Komisja Edukacji Narodowej i jej szkoły w Koronie (Commission for National Education and Its Schools in the Crown) (Warszawa: 1907), section 25, pp. 29-35.

that the purpose of girls' education was to teach them to become "good wives, mothers, housewives, so that they could cherish truth and love their country".³³

The constantly recurring concern with girls' education in the Commission's deliberations brought about a unique proposal from Ignacy Potocki, in which he recommended that the most reputable ladies be made responsible for young girls' upbringing and overall education. This proposal gained Piramowicz's full support.³⁴ Although only partially implemented during the Commission's term, this proposal was fully enforced and carried out by the generation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw (1807-1815).

Prince Adam Czartoryski in an effort to reach the nobility and to make it aware of the significance of girls' education, wrote in 1781 his Drugi list im. P. Doświadczyńskiego do przyjaciela swego względem edukacji córek (Mr. Doświadczyński's Second Letter to his Friend Concerning the Education of Girls). In it he criticized the cosmopolitan character of traditional education. With an awareness of social changes and of woman's role in Polish life, he included into their education the elements of patriotic and civic involvement.

The same thoughts were reiterated by two other Polish intellectuals, Hugo Kołłątaj and Stanisław Staszic. Kołłątaj called for a strict supervision of girls' educational program by the Commission. He

³³Tync, Komisja, pp. 634-635.

³⁴Piramowicz, Mowy, pp. 157-159.

analyzed the woman's role and gave her national significance. Kołłontaj wrote: ". . . we shall always remain such as our second half will be . . . woman, with whom fate has destined us to live, and to share social responsibilities."³⁵

Stanisław Staszic, philosopher, scholar and politician, reproached woman's "slavery" and her discrimination from active national life and from education. He demanded that the Commission make girls' education a priority, for as future mothers, they will have a voice in deciding the fate of the country.³⁶

The general concern with girls' education gave rise to the textbook Sposób nowy i najłatwiejszy pisania i czytania razem dla panienek z przypisami dla nauczycielek (A New and Most Easy Method of Writing and Reading for Young Women with Instructions for Teachers) written by Maksymilian Prokopowicz, which constituted a first attempt at preparing a concise textbook for young girls. The author reprimanded: "Do not criticize or detest the Polish language or apparel; it is an ill bird that fouls its own nest, that loathes its own land, such one is unworthy of living in any country."³⁷

³⁵Kołłontaj, Wybór pism naukowych, pp. 195-197.

³⁶Stanisław Staszic, Uwagi nad życiem Jana Zamoyskiego (1785) (Remarks on the Life of Jan Zamoyski) ed., S. Czarnowski (Biblioteka Narodowa: Wrocław, 1951), p. 39; and Przestrogi dla Polski (Warnings for Poland) (1790), ed., S. Czarnowski (Kraków: Biblioteka Narodowa, 1926), series 1, no. 98, pp. 161-162.

³⁷M. Prokopowicz, Sposób nowy . . . (A New Method) (Kraków: 1790), pp. 106-111.

The love of country and the concern with national affairs, which became the prime and ultimate goal in girls' education, clearly point to the fact that Polish pedagogical thought was in search of its own, unique course, taking into account the specificity of its conditions, independent of Western educational programs.

Considering the brief span of time the Commission was given in which to tackle the many priority issues referring to the elaboration and enforcement of the multi-faceted program of national education, and the hostile conditions it had to work under, its output and achievement in this regard remain impressive. Potocki, realistically content with the elaboration of such a program, left the full enforcement of girls' educational program for some other time.

The results of the effort the Commission had given to a comprehensive girls' educational program became clearly visible in the girls' curricula in force in both the schools of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw (1807-1815) and the later Congressional Kingdom of Poland, as well as in the ideology and mentality of Polish women and the concern of parents. It must be said that, compared to similar efforts in contemporary Europe, the Polish effort for a comprehensive national program of girls' education appears as a first attempt at organizing such program on a national scale.

The May 3 Constitution, recognizing the importance of the peasant class as the most numerous and a source of the country's material wealth, placed the peasantry under the protection of the law.³⁸

There were proposals strongly advocating the regulation of non-Catholic and Jewish educational matters, in view of obligating these segments of the population to teach their children Polish, and to establish a closer bond with the Polish society.³⁹ There were plans to facilitate the Jewish segment of the population in their process of assimilation, and there was serious thought given to the training of teachers for Jewish schools.⁴⁰

³⁸Mościcki, Trzeci Maj, pp. 62-63.

³⁹The Jews, persecuted in Europe, especially between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries (expelled from England in 1290, from France in 1306 and 1394, from Spain in 1492), found refuge in Poland, which became a center of Jewish culture. Unlike other European countries, the Jews in Poland enjoyed a high degree of tolerance and freedom. Polish kings and princes secured them with extensive privileges, gave them protection and autonomy. The most significant privileges were those of King Bolesław the Pious of 1264, and King Casimir the Great of 1334, 1354 and 1367. The Jews were given personal freedom and the right to engage in commerce, crafts and financial operations.

The economic decline of Polish towns in the eighteenth century caused the Jews to leave towns and settle in the country. Despite the decrees of the May 3 Constitution which granted the Jews equal rights with the middle class, and full equality given to Jews by the Constitution of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw of 1807, the social and economic situation of the Jews worsened. After the Polish Commonwealth was partitioned and ceased to exist in 1795, the Prussian, Austrian and Russian occupational authorities brought a relentless persecution, germanization and russification of not only the Polish, but also the Jewish population. Wielka Encyklopedia Powszechna PWN (Great Universal Encyclopaedia PWN) (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1969), p. 876.

⁴⁰Ender, Sprawy oświatowe, pp. 79-85.

The Russian incursion into the territories of the Commonwealth, as direct result of the Targowica Confederation, terminated the Commission's activity in July of 1792. When it was reactivated in November of 1793 under the name of Commission of Education of Both Nations, it was rumped, its authority limited, and it operated in an atmosphere of imminent national tragedy.

Russia's restrictive measures failed to prevent an armed protest which broke out on a more formidable scale than either the Bar Confederation of 1768-1772, or the War of 1792 -- and which was a response to the Targowica Confederation. The man entrusted with the task of salvation was General Thaddeus Kościuszko.⁴¹ When the situation in Poland became critical, Kościuszko hurried to Kraków, where on March 24, 1794, in the market square of the city, he took an oath to defend

⁴¹Kościuszko (1746-1817) studied military arts in Warsaw and Paris, and had specialized in the art of fortification. In 1776 he journeyed to America where he joined the Revolutionary Army with the rank of colonel. He was entrusted with the fortification of Billingsport, Ticonderoga, Charleston and West Point. He also prepared the fortification of Saratoga, contributing thus to the American victories of September 19, and October 7, 1777. He took part in actual combat at New York and Yorktown, and was the first to enter Charleston on December 14, 1784. He left the American army with the rank of brigadier general, and was honored with grants of land, citizenship, and membership in the Society of the Cincinnati.

Kościuszko returned to Poland in 1784. When the Great Sejm increased the army to 100,000 men, he was called into service with the rank of major general. In the War of 1792 he fought with distinction. When King Stanisław August joined the Targowica Confederation, Kościuszko called that body "infamous traitors and villains", submitted his resignation, and went into exile in France. (Radzinski, Masks of Moscow, pp. 93-94.

the honor and independence of Poland, and proclaimed the declaration of independence. Thus Kościuszko and the little Palatinate of Kraków challenged to war two of the most formidable powers in Europe. At the beginning of the insurrection, Kościuszko had at his disposal about 4,000 regular troops and 2,000 peasants.⁴²

On May 28, 1794, the Supreme National Council (Rada Najwyższa Narodowa) was formed under the leadership of Kościuszko. It included members from all classes who called themselves "citizens". Kościuszko sought especially to gain the support of the peasants, from whose ranks he hoped to create an army of 150,000 men. His manifesto to the peasants proclaimed at Połaniec gave them freedom to move from place to place, to own land, and instituted special courts to deal with peasant-nobleman relationships.⁴³

The army grew rapidly and soon numbered 70,000 men. The Poles won a number of battles, starting with the victory at Racławice (April 4, 1794). However, the Russians consolidated their war machine and prepared for the decisive engagement of the insurrection. In an attempt to prevent the union of General Suvorov with General Fersen, Kościuszko attacked Fersen's army at Maciejowice on October 10, 1794, which proved to have disastrous consequences to the Polish cause. His army was destroyed and he was seriously wounded and taken prisoner.

⁴²Radzinski, Masks of Moscow, p. 95.

⁴³Ibid., p. 96.

The battle of Maciejowice put an end to the Kościuszko Insurrection of 1794.⁴⁴

As punishment for the insurrection, 12,000 Polish officers were exiled to Siberia. The cruel massacre of the inhabitants of the Warsaw suburb of Praga by General Suvorov was quickly followed by the Third Partition, in 1795, in which the last vestiges of the old Respublica were destroyed. "Having destroyed the Polish state, the three powers resolved to erase from the map of Europe and from the minds of the world everything that might recall the memory of Poland."⁴⁵ They concluded a secret pact (January 26, 1797) by which it was decided to avoid in all official references the term Kingdom of Poland, "which for all time ceased to exist."⁴⁶

Franciszek Dmochowski, member of the Department of Education in Kościuszko's Supreme National Council, emphasized the significance of the Commission's program of national education and its tremendous influence on Polish revolutionary nationalism.⁴⁷

The modern, democratic ideals, generated during the term of the Great Sejm -- a direct result of the Commission's activity and the

⁴⁴Radzinski, Masks of Moscow, p. 95.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 98-99.

⁴⁶Michał Bobrzyński, Zarys Historii Polskiej, (Outline of Polish History) (Warsaw: 1927), vol. iii, p. 19.

⁴⁷Tync, Komisja, p. 558.

growing participation of an active body of Polish patriots in the Kościuszko Insurrection -- demonstrate the awakening of Polish revolutionary nationalism. This militant nationalism was the direct result of the tremendous effort made by the Commission for National Education under adverse political conditions in favor of national enlightenment.

What is, then, the achievement of national education in the domain of creating a model of patriotic New Pole, and what is its legacy?

Analyzing the brief period of the Commission's intense activity filled with optimistic hope and tragic events, two trends stand out, which were to dominate the unending Polish struggle for Nationhood: first, romantic, which advocated national pride, heroism and a struggle for independence; second, positivist, which proclaimed a concern for the material foundation of the country and for its social integration.

Although seemingly contradictory, they complemented each other, and served as checks and balances in the continuing effort of struggle for national independence. Polish resistance, dating from before the partitions and continuing after them, became the earliest example of modern revolutionary nationalism in Europe.

CHAPTER IX

THE HISTORICAL BASES AND OVERVIEW OF EUROPEAN NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

The interference of the State in educational matters is comparatively very recent. Up to the eighteenth century education was in the hands of the clergy and the State usually relegated the supervision and organization of education to the clerical authorities. With the rise of the modern national State the medieval education, international in character and clerical in its contents, could not supply the State with men it needed. Economic development of Europe required men of technical and practical education, which the Medieval Universities and clerical schools could not impart. On the other hand the growing centralization of national States required a great number of governmental officials with lay education. These causes compelled the State to pay more attention to the organization of education and gradually to take over from the Church the administration of schools. The aims of the State were in the beginning purely utilitarian and did not pursue the elevation of the whole nation This limited scope of State intervention led to a school system which might be called a class system In this way the ruling classes could more or less preserve their monopoly of government.¹

The foregoing introduction, written by Professor Nicholas Hans, accurately describes the state of affairs which was responsible for precipitating the trend towards a State educational system. Consequently, the Church, deprived of its unquestioned authority in education, struck upon an agreement with the State, by which, in return for the State's support of the particular form of belief, the Church promised to uphold the State's established authority. A time came when

¹Hans, History of Russian Educational Policy, pp. 1-2.

the economic development of Europe could not proceed unless the existing features of the feudal system were abolished. New crafts and industries were in need of free and skilled workers, not illiterate serfs. This economic factor was responsible for widening the social basis of educated citizenry. The influential rationalist movement of Enlightenment, based on science, called for an equality of citizens.²

The credit for the scientific foundation of the "ladder system" of education -- an important element of centralized national educational system -- must go to Jan Komensky (Comenius). Komensky, driven by religious persecution, settled in Leszno, Poland -- a country that for many centuries has been a European center and "an example of religious toleration and of a method of ruling a great State by a large representative body without recourse to autocracy" ³ -- where he was active and lived in the years 1628-1655. The spread of Protestantism was, especially in Poland, eminently successful in founding schools and converting merchant and noble families to Lutheranism and Calvinism.⁴ Komensky, for the first time, divided all of education into four consecutive schools, which thus formed an uninterrupted ladder. In Didactica Magna, written in Poland in 1632 (originally in

²Hans, History of Russian Educational Policy, p. 2.

³Goodwin, European Nobility, p. 157.

⁴William K. Medlin, The History of Educational Ideas in the West (New York: The Center for Applied Research in Education, Inc., 1964), p. 70.

Czech), he writes: "The whole period must be divided into four distinct grades: infancy, childhood, boyhood and youth, and to each grade six years and a special school should be assigned."⁵ These, of course, correspond to our contemporary kindergarten, elementary, secondary and university levels of education.

Since Plato, Komensky was one of the greatest educational reformers, and a source of many of our modern ideas on education. His influence may be traced in many countries. His ideas influenced directly or indirectly the educational policies of many nations during the last few centuries. Educational ideas of the French Enlightenment were influenced by Komensky. Rousseau used them in his Considerations on the Government of Poland, written in 1772 by special request of the Polish Government which anticipated the great State educational reform of the Polish Commission for National Education.⁶ Rousseau recommended the

adoption of a form of state education devoted to the inculcation of public virtue in the younger citizens -- the chief and most effective means towards Poland's regeneration in the face of her enemies. The recommendations are a mixture of practical shrewdness and far from practical idealism . . . Poland in her new life must be equipped with a wholly secular organization of schools, to be managed in every detail by a strong college of senior statesmen engaged in securing that the people shall be patriots, "par inclination, par passion, par nécessité".⁷

⁵Comenius, The Great Didactic, trans. M. W. Keatinge (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1896), chapter xxviii, paragr. 3.

⁶Hans, History of Russian Educational Policy, p. 6.

⁷Goodwin, Cambridge Modern History, p. 165.

The Polish educational reform of 1773 was influenced by Rousseau's work, by the ideas of Komensky and those of Konarski. Polish reforms, in turn, have played a great role in Russian educational history.⁸

(This role is discussed in Chapter X of this dissertation.)

Three great social movements have shaped educational progress since 1789: Nationalism, Democracy and the Industrial Revolution. Each one has contributed heavily to the creation of the present social situation. Nationalism was significant as a form of political organization; Democracy enlarged the electorate in control of government; and the Industrial Revolution brought about a transformation of economic and social life, due to mechanical inventions and the modernization of manufacturing and distributory processes involving material goods.⁹

While these three decisive movements had a thorough impact on the whole Western World, their manifestation in Europe differed from that in the United States of America. There is a striking contrast between European and American conditions. In Europe

a new and extremely vital type of nationalism sprang into existence as a result of the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars Nationalism continued to govern the policies of European governments, while the promise of democracy was engulfed in a flood of political reactionism. After the Congress of Vienna (1815), it was the industrial revolution that brought about in Europe gradual extensions of the suffrage and ultimately manhood suffrage. In the United States, on the other hand, the full development of a democracy based on manhood suffrage had taken place before 1830; that is to say,

⁸Hans, History of Russian Educational Policy, p. 7.

⁹Edward H. Reisner, Nationalism and Education since 1789 (New York: 1922), p. 1.

before any large degree of national unity had been achieved and before the industrialization of American life had made much headway. If democracy in the countries of Western Europe has been the result of the efforts of the factory workers to secure the ballot for the improvement of the conditions of labor, in the United States democracy has come as a result of the abundance of free land on the ever-extending frontier and from the simplicity and the naturalness of pioneer life. The effects of the industrial revolution on American institutions have been appreciably felt only since the Civil War. And so it is seen that, while the three factors of nationalism, democracy, and the industrial revolution have operated both in Western Europe and in the United States, they have done so in different order, with different emphasis, and with quite different effect.¹⁰

Each of the three movements had an interest in education. Nationalism favored education in order to develop a cognizant and enlightened individual, needed to realize national goals. Democracy favored education in order to equip all citizens with responsibility and awareness for their duties as citizens. The economic revolution favored education as a means of developing productive individuals, working for their own, as well as national prosperity.¹¹

On account of the highly complex and unique historical, political, economic, intellectual, linguistic, and psychological conditions of every single State in Europe, the process of educational nationalization proceeded at an uneven pace, with some countries never developing or acquiescing to such a system, for example, Switzerland or Yugoslavia.

The author has made an effort to arrange the different European States according to the date of their first attempt at centralizing and

¹⁰Reisner, Nationalism and Education, p. 2.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 2-3.

nationalizing their educational systems. Fully realizing the difficulty and complexity of such an endeavor, the author has undertaken it only to place the significant reform of the Polish Commission for National Education in a more visible, contextual perspective.

Use has been made of C. E. Black's work The Dynamics of Modernization¹² which was very helpful in placing the European States in their proper educational context referring to their national system of education. The three phases of modernization, used by Professor Black, contribute immensely to the understanding of the evolution of the State system of education, and are absolutely indispensable in this sort of undertaking. This analysis, therefore, has assimilated Professor Black's three phases: (1) Consolidation of Modernizing Leadership, (2) Economic and Social Transformation, (3) Integration of Society, as complementary and clarificatory concepts, and has incorporated them in Table I.

¹²C. E. Black, The Dynamics of Modernization (New York, Evanston, and London: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1966).

TABLE 1

EUROPEAN STATES AND DATES OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THEIR
NATIONAL SYSTEMS OF EDUCATION

Country	National System of Education Initiated	Consolidation of Modernizing Leadership	Economic and Social Transformation	Integration of Society
Poland	1773	1863-1918	1918-	
Austria	1774	1848-1918	1918-	
France	1791	1789-1848	1848-1945	1945-
Denmark	1791	1807-1866	1866-1945	1945-
Germany	1794	1803-1871	1871-1933	1933-
Russia	1804	1861-1971	1917-	
Netherlands	1806	1795-1845	1848-1948	1948-
Norway	1827	1809-1905	1905-1945	1945-

TABLE 1 - Continued

Country	National System of Education Initiated	Consolidation of Modernizing Leadership	Economic and Social Transformation	Integration of Society
Greece	1833	1863-1918	1918-	
Spain	1857	1812-1909	1909-	
Italy	1859	1805-1871	1871-	
Finland	1860	1863-1919	1919-	
Hungary	1868	1848-1918	1918-	
England	1899	1649-1832	1832-1945	1945-
Iceland	1910	1874-1918	1918-	
Portugal	1940	1822-1910	1910-	
Albania	1945	1912-1925	1925-	
Czechoslovakia	1948	1848-1918	1918-	

TABLE 1 - Continued

Country	National System of Education Initiated	Consolidation of Modernizing Leadership	Economic and Social Transformation	Integration of Society
Romania	1950	1878-1918	1918-	
Bulgaria	1959	1878-1918	1918-	
Belgium	Semi-national	1795-1848	1848-1948	1948-
Sweden	Semi-national	1809-1905	1905-1945	1945-
Ireland	Semi-national	1870-1922	1922-	
Switzerland	Nonexistent	1798-1848	1848-1932	1932-
Yugoslavia	Nonexistent	1878-1918	1918-	

SOURCE: Materials in footnotes to Chapter IX referring to countries under investigation.

The following is a chronological list of countries and dates referring to their national systems of education.

POLAND. The establishment of the Polish Commission for National Education in 1773 marks the beginning of Poland's centralized national system of education.

AUSTRIA. The Austrian School Statutes of December 6, 1774 began the country's national school system. The administration was centralized with a Central Educational authority in Vienna.¹³

FRANCE. Although there were many proposals in the eighteenth century to establish a national council on education, it took the revolutionary act of September 4, 1791, to authorize a "system of public instruction, common to all . . . and gratuitous with respect to . . . instruction . . . indispensable to all men". Although educational reforms were undertaken in 1793-95, educational legislation was never fully realized. In 1794, the Lakanal law, providing a primary school, was passed, and primary schooling was made compulsory. Napoleon, who had no interest in primary education, devoted his energy to secondary and higher education. By the imperial laws of 1806-11, the University of France (a national corporation not a school) was set up with jurisdiction over all public education and teaching. All contributed to a highly centralized educational system.¹⁴

¹³Hans, History of Russian Educational Policy, 22-23.

¹⁴William K. Medlin, The History of Educational Ideas in the West (New York: The Center for Applied Research in Education, Inc., 1964), pp. 94-97.

DENMARK. The far-reaching educational reform carried out over a period of twenty-five years by the Great School Committee of 1791 marks the beginning of the Danish central national system of education. In 1814 the most decisive event occurred: education was made compulsory for all children from 7-14. Since then, educational laws indicate the interest and unquestioned authority of the state in educational affairs. The national system of education in Denmark is highly centralized.¹⁵

GERMANY (Prussia). The codification of Prussian law in 1794 contained principles of compulsory education, maintenance of public schools and a religious non-discrimination policy. After 1807 national education was enforced.¹⁶

RUSSIA. The national system of education in Russia was initiated in 1804, influenced to a great extent by the Polish Commission for National Education, Polish ideas, practice and educators.

NETHERLANDS. The state of education in Holland, prior to 1784, was in a deplorable condition. There was no general law regulating primary or secondary education, no educational authority. The first improvements that took place came from an organization called "The Society for the Public Good". Its mission was to improve the existing educational facilities, to spread useful knowledge, and the moral

¹⁵Ole B. Thomsen, Some Aspects of Education in Denmark (University of Toronto Press, 1967), pp. 9-11.

¹⁶John E. Wise, The History of Education (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1964), p. 329.

relief of the masses. In 1796 the Society published General Ideas on National Education -- an analysis of the nation's educational needs.

In 1806 the major law on education was promulgated. By this law all schools in Holland became subject to one regular and unified system of superintendence. A Secretary of State was appointed to take charge of educational matters, and an Inspector General for Primary Schools was attached to his office. The Law of 1806 initiated a state system of education.¹⁷

NORWAY. The central authority in education is the National Assembly, which adopts and amends laws, and establishes the general educational policy. The administration and supervision of the national system is left to the Ministry. The present structure of the educational system was established in 1827, when the National Assembly adopted the first law on primary education in Norway.¹⁸

GREECE. The Ministry of Education was created in 1833 under Prince Otto of Bavaria, who became the first King of Greece. Under his influence the highly centralized German educational system was introduced.¹⁹

¹⁷Hugh M. Pollard, Pioneers of Popular Education 1760-1850 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), pp. 74-76.

¹⁸The Encyclopedia of Education (Macmillan Co., 1971), vol. 1, pp. 450-452.

¹⁹Ibid., vol. 4, p. 191.

SPAIN. Charles III (1759-1788) expelled the Jesuits and postulated the principles of the French Enlightenment, centralization and secularization. Nineteenth-century laws for primary and secondary education in 1812 and 1825 were ineffective, but the comprehensive Moyano law of 1857 covered all aspects of public education and lasted into the twentieth century. Education was compulsory from 6 to 12, and gratuitous for all in case of need as of 1868.²⁰

ITALY. The foundations of contemporary state educational system were formed in the second half of the nineteenth century. The first important educational step was the Casati Act of 1859, which organized the elementary schools, and also provided for secondary schools. These schools became compulsory under the Coppino Act of 1877, following the unification of Italy. Religious instruction was dropped, and civics introduced. The 1904 Orlando Act, further expanded the school's curriculum. The Casati Act of 1859 started Italy's state educational system.²¹

FINLAND. In the 1860s a network of elementary schools was established. At this time also the National Board of Schools has been charged with administering and supervising the nation's primary and secondary schools. State Universities are supervised by the Ministry of Education. The system is rather centralized and nationalized.²²

²⁰Wise, History of Education, p. 335.

²¹Ibid., p. 334.

²²Encyclopedia of Education, vol. 4, pp. 44-45.

HUNGARY. Compulsory education and state supervision were enacted in 1868. The nationalization of schools in 1948 established secular public education for the first time.²³

ENGLAND. In 1894 the Royal Commission on Secondary Education was established, to report on best methods of initiating a well-organized system of Secondary Education in England. In 1899 the Board of Education had replaced the Education Department, and became the sole central authority for primary, secondary and technical education alike. By the Act of 1902, an organized national system of education was introduced.²⁴

ICELAND. Until late in the nineteenth century, Iceland had no system and its education was based on home instruction. It was only between the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of World War I that interest was developed in establishing a nation-wide system of state-supported education.²⁵

PORTUGAL. The Ministry of Education is charged with implementing educational laws and supervising instruction. The government has taken a consistent interest in the primary system of education since 1940, and secondary since 1964.²⁶

²³Ibid., pp. 532-533.

²⁴H. C. Barnard, A History of English Education, (London: University of London Press Ltd., 1961), pp. 204-211.

²⁵Encyclopedia of Education, vol. 4, p. 534.

²⁶Ibid., vol. 7, p. 181.

ALBANIA. Prior to 1945 the country had a poor educational system. An uneven network of elementary and secondary schools did not cover the whole country, and there were no higher schools. Eighty to ninety percent of the entire population was illiterate. The development of the Albanian national system of education started in 1945. Education in Albania is free and state controlled. There are elementary and secondary schools and a State University founded in 1957. Education is compulsory for children 6-13, which due to shortage of schools is not fully enforced.²⁷

CZECHOSLOVAKIA. Schools and colleges are controlled by the national government. National education is determined by the basic school law of 1948.²⁸

RUMANIA. Rumania has a highly centralized national system of education. The state educational system is based on a series of laws adopted in the late 1950s.²⁹

BULGARIA. Education in Bulgaria is highly centralized and nationalized. The basic law on education was enacted in 1959.³⁰

BELGIUM. The structure, administration and content of Belgian education are determined by the national constitution and national school laws, the most important of which is the law of May 29, 1959.

²⁷Encyclopedia of Education, vol. 1, p. 120.

²⁸Ibid., vol. 2, p. 596.

²⁹Ibid., vol. 7, pp. 570-571.

³⁰Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 496-498.

It takes into account both linguistic and religious differences. It also stipulates that independent educational institutions may exist free from state control. The Belgian constitution provides that the State does not have a monopoly in education, and that it may organize its own schools according to laws passed by parliament. Consequently, there are two parallel systems of education: one organized by the public authorities, by the state, provinces and municipalities, the other by private bodies. The law recognizes two systems of schools -- official schools and independent schools. Official schools are organized by the national government. Belgium therefore possesses a dual system or semi-national system of education.³¹

SWEDEN. Educational direction and policy are established by parliament, the Ministry of Education, and the National Board of Education. There is an extensive decentralization of educational responsibility. Sweden's educational system would be best described as semi-national.³²

IRELAND. National schools provide primary education. Although almost all secondary schools are private, state control is exercised through the imposition of state examinations. The educational system is semi-national.³³

³¹Encyclopedia of Education, vol. 1, pp. 450-452.

³²Ibid., vol. 8, p. 577.

³³Ibid., vol. 5, pp. 219-223.

SWITZERLAND. Switzerland has no Swiss national system of education as such, only a family likeness between the arrangements of the different cantons, each one deciding when to go to schools, how long to go, and what to learn. Neither is there a Swiss National Ministry of Education. A national system of education does not exist.³⁴

YUGOSLAVIA. Although the nations constituting Yugoslavia are basically ancient, the name Yugoslavia is fairly recent and goes back to 1945, when it came into existence as a federal state. Education in Yugoslavia is the responsibility of the constituent Republics, which have great freedom to organize education in their own way. If there is any similarity between their arrangements, it arises from the fact that all of them have Communist governments. Differences occur from their different languages and history.³⁵

³⁴Anthony Kerr, Schools in Europe (London: Bowes & Bowes, 1960), p. 178.

³⁵Ibid., p. 178.

CHAPTER X

RUSSIAN NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND THE COMMISSION FOR NATIONAL EDUCATION

The Russian educational tradition presents many unique features which distinguish it from that of Western Europe. While Western Russia remained for centuries under direct Polish influence and rule, and has evolved under the impact of Western ideas, Muscovite Russia, on the contrary, was isolated from the rest of Europe for over two hundred years, due to the great Tartar invasion. It must be noted that both Western and Muscovite parts of Russia manifested a strong penchant for secular education. In this regard Russian school policy differs from that of Western Europe, where the Catholic Church constituted a strong, decisive force in education, was its initiator, promoter and leader.¹

Muscovite Russia did not have any lay schools in the seventeenth century, while Western Russia (Ukraine), which was at first Polish, afterwards Russian, could boast of a system of parochial, secondary and higher schools. These schools, maintained by religious brotherhoods, sought to preserve the orthodox faith and Ukrainian tradition from Roman Catholic and Polish influences. The Ukrainian system established privately in the Polish Commonwealth, outside the Russian state, only

¹Nicholas Hans, The Russian Tradition in Education, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 5.

partially continued to exist under Russia.² Consequently,

in their struggle with the Catholic-Polish reaction, represented by the Jesuits, the schools took over many features of the Western Europe tradition. But we must underline that they imitated not only the Jesuit system, but also the Protestant schools, which flourished in Poland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Especially interesting is the influence of the academy of Comenius (Komensky) at Lissa (Polish Leszno), which was evident in both the organization and the methods of Brotherhood schools. Being under the protection of the secular power of the Coassacks, these schools were open to all sections of the population.³

Russia's social structure included: (1) the ruling class, which consisted of two distinctive groups, the local gentry as Government officials held land and peasants on behalf of the Government, and, the hereditary nobles, descendants of princely and Boyar families, who owned land and peasants in their inherited right; (2) the motley middle class made up of town merchants, free citizens and clergy; (3) state peasants and cossacks -- direct subjects of the Government; (4) semi-free serfs and slaves -- personal property of their owners.⁴

The first attempt at building a national system of education was made by Peter the Great (1692-1725), who as founder of the Russian educational policy, was responsible for a number of important innovations in that domain. He initiated a secular, scientific and utilitarian school system and integrated many European characteristics into

²Nicholas Hans, History of Russian Educational Policy 1701-1917 (New York: Russel & Russel Inc., 1964), pp. 9-10.

³Hans, Russian Tradition, p. 6.

⁴Hans, History of Russian Educational Policy, pp. 8-9.

the Russian behavior, creating, for the first time, a fusion of Russian and European traditions. Peter's policy expressed an anticlerical propensity, and, as an autocratic enlightened ruler, he suppressed the Patriarchate and subordinated the Church directly to the secular government. He ignored public opinion, and the reforms he undertook were enforced by his police and army.

In 1701 Peter established the School of Mathematics and Navigation in Moscow, which became the basis for a number of lay public schools in Russia. Unable to find a clergy which would assent to cooperate with the West and accept European influences, Peter entrusted Feotan Prokopovich in 1715 with the education of a new class of clergy. The Dukhovny Reglament (Clerical Statute) of 1721 reformed clerical education in the spirit of the previously established secular scientific schools.⁵ In 1707 Peter established the "Surgeons' School" and in 1712 an "Artillery" and "Engineering" schools.

Peter's attempt, however, to create a State system of education for all classes failed. His plans expressed a utilitarian and scientific trend, and tended to train officials for various governmental positions. He did not intend to provide education for the nation, or to set up schools for the peasantry.

Educational institutions established after Peter's death in 1725, and before Catherine's accession in 1762, are isolated in character and far from contributing to a system. The notable event of this

⁵Hans, Russian Tradition, p. 7.

period was the foundation of the first Russian University in 1755 in Moscow.⁶

The next step in building a national system of education was made by Catherine II (1762-1796). When she came to the throne, there actually was no school system in the country, and no established educational tradition.⁷ Two factors influenced her domestic political and educational policies: the thrust of the ideology of the French Enlightenment, and, the class pressures of the gentry to whom she owed her throne. These polar interests were responsible for Catherine's often contradictory actions. She made an effort to establish a democratic ladder system in education, but her support weakened after the Pugachev peasant uprising.

In 1777 Catherine established an Educational Commission of the Holy Synod, which prepared a report on education. In 1782 she set up a "Commission for Establishing Schools". It followed the Austrian example and called for the publication of new manuals and the training of new teachers. The schools were divided into three levels: (1) two-year Minor Schools, (2) three-year Middle Schools, and (3) five-year Major Schools. A revised scheme was presented in the new Statute for Schools, published December 5, 1786, which, in fact, constitutes the first Russian Education Act covering the whole country, and is of

⁶Łukasz Kurdybacha, ed., Historia wychowania (History of Education) (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1967), vol. 1, pp. 571-572.

⁷Hans, History of Russian Educational Policy, p. 17.

great significance. The "Middle School" was dropped, and the Statute emphasized a number of provisions. The clauses of the Act stipulated that schools be maintained by local authorities, the Boards of Social Welfare (Cl. 94), the central control belonged to the Chief Administration of Schools in St. Petersburg (Cl. 106), all textbooks were to be published by the Chief Administration (Cl. 110), all education was to be free (Cl. 28), and private schools were to be placed under the authority of the Board of Social Welfare (App. No. 8).⁸

The Minor and the Major Schools were intended for the urban population. The absence of rural schools constituted a weak point in the statute, for the new school system accommodated the town population only, instead of being nationwide. Despite this disadvantage, it remains significant in the evolution of the Russian educational program. While the peasants did not get their schools, the statutes at least gave the peasants access to town schools: "New schools are called 'people's' schools, because in them any one of Her Majesty's subjects can receive education suitable to his situation".⁹

At the turn of the century 254 towns had schools, but 250 remained without any whatsoever. The schools of the former Polish provinces -- annexed by Catherine after Poland's partition in 1772 -- which existed previously, were incorporated into the system. As

⁸Hans, History of Russian Educational Policy, pp. 24-26.

⁹Ibid., p. 28.

regards schools for the peasant population, there were only eleven during Catherine's reign.¹⁰

The University Statutes of 1787 made provisions for higher education (Gymnasia and Universities). Although unconfirmed by Catherine, they are of importance, as they constitute a link in the educational continuum from Catherine II to Alexander I. Professor Hans gives the following assessment of Catherine's educational activity:

The educational system of Catherine . . . was democratic, open to all classes and both sexes, and was free and secular in character. But its structure was left unfinished, and after the first years of rapid development the number of schools and pupils began to decrease. Evidently in its incomplete state the system was doomed to failure. New ideas and new men were needed to rebuild anew the Russian school system.¹¹

The reign of Paul I (1796-1801) was brief and did not affect Russian educational legislation. His restrictive policies and autocratic tyranny brought about the nation's alienation and ended in his assassination. The accession of Alexander I (1801-1825) was greeted with relief by the general public as a token of new order. Alexander's first years of reign justified these expectations. New ideas and new men were permitted to influence the course of Russian education.

After his accession to the throne, Alexander appointed an "unofficial committee" (Comité secret), composed of his intimate friends:

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 29-30.

¹¹Ibid., p. 32.

Prince Adam George Czartoryski, his Polish friend,¹² Count Stroganov, Count Kochubei and Novosiltzev.¹³ Other Masonic friends such as La Harpe (Swiss reformer), Severin Potocki (Polish educator), M. Speransky, M. Muraviev, and F. von Klinger, worked closely with the committee. All of his collaborators espoused the ideals of the Enlightenment. As Masons they were international and undenominational, but as citizens of their countries, they were patriots and conformed to national religions.¹⁴

Alexander, also a Mason, was determined to reform Russia in conformity with the ideology of the European Enlightenment. He made the liberation of serfs, the limitation of autocracy, and the democratization of society through education his goal. He intended to bring Russian Autocracy into constitutional channels.

From the beginning, his advisers were uncertain as to how far it was safe to proceed. Czartoryski was the only member of the committee to present a tangible proposal. He suggested to divide the governmental organs into administrative, judiciary, and legislative branches, and replace the Collegia by ministers, each with an individual responsibility. That part of Czartoryski's plan the Czar accepted. His proposal, however, that the ministers be answerable to

¹³Ibid., p. 505.

¹⁴Hans, Russian Tradition, pp. 19-20.

the senate, and that the senate be given the right to discuss the Czar's decree, Alexander rejected.¹⁵

In order to gain the Poles' favor, and secure their help in an imminent war with Napoleon, Alexander surrounded himself with outstanding and influential Poles, such as Czartoryski and Potocki, and sought their advice. Under the influence of their opinions, Alexander reorganized the Central Government and created several Ministries with definite divisions of administration, including the Ministry of Public Instruction, which, as the central organ of the government was the result of the first law on education of 1802.¹⁶ Professor Kurdybacha offers the following comment pertaining to Polish involvement in the elaboration of a Russian national system of education:

Concurrently with the Ministry of Public Instruction the School Commission was established, composed of political and educational activists and of scholars. The Poles who were members of the Commission included Adam George Czartoryski and Severin Potocki. The first presented to the Commission at the end of 1802 an extensive proposal On the Principles of Public Instruction in the Russian Empire (O zasadach publicznego oświecenia w imperium rosyjskim) prepared in collaboration with Hieronim Stroynowski, the then rector of the University of Wilno. This proposal included both the Polish achievements of the Commission for National Education, and the various Russian desiderata discussed at previous meetings of the School Commission. On the basis of these two sources, Czartoryski proposed a plan for dividing Russia into six educational regions headed by universities, responsible for administering the lower-level schools, which was later accepted by Alexander I.¹⁷

¹⁵Radzinski, Masks of Moscow, p. 107.

¹⁶Kurdybacha, Historia wychowania, vol. 2, p. 132.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 132.

The system formerly worked out by Catherine II was partially successful. Major and Minor schools were opened in many provincial towns, but this could not satisfy the State's requirements for the training and education of officials. These schools constituted only the middle part of the educational ladder which was "without any base and ended in mid air".¹⁸ This embryonic educational structure was so radically reformed, and expanded to such dimensions by the new Czar, that we may justly consider Alexander I to be the founder of the modern Russian national school system. His educational legislation was influenced to a great extent by Polish educational reformers like Czartoryski, Potocki and Stroynowski, Polish ideas and practice.¹⁹

Prince Adam George Czartoryski (1770-1861), perhaps the Czar's most intimate friend,²⁰ shared his liberal views, and helped him mould them. It will be remembered that Czartoryski's father, Prince Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski (1734-1823), was one of the leading educational reformers and masterminds of the Polish Commission for National Education of 1773, and had thorough knowledge of its theory and practice. It is known that the young prince was exposed to, and discussed, national and educational affairs with his father, which leaves no ground for doubt that, even before his departure for Petersburg after the last Partition of Poland, he must have had good knowledge of the

¹⁸Hans, History of Russian Educational Policy, p. 35.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 35.

²⁰Goodwin, New Cambridge Modern History, vol. 9, p. 503.

Statutes and its contents.²¹ It will also be remembered that these Statutes, published in 1783, under the significant title of Ustawy Komisji Edukacyi Narodowej dla stanu akademickiego i na szkoły w krajach rzeczypospolitej przepisane (Statutes of the Commission for National Education Written for the Faculty and Schools of the States of the Polish Commonwealth), organized all Polish schools on the same unified principles. An administrative ladder was established which connected all levels of the educational system. Elementary schools, called parochial schools (szkoły parafialne), were intended for the poorer classes. There were two kinds of secondary schools: District Schools (Szkoly podwydziałowe) offered a four-year course, and Provincial Schools (Szkoly wydziałowe), a seven-year course. The two Universities in Cracow and Wilno were the higher schools (Szkoly główne). The administration was reorganized by which parochial schools were supervised and controlled by the headmasters of District Schools, District Schools by the Rectors of Provincial Schools, and the latter by the Rector of the University of their State, that is, Cracow for the Crown (Poland), and Wilno for the Principality (Lithuania). This system of education survived the partitions of Poland and continued to exist in all provinces acquired by Russia.

The Russian Commission of 1782 did not change the existing system in the former Polish provinces, but opened a number of Major and Minor schools with the Russian language. It was not until 1800 that the Russian Commission decided to examine the Polish system.

²¹Hans, History of Russian Educational Policy, pp. 35-36.

In November of 1801, it issued an official report on the work of the Polish Commission for National Education. The Russian Commission did not criticize the system itself, but it considered the Polish nationalistic spirit which dominated all these schools as contrary to Russian interest. The Commission, therefore, introduced the necessary changes into the textbooks, but Polish as the language of instruction was retained.²²

On December 23, 1801, Alexander's "Unofficial Committee" discussed educational policy. On its advice, the old School Administration (founded by Catherine II) was authorized and instructed to draw up new School Statutes. Prince Adam Czartoryski's detailed memorandum in 10 chapters and 102 paragraphs, presented to the Administration on October 4, 1802, was accepted as the basis for the new Statutes. Two other proposals were presented by members of the Administration -- N. Fuss and Yankovich de Mirievo -- which incorporated the educational achievements of the 1782 Russian Commission, but Czartoryski's memorandum was preferred.²³

In addition to the first law on education of 1802, which established Russia's first ministry of education, we must distinguish the following separate educational laws; (1) The Provisional Rules of Public Instruction of January 24, 1803, which provided general policy, (2) The Statutes of Dorpat University of 1803, (3) The Statutes of

²²Ibid., pp. 36-37.

²³Ibid., p. 37.

the Imperial University of Wilno and of the Schools of the Wilno Region of May 18, 1803 (supplemented by the law of August 28, 1804), (4) The Statutes of November 5, 1804 which referred to the Regions of Moscow, Kharkov and Kazan.²⁴ As mentioned earlier, it was Czartoryski who proposed to divide Russia into six university regions, which was accepted by Alexander I. Consequently, besides the existing Universities of Moscow and Wilno, universities were established in Dorpat (1802), Kazan (1804), Kharkov (1805) and Petersburg (1819). Provincial Schools (gymnasia) were founded in all the provincial capitals of European Russia. District Schools did not cover all district towns. Parochial Schools found themselves in the worst situation on account of dire need of trained teachers and substantial financial resources.²⁵ Table II lists the six university regions organized upon the recommendation of Prince Adam Czartoryski, the foundation year of the university, and the curators.

²⁴Hans, History of Russian Educational Policy, pp. 37-38.

²⁵Hans, Russian Tradition in Education, p. 21.

TABLE II

RUSSIAN UNIVERSITY REGIONS AND THEIR CURATORS

University Regions	Curators
Wilno University 1578	Prince Adam Czartoryski (Pole)
Moscow University 1755	N. Muraviev (Russian)
Dorpat University 1802	F. von Klinger (German)
Kazan University 1804	Stepan Rumovsky (Russian)
Kharkov University 1805	Count Severin Potocki (Pole)
Petersburg University 1819	N. Novosiltsev (Russian)

SOURCE: Hans, Russian Tradition in Education, pp. 20-21.

Prince Adam Czartoryski was put in charge of the university and schools of the Wilno region in which Polish was to be the main language of education. As curator of the Wilno Region (1803-1824) and, at the same time, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs (1804-1806), Czartoryski never ceased to be a Polish patriot, and, his entire life was dedicated to the restoration of Polish independence. Count Severin Potocki, the noted Polish educator, became the curator of the Russian region of the University of Kharkov.

The Ministry of Public Instruction, headed by Count P. W. Zavadovsky, worked jointly with the Central Board of Schools (Glavnoe Pravlenie Uchilishch), consisting of the six curators, Stroganov, and two members of the Academy of Sciences, which was the real decision maker.

Czartoryski, as curator of the Wilno Region, became the chief of all schools within the former Polish territories. As part of Russia, these territories formed eight provinces. The provinces of Wilno, Grodno, Minsk, Vitebsk, and Mohylev were under Czartoryski's direct authority.²⁶ The three southern provinces of Volhynia, Podolia and Kiev, were under Thaddeus Czacki, the Polish educator, who in 1803 was appointed school inspector by Alexander I.²⁷ The Czar, who sought the support of the Polish szlachta, did not hesitate to base all education in the Wilno Region on the Polish language. When in 1819

²⁶Kurdybacha, Historia wychowania, vol. 2, p. 132.

²⁷Ibid., p. 142.

Alexander I told the historian Karamzin of his plans to restore the old Poland and return to her the West Russian provinces, Karamzin submitted a memorandum in which he strongly rebuked the Czar stating that Alexander had no right to dispose at his will of the Russian lands.²⁸

The greater part of Western Russia was for a long time under the authority of the Polish Commission for National Education, possessed an established school system and a recognized educational tradition. When Prince Czartoryski and Count Potocki were asked by the Russian Chief School Administration to frame new statutes in accordance with the practice of the Polish Commission, the two educators not only made thorough use of the Polish Statutes, but it is obvious that some parts of the Wilno Statutes were merely translated from Polish with slight modifications. Table III -- comparison of the translated Polish paragraph 4 and Russian paragraph 41 -- will constitute an excellent example.

²⁸Hans, Russian Tradition in Education, p. 23.

TABLE III

COMPARISON BETWEEN POLISH AND RUSSIAN STATUTES

Paragraph 4 of the Polish Statutes	Paragraph 41 of the Russian (Wilno) Statutes
1. Candidates for teaching posts must be prepared by the University.	1. The University must prepare capable teachers for all vacancies in the schools of the district.
2. All teachers of Provincial and District Schools have the right to become candidates for University Chairs.	2. The Senior teachers of Provincial Schools and the Headmasters of District Schools have the right to become candidates for the University Chairs.
3. The University sends its Inspectors to all Schools of its Region.	3. The Rector of the University has the right to inspect all Schools of its Region.
4. All School reports must be sent to the University (annually).	4. The usual Inspectors elected by the University report annually to the University.

SOURCE: Hans, History of Russian Educational Policy, p. 39.

Furthermore, the Polish structure of schools was retained in its entirety: parochial, district, provincial schools and Universities. The ladder of educational administration remained the same but for one point: the post of Regional Curator was introduced, which was not to be found in the Polish Statutes. The Curator was limited to powers of supervision and inspection. The administration belonged to the University. The syllabus and time table were nearly identical in both Statutes. The Russian District School, like the Polish one, offered a four-year course, and the Provincial, again like the Polish one, a seven-year course. The time table was slightly modified in the upper classes, with more emphasis on morals, history and geography, and less on Latin and physics. The difference can be seen in Table IV, which presents a comparison of time tables.

TABLE IV

COMPARISON OF THE NUMBER OF HOURS PER WEEK
IN THE POLISH AND RUSSIAN PROVINCIAL SCHOOLS

Subjects	I & II Class.		III Class.		IV Class.		V Class.		VI Class.		VII Class.		Total		Difference
	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	
Literature (Polish & Latin)	9	9	8	9	3	3	3	3	3	3	6	2	41	38	- 3
Mathematics	6	6	6	4	8	6	4	4	4	4	-	-	34	30	- 4
Handwriting	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	0
Geography & History	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	4	-	4	3	7	14	24	+10
Morals & Civics	1	1	1	2	1	3	1	3	4	5	-	-	9	15	+ 6
Physics & Natural Science	-	-	3	3	6	5	9	6	9	4	2	2	29	20	- 9

TABLE IV - Continued

Subjects	I & II Class.		III Class.		IV Class.		V Class.		VI Class.		VII Class.		Total		Difference
	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	
Logic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	2	0
Political Economy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	7	7	7	0
TOTALS	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	140	140	0
German } French } Russian } Drawing }	all the seven classes are combined in four groups												12	16	+ 4
													0	16	+16
													0	16	+16
													0	16	+16
P = Polish															
R = Russian															

SOURCE: Hans, History of Russian Educational Policy, p. 40.

The distribution of subjects among teachers remained the same but for one modification. Whereas the Polish Provincial School had four senior teachers: (1) Teacher of Polish and Latin Literature, (2) Teacher of Mathematics and Logic, (3) Teacher of Physics and Science, and (4) Teacher of Morals, Laws, History and Geography, together with one junior teacher of German, and in some schools, Russian and French, the Russian version replaced the fourth teacher by two: (1) Teacher of Morals and Law, and (2) Teacher of History and Geography. This modification together with the change in redistribution of hours in the upper classes, emphasized the more utilitarian aims of the Russian Statutes for Wilno. Another striking innovation in the Russian Statutes was the coordination of syllabuses of the parochial and secondary schools. The Polish school system was rather a class system, while the Wilno Statutes seemed to express greater democratic attitude, perhaps due to French influence. The Russian parochial school was also intended for the poorer classes. Its curriculum was identical with that of the Polish school, and included Reading, Writing and Arithmetic, Agriculture and Crafts, but according to paragraph 49, every student who finished the parochial school was allowed to enter the District School without examination. The District and Provincial School syllabuses had to be a direct continuation of the parochial school.²⁹

²⁹Ibid., pp. 40-41.

The foregoing comparisons have provided us with facts, which make it obvious that the Wilno Statute is a modification of the Polish Statutes of 1783. Furthermore, we know it for a fact that the Wilno region was taken as an example in modelling the other university regions of Russia. Consequently, when the general Statutes of 1804 were framed, the Wilno Statute was much consulted. In this indirect way, the Polish influence is felt even in the later Russian Statutes.³⁰

It is only in this historical connection and perspective, and in the full understanding of how Alexander's educational legislation was considerably influenced by Polish ideas, practice and men, that we are able to appreciate a major Polish contribution to the origin and development of the Russian national system of education and reform. The era of Alexander I, which could be termed as a period of struggle between absolutism and constitutionalism, may be considered as being relatively progressive, one that had a lasting effect on Russian educational policy and modernization.

³⁰Ibid., p. 41.

CHAPTER XI

PLANS FOR A NATIONAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE COMMISSION FOR NATIONAL EDUCATION

When in 1795, after twenty-two years of intensive educational activity, the Polish Commission for National Education ceased to exist together with the statehood of the Polish Commonwealth, and the development of the successful achievements of its democratic national system of education were arrested, a new born nation, the United States of America, initiated an effort to establish an American national system of education.

Although the attempt to establish such a system of education in the United States was unsuccessful, among its many outstanding proponents -- Samuel Knox, Samuel Smith, Robert Coram, Benjamin Rush, Lafitte du Courteuil¹ -- one man stands out: Pierre Samuel Dupont de Nemours (1739-1817). This leading French physiocrat wrote, at the suggestion of Thomas Jefferson, a proposal which outlined in some detail his ideas for a complete national system of education in the United States, from primary grades through the university. Interestingly

¹Robert E. Potter, The Stream of American Education, (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1967), pp. 116-117.

enough, that very same Franchman, twenty-six years earlier, was actively involved in the grand project of the Polish Commission for National Education of formulating and establishing a national system of education for the states of the Polish Commonwealth. It can be seen that, having been actively involved in the Polish Commission's enterprise and exposed to the myriad of problems relating to the implementation of a national educational system, Dupont had acquired a valuable first-hand working knowledge in this domain by being an eyewitness to the many discussions and proposals referring to all aspects of national education, and had therefore been influenced by the Commission's theory and practice. It can be seen that he had assimilated a number of significant ideas, solutions and answers during the course of his Polish experience. By juxtaposing and comparing his 1774 Polish educational activity and his three proposals referring to a national system of education written on the request of the Polish Commission, with the proposal for an American national system of education, it will become evident that Dupont remains a significant link between the successful Polish experience in national education and the vigorous but unsuccessful American undertaking.

In the spring of 1774 Dupont was confronted with an unusual offer of employment which promised both honor and generous financial remuneration. Count Joachim Chreptowicz, Vice-Chancellor of Lithuania and a Commissioner of Education in the newly established Commission for National Education, recommended Dupont to Prince Adam Czartoryski, who at

that time was in Paris in search of a tutor for his son.² Prince Czartoryski offered Dupont the position of tutor and the title of Honorary Councillor of the King and the Republic of Poland. Dupont was to receive for these offices an annual salary of 10,000 francs in addition to other handsome benefits. When Dupont hesitated, Baudeau, who returned from Poland, made arrangements that Dupont be given also the position of Secretary of the High Council of National Education.³

Dupont could not refuse such offer. He arrived in Warsaw with his wife and two sons in the first week of September. His position of Secretary for Foreign Correspondence of the Commission for National Education brought him tremendous satisfaction. He was in total agreement with the Commission that national regeneration was to come through a consistent and efficient system of national education.⁴ With a sincere concern for the importance of education and its decisive role in improving society, Dupont eagerly went to work.⁵

His original contributions cannot be discerned, and were most likely limited, since they were usually restricted to summarizing and elaborating the Commission's proposals and suggestions, and therefore reflected

²The young Adam Czartoryski, whom Dupont was supposed to tutor, grew up to become the well known principal Polish adviser of Alexander I of Russia and reformer of the Russian national system of education.

³Ambrose Saricks, Pierre Samuel Dupont de Nemours (The University of Kansas Press: Lawrence, 1965), p. 59.

⁴Ibid., pp. 60-61.

⁵Ibid., p. 60.

the views of the Polish Commission for National Education.⁶ Dupont quickly recognized the extremely difficult conditions the Polish reformers were facing in trying to enforce a national system of education. These unique conditions included a weak governmental system, interference by foreign powers, lack of revenue, and jealousies among the Polish nobles.

The three proposals submitted by Dupont stressed, in addition to educational matters, key social and military aspects. Dupont revealed that the establishment of the Commission for National Education was closely linked to a series of reforms to be carried out by the progressive segment of the Polish society. In Dupont de Nemours' own words, the Commission was to create a nation which, thus far, was made up of such heterogeneous elements as lords and slaves.⁷ The French physiocrat and economist based his proposals on a hierarchy of primary, secondary and higher schools. Within the structure of the primary school a thoroughly practical and utilitarian program was to be established. He requested that special attention be given to the teacher and his family, by providing for his material existence so that he be able to devote himself to the important task of his profession. The szkoła powiatowa (district school) reserved for the children of the nobility

⁶Jobert, La Commission d'Education Nationale, p. 186.

⁷P. S. Dupont de Nemours, Principes de l'éducation politique (Principles of Political Education) in Education Nationale (National Education) (Kraków: Biblioteka im. Czartoryskich), vol. 2, manuscript no. 818.

would offer an education needed by the landowner who wanted to be kept abreast of all innovations and modern achievements in agriculture and animal raising, and who, at the same time, would take active part in economic and political life. The szkoła wojewódzka (provincial school) would train for military, civil and administrative services. It would therefore offer a thorough curriculum that included economics, politics, national law, international law, an array of military subjects and foreign languages including French. Cognizant of Poland's political situation Dupont, in agreement with and full knowledge of members of the Commission who themselves had to be cautious of the Partitioning Powers, proposed military training in all types of schools, including parochial elementary schools. This particular kind of military training, called "patriotic games", anticipated the joint participation of children of the nobility and peasants, and constituted an important step in the process of democratization of social life in the Polish Commonwealth.⁸

Stanisław Tync, the eminent educational historian and authority on education and the eighteenth century, has the following to say about the

Commission:

The concern to sever the school from monastic cosmopolitanism, to confer upon it and the students there educated a distinct national character, which is generally expressed in the slogan of national and civic education, uniform, and possessing consistent ideology, seems to have made a striking impression on its contemporaries if Pierre Dupont de Nemours, the Commission's Secretary for Foreign

⁸P. S. Dupont de Nemours, Vues générales. Moyens d'établir les écoles paroissiales, le 27 septembre 1774 (General Views. Means of Establishing Parochial Schools, September 27, 1774) in Education Nationale (Kraków: Archiwum PAN), manuscript no. 2200.

Correspondence, defined these Polish tendencies in the words: create a nation through public education -- Créer une nation par l'instruction publique.⁹

When Louis XV died, Louis XVI appointed Turgot as his Finance Minister, and Turgot immediately insisted that Dupont become his assistant. Turgot arranged to have Louis XVI personally request of the Polish king that Dupont be released. Dupont was to be compensated for the salary he would forego by resigning his position with the Commission for National Education.¹⁰

When Dupont returned to France, he helped Turgot draft a proposal dealing with the organization of a national system of education in France, at which time he drew on the Polish Commission's educational experience. It was not until 1808, under Napoleon I, that his educational plans were carried out.¹¹

Twenty-six years after his Polish venture, he was undertaking a second trip abroad, this time to America. He arrived in the United States, again, with his wife and two sons in 1800. At the suggestion of Thomas Jefferson, Dupont wrote a proposal for a national system of education in the United States -- Sur l'éducation nationale dans les Etats Unis d'Amerique (National Education in the United States of America). Two of his most significant contributions in the plan for a national system of education in America were: the concept of the

¹⁰James J. McLain, The Economic Writings of Dupont de Nemours (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1977), pp. 41-42.

¹¹Kurdybacha, Komisja Edukacji Narodowej, pp. 291-292.

"university", embracing all branches of public education, and the establishment of a Council on Education.

Dupont's first contribution, the university, would be federally controlled and supported, and would provide free education to citizens, beginning with primary and ending with university education.¹²

Our University will be different. It will include our primary schools, our colleges, and our special schools. For all these institutions will be branches of our public education. And the special schools will be only the summit or the completion.

I would not therefore give the name University to the special schools, though it may have a useful side; namely, that of adopting standards, and of convincing Europeans as well as Americans that youth can be as well taught in America as in Europe.

It should be provided by the law concerning education, that the General Council and the Committees of Public Instruction; the special schools for the most advanced studies; the colleges, of which the object is chiefly to develop literary and scientific men; and the primary schools which will give the most important knowledge to all citizens -- shall together constitute the University of North America.¹³

It will be remembered that a similar structure of interdependent educational ladder has been formulated and implemented by the Polish Commission in 1773.

Dupont's second contribution anticipated the establishment of a Council on Education:

¹²Pierre Samuel Dupont de Nemours, National Education in the United States of America (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1923), pp. 94-95.

¹³Ibid., p. 125.

In each State the Committee of Education appointed by the Legislature should supervise all the national instruction; appoint the Principals of colleges; give its approval to professors and assistant professors; dismiss them, as well as the Principals themselves; keep informed of all that is being accomplished; preside, by one of its members or by an authorized Commissioner, with the municipality and local public officers, at the distribution of prizes; present to the Legislature each year an account of the work of colleges and schools; publish the names of pupils to whom prizes are awarded; suggest, in the form of a petition, such laws or appropriations as may be necessary for education. The Committee should also inspect the free schools, which may not open without its consent, after submitting their plans, their books and papers; and it may close them if their principles become dangerous or their methods improper. Finally, the Committee should select one member to join in forming the General Council of Education of the United States; he may be a member of the Committee or not; may even be a member of Congress, or not.

. . . The whole educational system should be directly or indirectly in touch with the legislative body and the administrative power. The Government should be everywhere to protect everyone.¹⁴

Again, there is a striking resemblance in the functions of the proposed American Committee of Education and the Polish Commission for National Education.

In regard to textbooks, Dupont advocated the very same guidelines as those that were recommended by the Polish Society for Elementary Textbooks.¹⁵ Dupont surely had the Polish Society in mind when he wrote:

The school books that of necessity begin all education, those from which children learn to write and read, should therefore contain all the principles of morals, the ethics of law, the fundamental ideas of duty, the maxims of wisdom, the proverbs of common sense. No such book now exists.

¹⁴Dupont de Nemours, National Education, pp. 152-153.

¹⁵Tync, Komisja, pp. 64-73.

. . . Such books will be expensive; however, they will be worth all they cost.¹⁶

Working on the recommendation of the Polish Commission, Dupont in his proposal on Polish elementary education (parochial schools) elaborated the three-year instruction period, dispensed in three grades by one teacher.¹⁷ He recommends the very same for the American primary system:

The course in the primary schools will last for three years from seven to ten; and if the teacher is helped -- greatly to their own advantage, by those pupils who are most esteemed by their fellow students -- one Master can suffice for all three classes.¹⁸

The Statutes of the Polish Commission established a seven-year course, taught by six professors for the Provincial secondary school.¹⁹ Dupont, again, in his proposal for the American secondary school, recommends the same:

In these colleges (secondary schools), the pupils will study seven courses under six professors. They will be expected to learn, between the ages of ten years and seventeen . . .²⁰

Whereas the Polish Statutes established three goals for the Polish Principal Schools (universities): responsibility for the spreading of knowledge indispensable to the country, spreading of scholarly and practical knowledge to all classes of the Polish Commonwealth, the

¹⁶Dupont de Nemours, National Education, pp. 154-155.

¹⁷Dupont de Nemours, Moyens d'établir les écoles paroissiales.

¹⁸Dupont de Nemours, National Education, pp. 156-157.

¹⁹Tync, Komisja, p. 661

²⁰Dupont de Nemours, National Education, p. 157.

supervision of public instruction (primary and secondary schools), supervision of the academic estate (faculty), and the training of teachers for national schools,²¹ Dupont in his proposal for the American system briefly states: "The higher schools will be practical as well as scholarly".²²

The concern expressed by the Polish Commission for the training of teachers in Teacher Colleges, their importance for a national system of education, and the matter of proper remuneration,²³ echoes in Dupont's recommendation for American teachers:

The positions of instructors will become very much sought after because of the contingent fees, the amount of which will be increased by good work and the reputation that follows . . . it will not be difficult to attach men of the highest standing to the service of national education in the United States.²⁴

The concern for obedience to the authority and supervision of the Polish Commission and to its Inspectors was strongly emphasized in the Statutes.²⁵ Writing on the subject of free, or private schools, as opposed to national schools, Dupont expresses the same concern:

. . . if adjoining the primary school authorized by the State and supported by its citizens, someone establishes a school in which he teaches by another method, better or worse, let him; but make one condition -- that the books ordained by the State for the primary schools shall be used in his classes; that he shall not use other

²¹Tync, Komisja, pp. 581-582.

²²Dupont de Nemours, National Education, p. 158.

²³Tync, Komisja, pp. 612-619.

²⁴Dupont de Nemours, National Education, p. 160.

²⁵Tync, Komisja, pp. 609-610.

books which may be harmful; and that at the time of examination his pupils shall present themselves to be examined according to the national standards.

. . . If a man, or an organization, wishes to pen a boarding-school, a college, a special school of greater or less scholarship, they should be quite free to do so; provided that before it opens they have submitted to the Committee of Education . . . the books or papers from which they expect to teach . . . And, provided also, that such a school continues obedient to the supervision of the Committee of Education and to the Inspectors authorized by the Committees.²⁶

American national instruction, as the Polish national instruction, was to be free:

. . . free instruction . . . will offer a wholesome emulation in every class of teaching . . . All public establishments should have a center. That of national education shall have, in every State, a Committee appointed by the legislative body; and for the special schools a General Council, to which the Committees of each State will each year send one elected member. This Council and these Committees will be the agent of the Government for the administration of everything concerned with education; and in matters that concern the legislative bodies or Congress, the Council and Committees will be the proper petitioners for laws and appropriations that may contribute to the progress of their work.²⁷

After a seventeen-month stay in the United States, Dupont returned to France. Writing to his Polish friend, Count Joachim Chreptowicz (one of the originators of the Polish Commission), Dupont confessed that despite the "personal considerations" which he enjoyed, the Government no longer regarded him as a statesman on account of his two years' absence in America. He also confessed to Chreptowicz his dislike for

²⁶Dupont de Nemours, National Education, pp. 147-149.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 160-161.

the "multitude of business affairs", which devoured his time and his life.²⁸ He longed for an active political life.

Although the movement to establish a national system of education in the United States was not sufficiently strong to overcome the many obstacles and opposition to the accomplishment of its purpose, it was sufficiently strong to continually keep the topic of education before the American public and Congress. This, in itself, was a valuable contribution, and Dupont de Nemours -- through his prior involvement in and exposure to the unusual undertaking of establishing a national system of education in the Polish Commonwealth by the Commission for National Education -- had an important role in furthering the idea of an American national system of education. Working for the Polish Commission in 1774, Dupont acquired first-hand experience in the domain of theory and practice of national education and its process. When a quarter of a century later, he decided to renew his activity in favor of national education, he could generously draw on the successes and failures of the Polish experience in establishing a national educational system, and thus produce a more perfect, thought-out and viable proposal for the United States of America, both theoretically and practically. His Polish activity was an excellent testing ground for the French physiocrat's educational project. His work is undoubtedly a

²⁸G. Schelle, Lettres inédites de Dupont de Nemours au Comte Chreptowicz (Unpublished Letters of Dupont de Nemours to Count Chreptowicz), *Journal des Economistes*, series 6, xiv, (1907), 4.

synthesis of his personal thoughts on national education, broadened, perfected, revised and amended by his work for the Polish Commission in 1774.

By writing a proposal for national education in the Unites States of America, Dupont wanted to pay the debt of friendship to Thomas Jefferson and express his gratitude for the hospitality that the United States offered him.²⁹

Many years later, when the Polish Commonwealth ceased to exist -- partitioned by the three autocratic powers -- Dupont had the following to say about his Polish experience: "I have served with zeal and courage a great republic, the loss of which I mourn today, the Republic of Poland."³⁰

²⁹Dupont de Nemours, National Education, p. 161.

³⁰Moniteur, XII, 235-236; L'Historien, I, cliv-clviii.

CHAPTER XII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

COMMISSION FOR NATIONAL EDUCATION IN THE LIGHT OF CONTEMPORARY OPINION, ITS SIGNIFICANCE AND PLACE IN EDUCATION

When in 1773 the Commission for National Education was established, it immediately became the first national central educational authority in Europe subordinated to governmental authority, responsible to the parliament, and in control of the funds indispensable to maintaining an extensive system of schools. The Commission strongly emphasized the fact that education was of prime value to public interest. It also stressed full independence of foreign influence, independence of Polish educational concepts, and absolute uniformity of the national system of education. The new educational system was to become the means for the nation's regeneration, the reform of social life, the modernization of production, the improvement of life and, above all, a safeguard against the loss of national independence. Education became the nation's highest priority and a raison d'être.

The Commission established national education through a tri-level educational system, with the lower level dependent on the higher. The elementary school, even though it still bore the medieval name of...

parochial school, was worlds apart from the traditional religious school; it became an elementary public school which offered a general education program and prepared the young for the secondary school. The importance of primary public education open to all children can be seen in the fact that it was a major topic at the Great Sejm, and that it was passed on as model of elementary school organization in the Duchy of Warsaw (1807-1815) and the later Congressional Kingdom of Poland. The effort at training elementary school teachers in Teacher Seminaries was an important undertaking. It implemented a consistent network of elementary school inspection and supervision, and monitored the educational and didactic activity of the elementary school system.

The secondary level of education, represented by the seven-year provincial school, was open, as of 1788, to both nobility and the middle class. From a traditional, clerical school, it was transformed into a modern educational institution offering a practical curriculum of mathematical and natural sciences. Information dispensed in these schools had the dual function of shaping the student's world outlook, and furnishing him with the necessary material and practical information needed in his economic activity. The new teachers, trained in Teachers Colleges, had a thoroughly secular approach, were free of clerical tradition, and were fervent advocates of political and economic reforms. This new cadre of educators initiated the nationwide transformation of schools, emphasizing the new moral, political and economic values.

The highest educational level was represented by the two universities -- the Principal School of the Crown and the Principal School of Lithuania -- former academies of Cracow and Wilno. Thoroughly reformed, they were among the most progressive universities in Europe. They expanded mathematical and natural sciences, and based their scholarship on observation and experiment. Their bold attempts in the domain of natural sciences, chemistry, physics, medicine, mathematics, philosophy and teacher training activity manifested their progressive and modern approach to research.

The schools not only were put under the control of the State and adopted a uniform system, they were fully nationalized. The introduction of Polish as the language of instruction, in itself a revolutionary undertaking, was complemented by furnishing information on Poland pertinent to each subject matter. Polishness manifested itself not only in the study of the country's literature and history, but also in such sciences as chemistry, physics, zoology and mineralogy, as they related to the economic development of the country. It also manifested itself in the necessity of becoming familiar with animals and minerals found in the Commonwealth. It was the school's duty to explain the danger of the existing, obsolete and unjust laws, which constituted the base of the governmental system, and to work for their change.

Prince Adam Czartoryski, the mastermind of the reform, pointed out that a young Pole should readily sacrifice his life and possessions for the good of the country.¹

The modernizing Polish patriotism was gradually winning over all segments of the Polish society. Its modernity manifested itself in the fact that it strongly criticized and discarded the traditional Sarmatian-Old-Polish class patriotism of the nobility, and introduced an all-national involvement, national education, national economic growth, commerce, industry, currency, political awareness and discipline. The qualifying trait of the new patriotism was indeed an all-national effort to work for the common good of the country. Whereas the traditional szlachcic had contempt for both physical and intellectual work, the new Pole was taught to respect it. The middle-class material values were transforming the overall mentality of the Polish society and changing its attitude in favor of a politico-economic structure of the Commonwealth. Stanisław Staszic, an outstanding Polish philosopher representing the middle class wrote: ". . . man's prime duty is to work, for only through work he becomes useful".² As for education, "it

¹S. Kot, ed., Epoka wielkiej reformy. Studia i materiały z dziejów oświaty w Polsce XVIII wieku. (Period of Great Reform. Studies and Materials Relating to the History of Education in the Eighteenth-Century Poland) (Lwów: 1923), p. 214.

²Stanisław Staszic, Uwagi nad życiem Jana Zamoyskiego (Remarks on the Life of Jan Zamoyski) (Kraków: 1861), p. 13.

ought to teach how to develop the prosperity of one's country, how to improve the country's product . . . "3

History was an important tool in the shaping of the new Pole. Kajetan Skrzetuski, the historian, stated that the prime goal of teaching history was the civic education of students. History should demonstrate that the citizen's prime duty is to work for his country. If ever a country lost its sovereignty, it was on account of neglect and carelessness of its citizens. Prosperity of a nation depends on the just execution of its laws. Public law cannot be injurious to any particular social class, for nature does not acknowledge difference among people. The violation of natural laws always brings about an all-national disaster.⁴

The emergence of the Commission for National Education was a function of specific historical events which both conditioned its development and were responsible for its fall. The Commission, established immediately after Poland's first national tragedy -- the partition of 1772 -- sought to avert national catastrophe through the reform of education of the young. This ambitious goal was reflected in the Commission's Proclamation of 1773, its proposals, the contents of its curricula, textbooks, and methodology. King Stanisław August, unable at the time to introduce political reforms, undertook a decisive struggle for the reform of education. In a letter to Prince August Sułkowski,

⁴K. Skrzetuski, Przypisy do historii powszechnej dla szkół narodowych (Notes to World History for National Schools) (Marywil: 1782), p. 29-31.

the King wrote: "It is necessary to enlighten the minds. This task is enthusiastically and successfully performed by the Commission for National Education."⁵

A long list of achievements characterizes the Commission's activity. The first of its kind in Europe, the Commission won a victory for national education and for governmental control of the education of youth. It successfully launched the process of educational secularization and established a unified program of tri-level public education. The universities were reformed and scientific research was reinforced. The new Polish schools utilized modern methodology, stressed educational self-direction and independence in reflection and decision. The Commission introduced teacher training curricula and Colleges, established and clarified the secondary and university teacher's legal and academic status. The new national central educational authority initiated not only a unified, but also a universal, educational elementary system, recognized the importance of the Polish woman, prepared legislation and rules for girls' education, and put it into practice. It finally assured the Polish language of its priority, and introduced into the curricula strong elements of patriotic and civic character. All these led eventually to an extraordinary revival of Polish national awareness and involvement, and constituted a decisive tool in the regeneration of the Polish nation and State.

⁵List do Augusta Sułkowskiego z 12 września 1781. (Letter to August Sułkowski of September 12, 1781.) (Kwartalnik Historyczny: 1910), no. 536.

During the twenty-two-year period of the Commission's activity, an interesting sociological and psychological phenomenon took place in the szlachta's milieu. Confronted with national catastrophe and exposed to the activity of the Great Sejm, the szlachta radically changed its attitude in favor of national unity and national education. A staunch supporter of the Commission, Peter Świtkowski, an ex-Jesuit, pointed out the precursory significance of the educational authority, and emphasized that the educational system of the Commonwealth and the reform of the Universities, surpassed in this regard other European countries: "It is a considerable honor for Poland, that in this respect, she has outdistanced Austria, Moscow and Naples."⁶

Hugo Kołłontaj also proudly emphasized Poland's precursory achievements in the domain of education in comparison with the rest of Europe: "Europe has not seen in political legislation anything more sensible and sound, which ancient and contemporary nations could afford . . . Unified education became the guarantee of greater governmental unity and consensus within the government."⁷ Kołłontaj further emphasized the Commission's democratic objectives of extending educational opportunities on all segments of the population.

Kajetan Koźmian, former alumnus of the Commission's schools, writer and patriot, emphasized the role the Commission performed in precipitating the moral rebirth and national awareness of the country. The young

⁶J. Krasuski, Rozprawy z dziejów oświaty (Papers on the History of Education) (Wrocław: 1964), vol. vii, p. 39.

⁷Kołłontaj, Listy Anonima, vol. 2, p. 85.

generation, educated in the Commission's schools, won the respect of Europe, and glory on the battlefield.⁸

Wojciech Szweykowski, also a former alumnus of the Commission's schools, observed that within a period of two decades the Commission's schools had transformed the nation, instilled a patriotic spirit into the people, and in the most trying period of the nation's history, surpassed in this domain other nations in Europe.⁹

Konstanty Wolski, educator and writer, drew attention to the Commission's decisive role, and to its extraordinary achievement, due to which, Poland acquired the opinion of being the country with the best organized educational system in Europe.¹⁰

On the basis of reports submitted by school inspectors, we can easily ascertain that the Commission provided education for 13,500 young Poles yearly in its forty-four Crown secondary schools and thirty-eight Lithuanian schools. Until 1793 the number was constantly growing.

The influence of Polish education on Russian national education must not be forgotten. When in 1784 Russian educational authorities undertook the organization of girls' education, Prince Adam George

⁸K. Koźmian, Pamiętniki (Memoirs) (Poznań: 1958), pp. 8-13.

⁹W. Szweykowski, Uwagi nad wyższymi szkołami polskimi w porównaniu do niemieckich (Comparison of Polish and German Higher Schools) (Warszawa: 1808), pp. 12-13.

¹⁰K. Wolski, Mowa (Speech), Rocznik Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk, 1812, vol. xiii, p. 149.

Czartoryski's Regulations for administrators of Boarding Schools served as model.¹¹ The Provisional Rules of Public Instruction of January 24, 1803, and the Statutes of 1804, were literal replicas of the Polish Statutes of 1783. These Statutes also served as basis for the Russian School Inspectors' Instructions.¹²

Polish educational experts, Prince Adam Czartoryski, Count Severin Potocki, Hieronim Stroynowski, Thaddeus Czacki -- all made a significant contribution towards the development of the Russian national system of education. When in 1834, the University of Kiev was founded, Polish scholars and scientists constituted the core of its faculty. The University's first professors were Poles: Jakubowicz, Korzeniowski, Andrzejewski, Ablamowicz, Danilowicz, Hreczyna, Fonberg, Klebowski, Mickiewicz, Miechowicz, Mikulski, Wyżewski, Zienowicz. The question: "Where have these professors been educated?" prompts Wierzbowski to answer: "In the schools of the Commission for National Education".¹³

While, after the partitions, the Russians came to appreciate the Polish achievements in national education and eagerly imitated them, most Prussians, without examination, discarded them. A few Prussians, however, did acknowledge the Polish educational achievement. Among them, Frederick Gedike, superintendent of schools on former Polish

¹¹S. Truchim, Współpraca polsko-rosyjska nad organizacją szkolnictwa rosyjskiego w początkach wieku XIX (Polish-Russian Cooperation in Organizing Russian Schools in the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century) (Lodz: 1960), pp. 10-11.

¹²Truchim, Współpraca polsko-rosyjska, pp. 75-76.

¹³Tync, Komisja, p. cxcix.

territories, pointed out, that there are very few educational institutions in Prussia that could be the equal of Polish schools.¹⁴ Another Prussian, Wilhelm de Klewitz, inspector of schools of South Prussia (former Great Poland territory), in a report of 1805, declared that, when the Prussians were taking over Polish territories, they found

admirably strange laws of the Polish government of 1783 and 1790 pertaining to the arrangement of schools . . . Learning tended to be analytical in character, and practical in application . . . Urban and rural schools had as its goal the enlightenment of the people . . . In 9166 villages there were 489 elementary schools. What new government would not readily want to comply with them?¹⁵

He also added that young Poles were especially proficient in mathematics and foreign languages.¹⁶

There are grounds for believing that the Commission had considerable influence on the establishment, organization and activity of the Prussian Oberschulkollegium of 1787. The respect that the Prussian authorities had for the Polish educational system can be seen in the fact that these authorities, in their instructions for the South Prussian Educational Commission, retained in its entirety the Polish Commission's organizational structure.¹⁷ Also, the Commission's educational structure was left intact and was retained by the Prussian

¹⁴Szweykowski, Uwagi, p. 15.

¹⁵Tync, Komisja, pp. 412-414.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 414.

¹⁷Mizia, Komisja Edukacji Narodowej, p. 104.

Educational Minister for Silesia, Hoym, in his School Regulations of 1800 for the University of Wrocław province and its secondary schools.¹⁸

The Commission's incredible activity inspired a great deal of interest in many outstanding foreigners. In addition to Pierre Samuel Dupont de Nemours, the French physiocrat, Nicolas Baudeau, another physiocrat, was also involved in the Commission's enterprise. After returning from Poland to France, Baudeau continued to serve the Commission's cause by translating, printing and publicizing in French newspapers the Commission's writings and publications.¹⁹

A German doctor, J. J. Kausch, visiting Poland during the period of the Great Sejm, acknowledged Poland's political and economic weakness, but was impressed with the Polish educational system.²⁰

The Swiss mathematician, J. Bernouilli, who traveled to Poland in 1778, and who was mainly interested in that country's cultural objects and institutions, provided in his report a great deal of information relating to the Commission and its activity. He presented a detailed description of the Commission, the Society for Elementary Textbooks, and their members. Bernouilli analyzed the Commission's activity and

¹⁸Tync, Komisja, p. cxcix.

¹⁹Ambroise Jobert, Magnats polonais et physiocrates français (Polish Magnates and French Physiocrats) (Paris: 1941), pp. 59-90.

²⁰J. J. Kausch, Nachrichten über Polen (Report on Poland) (Graz: 1793), part I, in W. Zawadzki, ed., Polska Stanisławowska w oczach cudzoziemców (Poland of King Stanisław August in the Eyes of Foreigners) (Warszawa: 1963), vol. 2, pp. 327-328.

achievements, and declared with some regret, that European countries, especially Germany, knew nothing about the Polish achievements, and what they did know about Polish affairs was often erroneous. Bernouilli popularized the Commission's achievements in articles he wrote in the Journal Encyclopédique, a journal published in Bouillon, France.²¹

An in-depth assessment was given by the French journalist, Emile N. Murray, in his De l'état des études des lettres et des moeurs en Pologne (On the State of Literary Studies and Customs in Poland), published in 1800. Murray wrote:

Poland is the first country to give example by establishing a commission with authority over national education, and the only country, which, after the suppression of the Jesuit Order, did not change the purpose of the post-Jesuit estates.²²

Murray further pointed out that the Commission was a product of deep thought and national concern, and emphasized the fact that schools, established by the Commission, were adapted to the country's political and economic conditions, its needs, character and customs. If it were not for the partitions, the results of its activity would have surpassed its expectations. The Commission, as a national central educational authority, wanted to see in each student a "child of the state".

²¹J. Bernouilli, Reisen durch Brandenburg, Pommern, Preussen, Curland, Russland und Polen in den Jahren 1777 und 1778 (Travels through Brandenburg, Pomerania, Prussia, Courland, Russia and Poland in the Years 1777 and 1778) (Leipzig: 1779-1800) in Polska Stanisławowska, pp. 428-432.

²²Tync, Komisja, p. 406.

It wanted to help him discover his capabilities and talent, in order that the country could benefit, and the arts and sciences could be enhanced.²³

The French philosopher and educator, Jean Henri Formey, of the Berlin Academy, declared that he was proud to have been invited to collaborate with the Society for Elementary Textbooks, whose proposal of educational reform was the most realistic of all those he encountered in his twenty years of academic activity. Formey wrote:

In regard to sciences, their arrangement and order, I have not been able to come across anything more perfect than the Proclamation of the Commission of Education Concerning Elementary Textbooks for Provincial Schools.²⁴

Another famous French philosopher, Etienne Bonnot de Condillac, invited by the Society to write a handbook of Logic for Polish national schools, responded:

Indeed, how can I refuse to work for a nation whose destiny should be of concern to everyone who in these days can say to possess a soul characterized by good citizenship. As for the recompense, I have already received it: it is for me the summons of the Illustrious Commission . . .²⁵

The French naturalist, M. Dubois, in his Essai sur l'histoire littéraire de Pologne (Essay on Literary History of Poland) of 1778, gave a penetrating comparison of the state of education in Poland and

²³Ibid., pp. 406-407.

²⁴Tync, Komisja, pp. 411-412.

²⁵Ibid., p. clviii.

France in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The author did not hesitate to assert that France, after the suppression of the Jesuit Order, not only was not able to reform its school system, but also did not make any effort in this regard. Directing his sarcastic remarks at the French, Dubois wrote:

Let us therefore boast of our wisdom and good taste; let us proclaim that we have shaken off the yoke of prejudice, that we derive all possible benefits from our academies. Our schools are still steeped in the sixteenth century, while our aesthetes already live in the eighteenth. Poland did not have at her disposal the opportunities we did; her citizens were neither so enlightened, nor had such life conditions as we did; they did not have an academy (the author has in mind an academy of the kind of the Académie Française); for the education of youth they had at their disposal mediocre schools, where everything was taught in the common baroque Latin, where there was no need for reasoning or imagination, with only a need for some memory. Under the auspices of the ruler, a patron of good, a body was established called the Commission for National Education. This Commission, composed of members of the country's different estates, has under its control funds appropriated for the education of youth, and makes final decisions in all matters pertaining thereto. To make its work efficient it appointed a committee of learned men (i. e., the Society for Elementary Textbooks), who regularly meet in sessions in order to discuss matters which could further and improve schools and elementary textbooks. The prizes and program of studies, established two years earlier, bring honor to its originators and to the nation.

Indeed, if this plan is not yet perfect, it excels, at any rate, all those plans, which have been used until now in our schools. Its design reflects a deep philosophical foundation

. . . ²⁶

²⁶Tync, Komisja, pp. 410-411.

When the French scholar, Jean Alexis Borrelly, professor of the Berlin Knights' Academy, became familiar in 1775 with the Commission's Proclamation -- which invited foreign scholars to participate in the elaboration of progressive, modern textbooks for the Commission's newly established school system -- he expressed his admiration for the implementation of the Commission's ambitious program and added that, had the bold plans of the Polish educational authority been carried out at least in part, Poland, even then, would have become the most progressive country in the world.²⁷

²⁷J. A. Borrelly, Plan d'études (Program of Studies) (Hague: 1776), p. 7.

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Dec. 12th, 1978

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