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# Schools of the Commission of National Education's Lithuanian Department (1773—1794)

**Summary:** This article presents an outline of the activities of the schools of the Lithuanian Department, which included schools in Grodno, Białystok, Merkinė, Lida, Vidzy, Vilnius, Vishnyeva, Pastavy, Shchuchyn and Vawkavysk. The leading role was played by the Grodno school, which became a department school, which means that it supervised all lower, sub-department schools. All of the schools of the Lithuanian Department were supervised by the Main School of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in Vilnius. The person deciding on personnel and organisational matters was Rector Marcin Poczobut (1728—1810). Working conditions at the schools were generally difficult, as the buildings (mostly post-Jesuit) were considerably dilapidated due to neglect, but also fires and floods, so they required ad hoc repairs or general refurbishments. Due to the need to ensure proper conditions of learning, the rectors and prorectors demanded more funds from the Commission of National Education (KEN) for renovation purposes. One of the primary tasks of the schools was to educate future citizens — enlightened, capable and responsible for the country. They sought to accomplish that objective by incorporating in the syllabus ideas of an explicitly national and patriotic nature. Great importance lay in the teaching of the Polish language, literature and speech. The formation of man and citizen was helped by history and geography, as well as by mathematical and natural sciences that demonstrated scientific achievements and drew the attention to the functionality of science in everyday life.

**Keywords:** Commission of National Education, Lithuanian Department, Grodno, Białystok, Merkinė, Lida, Vidzy, Vilnius, Vishnyeva, Pastavy, Shchuchyn, Vawkavysk

The sizeable historiography concerning the Commission of National Education (KEN) lacks in works which would demonstrate full operation of the secondary education system in the particular school departments. So far, authors have focused on the history of the Commission itself, the people working as part of it, the Society for Elementary Books and education syllabi; they have

published sources, but have never undertaken to describe all schools<sup>1</sup>. With regard to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the fullest — to date — perspective was presented in 1973 by Irena Szybiak in her monograph *Szkolnictwo Komisji*

<sup>1</sup> Sources: *Pisma i projekty pedagogiczne doby Komisji Edukacji Narodowej*, ed. K. Mrozowska, Wrocław—Warsaw—Kraków, 1973; *Protokoły posiedzeń Komisji Edukacji Narodowej 1773—1785*, ed. M. Mitera-Dobrowolska, Wrocław—Warsaw—Kraków, 1973. Monographs and articles: J. Ciemniwski, “Stanowisko Komisji Edukacyjnej w kwestji religijnego wychowania młodzieży”, in *Epoka Wielkiej Reformy. Studja i materiały do dziejów oświaty w Polsce XVIII wieku*, ed. L. Bykowski et al., Lviv—Warsaw, 1923, 17—26; Z. Iwaszkiewiczowa, “Nauczanie arytmetyki w szkołach Komisji Edukacji Narodowej”, in *Epoka...*, 27—63; L. Bykowski, “Zajęcia praktyczne w przepisach Komisji Edukacyjnej”, in *Epoka...*, 64—67; K. Bartnicka, “Koncepcje wychowania obywatelskiego i patriotycznego w szkołach Komisji Edukacji Narodowej”, *Rozprawy z Dziejów Oświaty* 16, 1973, 41—67; K. Bartnicka, *Wychowanie patriotyczne w szkołach Komisji Edukacji Narodowej*, Warsaw, 1973; R. Dutkova, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej. Zarys działalności. Wybór materiałów źródłowych*, Wrocław—Warsaw—Kraków, 1973; E. Kurdybacha, M. Mitera-Dobrowolska, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej*, Warsaw, 1973; C. Majorek, “Podręczniki Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w aspekcie rozwiązań dydaktycznych”, *Rozprawy z Dziejów Oświaty* 16, 1973, 69—140; T. Mizia, “Nowe ujęcie nauki o poezji i wymowie w szkołach Komisji Edukacji Narodowej”, *Przegląd Humanistyczny* 17, 1973, 1—14; K. Mrozowska, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej 1773—1794*, Warsaw—Kraków, 1973; J. Poplatek, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej. Udział byłych jezuitów w pracach Komisji Edukacji Narodowej*, ed. J. Paszenda, Kraków, 1974; A. Sobczak, “Nauczanie historii w Polsce w szkołach Komisji Edukacji Narodowej”, *Rozprawy z Dziejów Oświaty* 16, 1973, 141—194; B. Sucho-dolski, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej na tle roli oświaty w dziejowym rozwoju Polski*, Warsaw, 1973; A. Woltanowski, R.W. Wołoszyński, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej 1773—1794*, Warsaw, 1973; *Ze studiów nad Komisją Edukacji Narodowej i szkolnictwem na Lubelszczyźnie*, ed. J. Dobrzański, A. Koprucki, Lublin, 1973; A. Jobert, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej w Polsce (1773—1794). Jej dzieło wychowania obywatelskiego*, transl. M. Chamcówna, pref. H. Barycz, Wrocław—Warsaw—Kraków, 1979; C. Majorek, “Problemy badań nad programami nauczania doby Komisji Edukacji Narodowej”, *Rozprawy z Dziejów Oświaty* 22, 1979, 57—67; J. Dębowski, *Przyroda w programach Komisji Edukacji Narodowej i poglądach uczonych na Podlasiu w XVIII i XIX wieku*, Olsztyn, 2000; W.M. Grabski, *Prekursorzy idei Komisji Edukacji Narodowej*, Warsaw, 2000.

Historians of education have conducted some research in the framework of grant *Komisji Edukacji Narodowej model szkoły i obywatela. Koncepcje, doświadczenia i inspiracje* [The Commission of National Education’s model of the school and the citizen: Concepts, experiences and inspirations], led by Kalina Bartnicka of the Institute for the History of Science, Polish Academy of Sciences. Their publications include: *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej — kontekst historyczno-pedagogiczny*, ed. K. Dormus et al., Kraków, 2014; J. Kamińska, E. Kula, “Źródła do dziejów Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w zasobach Rosyjskiego Państwowego Archiwum Akt Dawnych w Moskwie”, *Rozprawy z Dziejów Oświaty* 53, 2016, 135—147.

Basic information on the Lithuanian Department’s schools are included in Volume 2 and Volume 4 of *Historia szkół w Koronie i w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim od najdawniejszych czasów aż do roku 1794* by Józef Łukaszewicz (Poznań, 1849—1851). See also: T. Wierzbowski, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej 1773—1794. Monografia historyczna*, Warsaw, 1911.

*Edukacji Narodowej w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim* [Education system of the Commission of National Education in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania]. That valuable scholarly work may serve as a guide throughout the major issues of the Commission's reform and the education system it sought to create in Lithuania. In her chronological and issue-oriented approach, the author presented the essence of the functioning of the Lithuanian education system. It demonstrated operation of the system's all educational tiers in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: parochial, secondary and higher. Considering that the perspective on the education system of the whole of Lithuania was so extensive, the particular schools of the Lithuanian Department could not be discussed more broadly. Irena Szybiak presented important aspects of schools' operation, such as creation of school departments, people involved in educational work and modernisation of the syllabi<sup>2</sup>.

Irena Szybiak undertook a more extensive research into the Commission's operation and explored the issues of how teachers were trained and how they performed their work in KEN schools. The effect of her work was publication of the monograph *Nauczyciele szkół średnich Komisji Edukacji Narodowej* [Teachers of the Commission of National Education's secondary schools]. In her work, the author included short biographies of multiple teachers of the Lithuanian Department schools which allow learning about their educational and career paths, and sometimes even character traits<sup>3</sup>.

On the occasion of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Society for Elementary Books, Professor Józef Lewicki (1882—1942) produced an important publication of sources concerning the education system at the time of the KEN. That work went on to become helpful for future scholars and has remained indispensable in research into the history of the KEN and the schools undergoing reform, as it has allowed locating the schools in a historical and legal context. It is where I found the first school regulations issued to schools before the eventual school structure was put in place, i.e. before the establishment of the departments, including the Lithuanian Department<sup>4</sup>.

Lithuanian historiography is in possession of a number of valuable publications, but they also lack in detail concerning operation of particular schools<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> I. Szybiak, *Szkołnictwo Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim*, Wrocław—Warsaw—Kraków, 1973.

<sup>3</sup> I. Szybiak, *Nauczyciele szkół średnich Komisji Edukacji Narodowej*, Wrocław—Warsaw—Kraków, 1980.

<sup>4</sup> *Ustawodawstwo szkolne za czasów Komisji Edukacji Narodowej. Rozporządzenia, ustawy pedagogiczne i organizacyjne (1773—1793)*, ed. J. Lewicki, Kraków, 1925.

<sup>5</sup> Said publications include the following: J. Račkauskas, *Švietimo reforma Lenkijoje ir Lietuvoje XVIII a.*, Vilnius, 1994; J. Minginas, *Edukacinė komisija ir Lietuvos pradžios mokyk-*

The KEN's 240<sup>th</sup> anniversary induced historians of education to embark on extensive research into the functioning of this first secular educational institution and into the histories of the particular school departments. This article is an outline of operation of the schools in the Lithuanian Department.

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The Commission of National Education, which was established in 1773, found it urgent to establish a new school organisation that would fill the void left by the schools of the suppressed Jesuit Order. It set out to create a school that would aim to raise a new citizen who loved his country and understood its needs. It therefore outlined the idea of raising a man-citizen and a patriot.

In its first years of operation, the Commission focused on establishing the organisational structure and devising new syllabi for schools. This was a process that began with enacting ad hoc regulations and concluded with the adoption of *Ustawy Komisji Edukacji Narodowej dla stanu akademickiego i na szkoły w krajach Rzeczypospolitej przepisane* [The Commission of National Education's Acts for the academic estate and the schools of the Commonwealth] of 1783.

The KEN confirmed its first administrative division at its session on 22 June 1774, setting up six departments under their authority: the Podolia, Bratslav, Kyiv and Volhynia Provinces under the authority of Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski (1734—1823), the Greater Poland Provinces under August Sułkowski (1729—1786), the Mazovia Province under Andrzej Zamoyski (1716—1792), Lithuania under Ignacy Massalski (1727—1794) and Joachim Chreptowicz (1729—1812), Lublin and Podlachia under Ignacy Potocki (1750—1809), and Kraków, Sandomierz and Płock under Michał Poniatowski (1736—1794).

In 1778, the Commissioners adopted a new territorial division that consisted of seven school departments. They were subjected to the authority of individual Commissioners who, like their predecessors, were to exercise direct control over those departments. Two departments were set up in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: Ignacy Massalski exercised his supervision over schools in the Vilnius and Trakai Provinces and in the Samogitian Principality, and

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*la*, Vilnius, 2007; R. Šmigelskytė-Stukienė, “1773 m. švietimo sistemos reforma. Edukacinė komisija”, in R. Šmigelskytė-Stukienė et al., *Modernios administracijos tapsmas Lietuvoje. Valstybės institucijų raida 1764—1794 metais*, Vilnius, 2014, 158—175. This publication contains maps of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, including maps with schools of the Commission of National Education. Ramunė Šmigelskytė-Stukienė supervised the publication of Volume 2 of the magazine *XVIII amžiaus studijos*, dedicated to the 240<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Commission of National Education, titled *Lietuvos Didžioji Kunigaikštystė. Valstybė, kultūra, edukacija*.

Joachim Chreptowicz exercised his authority over schools in the Navahrudak, Brest and Minsk Provinces. Until 1780, the department was home to province, county and parochial schools.

In 1781, along with the new school legislation, the KEN divided the country into school departments. It had originally planned to create as many as 16 departments: nine in the Crown (Poznań, Łęczyca, Warsaw, Płock, Kraków, Lublin, Lutsk, Zhytomyr, Kamianets), six in Lithuania (Vilnius, Kaunas, Grodno, Brest, Minsk and Navahrudak), as well as a separate department of the Crown's Piarist schools. This division, however, proved to be ineffective owing to the schools' widely spaced distribution across the country, which was particularly acute for the school inspectors.

In the end, the layout of the school administration was confirmed in 1783 following the adoption of the Commission of National Education Acts. In April, the KEN presented the *Tabela zgromadzeń akademickich i szkół w Koronie* [Table of academic assemblies and schools in the Crown] and in May, *Tabela zgromadzeń akademickich i szkół w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim* [Table of academic assemblies and schools in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania]. The country was then divided into nine school departments. The Commission established six departments in the Crown (Greater Poland, Lesser Poland, Mazovian, Volhynian, Ukrainian and Piarist) and four departments in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (Lithuanian, Navahrudak, Samogitian and Polesian).

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The Lithuanian Department consisted of the following schools: in Grodno, Białystok, Merkinė, Lida, Vidzy, Vilnius, Vishnyeva, Pastavy, Shchuchyn and Vawkavysk. Before the establishment of the Commission, two of those schools, located in Lida and Shchuchyn, had been Piarist schools and as such incorporated in the KEN's school structure in the Lithuanian Department. In 1776, the post-Jesuit school in Merkinė was handed over to the Dominican Order.

The schools were situated in three provinces: Vilnius (Lida, Pastavy, Vidzy, Vilnius and Vishnyeva), Trakai (Białystok, Grodno, Merkinė, Shchuchyn) and Navahrudak (Vawkavysk). The Lithuanian Department's borders did not comply either with the country's administrative division or the diocese division.

In setting up the department, the Commissioners were apparently influenced by the first school inspectors, Franciszek Bienkowski and Grzegorz Piramowicz, who had visited the schools in 1782. It was probably due to the convenient access to the schools and the distances to the major towns, e.g. Grodno, Minsk, Brest and Vilnius, that determined why the schools were placed in those locations. According to the sources, the distance from the school to Vilnius or Grodno did not exceed 20 miles, i.e. a little more than 170 kilometres. The

most distant school was the one situated in Vidzy (20 miles from Vilnius and more than 20 miles from Grodno).

The Grodno school, which had the status of the department school in that it supervised all schools of a lower rank (the sub-department schools), played the leading role in the Lithuanian Department. It was a six-class school with the studying period lasting seven years because the fifth class spanned two years. The school was headed by Rector Józef Muczyński (1729—1793), a former Jesuit, and it employed six teachers, a school preacher, and *metr* teachers of foreign languages: French and German.

The sub-department schools had three classes, each taking two years, therefore the entire learning process took six years there, which was one year fewer than in the Grodno department school. They were headed by prorectors and they employed three teachers, a school preacher and sometimes teachers of foreign languages. The schools run by the Piarists and Dominicans were headed by prefects. Aside from educating the youth, the sub-department schools took care of the parochial schools. Given the scarce sources, however, the knowledge about the latter schools is poor. The most information is provided by archived sources on the schools under the Białystok school's authority.

The work of all the Lithuanian Department schools was ultimately supervised by the Lithuanian Main School of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in Vilnius. Rector Marcin Poczobut (1728—1810) was the decision-maker on matters concerning teaching staff or repair works. It was him to whom the rector, prorectors and teachers would usually address their school-related queries.

Working conditions at the schools were usually difficult because the buildings (most of them post-Jesuit) were considerably dilapidated due to neglect, fires and floods. They required ad hoc repairs or general refurbishments. In order to ensure the necessary conditions for studying, the rectors and prorectors called on the KEN to provide greater resources for repairs. Given its paltry finances, it would have been hard to expect the Commission to erect new buildings. For example, the Białystok school received aid from Izabela Branicka (1730—1808), who donated a plot of land for the construction of a new school and commissioned a new design of the investment.

The schools' primary obligations included raising citizens who would be enlightened, capable and responsible for the country. They sought to accomplish that objective by incorporating in the syllabus ideas of an explicitly national and patriotic nature. Great importance lay in the teaching of the Polish language, literature and speech that was to be purified of anachronistic phrases and foreign clichés. The formation of man and citizen was helped by history and geography, as well as by mathematical and naturalist sciences that demonstrated scientific achievements and drew the attention to the functionality of science in

everyday life. Moreover, the civic education was advanced by the introduction of the teaching of morality and laws of nature.

The school's work also involved extra-curricular care for its students. For example, the school took care of the students at their private lodgings or the *convictus* dormitories. Teachers would visit the students to check on their dwellings and health condition.

In principle, each school of the Lithuanian Department made sure to implement that programme.

The introduction of the teaching and educational processes required duly qualified teaching staff. It was mainly former Jesuits and religious teachers, the Piarists and diocese priests that constituted the teaching staff of the Lithuanian Department schools. With time, their duties would be taken over by secular teachers who had acquired their trade at the Main School of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. It was not until the late years of the KEN that they began work at most schools. The Vilnius school was an exception with the first such teacher (Szymon Malewski) to start work as early as 1785.

The schools of the Lithuanian Department were a showcase for their towns which the local community was very keen to visit, coming both from the town and from its environs. School ceremonies were an occasion for the visit, with the students demonstrating their knowledge and skills and with those more talented receiving prizes. The most coveted prize was the *Diligentiae* Medal, which was funded by King Stanislaus II Augustus (1732—1798).

It is worthy of presenting operation of Lithuanian Department schools.

## Grodno

The department school in Grodno was converted from a Jesuit college that had been in operation there since 1664. At that time, it was one of the most affluent schools in Lithuania<sup>6</sup>. After the KEN was established, the college was converted into a province school, and after the Acts were passed, it became the Lithuanian Department's central school. Direct supervision over the school was exercised by the Main School of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The school's operation was controlled by school inspectors, initially appointed by the KEN, and subsequently, by the Main School. School inspectors' reports informed the Commission about its state and needs. School visitations were conducted in the following years: 1777, 1782, 1783, 1786, 1787, 1788, 1789, 1790 and 1791. In the school inspectors' opinion, the school operated well; in some years, even

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<sup>6</sup> I. Szybiak, *Szkolnictwo...*, 34—35; *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach na ziemiach Polski i Litwy 1564—1995*, ed. L. Grzebień, Kraków, 2004, 196—197; Z. Jędrzychowski, *Teatra grodzieńskie 1784—1864*, Warsaw, 2012, 15.

very well. Undoubtedly, that positive assessment was owed to the rector, Priest Józef Muczyński (1729—1793), a former Jesuit. Muczyński received his professional training in the Order and provided instruction in the colleges of Dau-gavpils, Ilūkste, Slonim and Navahrudak. He had settled in Grodno before the Jesuit suppression. First, he acted as the preacher and took charge of the library, and at the beginning of the school year 1771—1772, he became the college prefect. After the Jesuit suppression, the KEN entrusted him with supervision of the province school, and after the Acts were brought into effect, he became the rector of the school and the entire Lithuanian Department. He proved to be a good organiser in caring about the school's wellbeing and about proper implementation of the educational process. He held his position actually throughout the entire time of the Commission's operation. In 1793, he retired<sup>7</sup>.

The circle of the Grodno school's talented students included, among others, Ignacy Szaniawski and August Bécu (1771—1824). Szaniawski chose to enter the academic estate and studied at the Main School of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the years 1787—1790. He became a teacher, and in his first post, he worked at his original school in Grodno. During the school year 1791—1792, he was an assistant teacher, and from 1793 onwards, he provided instruction in Class 4.

August Bécu also studied at the Main School, but he pursued his interests in medicine, developing his medical expertise also in other countries — in Germany, England and Scotland. That was where he familiarised himself with the latest methods of treating various diseases. His future professional career owed the most to his acquaintance with Edward Jenner (1749—1823), contributor of the smallpox vaccine. On returning to Vilnius, Bécu popularised the vaccine and encouraged the public to apply vaccination. His writing *O wakcynie, czyli tzw. ospie krowiej* was published in 1803. Aside from university lectures, Bécu was involved in treatment of patients, also in his charity work at the Sisters of Mercy Hospital in Vilnius. He was perceived as a good physician and an individual who was interested in the development of medicine. Bécu was a member of the Vilnius Physicians' Society<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> *Raporty generalnych wizytatorów szkół Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim (1782—1792)*, ed. K. Bartnicka, I. Szybiak, Wrocław—Warsaw—Kraków, 1974, 163, 419; A. Królikowska, "Muczyński Józef", in *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej 1773—1794. Słownik biograficzny*, ed. A. Meissner, A. Wałęga (in print).

<sup>8</sup> H. Mościcki, "Bécu August Ludwik", in *Polski słownik biograficzny*, ed. W. Konopczyński, 1, Kraków, 1935, 391—392; J. Bieliński, *Uniwersytet Wileński (1579—1831)*, 3, Kraków, 1899—1900, 118—119; A. Kowalska-Śmigielńska, *Dzieje katedry anatomii w dawnym Uniwersytecie Wileńskim i Akademii Medyko-Chirurgicznej Wileńskiej w latach 1777—1842*, Vilnius, 1938, 7; J. Kamińska, *Universitas Vilnensis. Akademia Wileńska i Szkoła Główna Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego 1773—1792*, Pułtusk—Warsaw, 2004, 93, 99, 149, 191.



After the collapse of the Commonwealth, the Grodno department school was in 1797 entrusted to priests of the Dominican Order. It was also transferred to the Order's premises<sup>9</sup>.

### Białystok

The Białystok school was established in 1777 owing to the efforts of Hetman Jan Klemens Branicki's wife, Izabela Branicka (1730—1808). Direct supervision over the school was exercised by the department school in Grodno, but ultimate supervision was exercised by the Main School of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The school's operation was controlled by school inspectors appointed by the KEN, and subsequently, by the Main School. Their reports informed the Commission about the school's state and needs. School visitations were conducted in Białystok in the following years: 1782, 1783, 1785, 1786, 1787, 1788, 1789, 1790 and 1791<sup>10</sup>.

The Białystok school received good evaluations from school inspectors. What they observed was the prorector's care to make sure it operates properly, and any imperfections were redressed on an ongoing basis. Scarce funds constituted the school's biggest problem. The money provided by the Commission was insufficient, e.g. for repairs, equipment, but also for heating. Huge support for the school was provided by Izabela Branicka, who spared no expense to provide good facilities and proper conditions.

At the time of its establishment, the position of school prefect was held by former Jesuit Jan Michałowski (1738—post 1794), who, after the Acts were passed, became the prorector and held this position throughout the time of KEN operations. Michałowski was fully educated, which education he had received in the Order, as he had studied philosophy in Pinsk and Nesvizh and theology in Polotsk. He was interested in mathematics, which he familiarised himself with at Warsaw's Collegium Nobilium. Michałowski gained his first teaching experience at Jesuit colleges, e.g. at Nesvizh college. After the Jesuit Order suppression, he provided instruction at the province school in Minsk. In Białystok, aside from caring about the proper school organisation, he also stepped in for the teachers and conducted classes himself. As the Białystok

<sup>9</sup> L. Zasztowt, *Kresy 1832—1864. Szkolnictwo na ziemiach litewskich i ruskich dawnej Rzeczypospolitej*, Warsaw, 1997, 40—44; J. Gordziejew, *Socjotopografia Grodna w XVIII wieku*, Toruń, 2002, 309, 311; D. Beauvois, *Wilno — polska stolica kulturalna zaboru rosyjskiego 1803—1832*, Wrocław, 2010, 469.

<sup>10</sup> *Raporty...*, 41—44, 103—104, 145—147, 161—162, 263—265, 307—310, 412—418, 509—512, 538—540; H. Pohoska, *Wizytatorowie generalni Komisji Edukacji Narodowej. Monografia z dziejów administracji szkolnej Komisji Edukacji Narodowej*, Lublin, 1957, 305—309, 350.

school prorektor, Michałowski was considered as a good caretaker and organiser, as well as a reliable teacher<sup>11</sup>.

Quite a big group of young people attended the Białystok school, coming mainly from noble families — sons of officials of magnate courts and children of less wealthy nobles, as well as children of townsmen.

The group of talented students included Mateusz Korbutt (Korbut), who displayed an interest in natural science. His dexterity in this field was discerned by Prorektor Michałowski, and Korbutt was sent to a well-known naturalist and Priest Krzysztof Kluk (1739—1796), so that he could, under Kluk's supervision, expand his naturalist knowledge (botanical knowledge in particular)<sup>12</sup>.

The circle of talented students also included Bartłomiej Dziekoński (?—1801), who studied at the Białystok school, and subsequently, became a teacher there. Aside from his teaching duties, he also prepared for publication two scholarly works in agriculture and craftsmanship: *Zasady o rolnictwie, rękodzielach i handlu* and *Przepisy rolnictwa i ogrodnictwa*.

In 1793, the school's operation was suspended as a result of the entry by Russian troops and the Second Partition. A year later, many of its students took up arms in the Kościuszko Uprising. It was undoubtedly an expression of patriotism of the young generation. After the Third Partition, Białystok found itself within the Prussian Partition, and in 1807, in the Russian Partition. It was then that the school was incorporated to the Vilnius School District<sup>13</sup>.

## Lida and Shchuchyn

Two Piarist schools were incorporated in the KEN Lithuanian Department: in Lida and in Shchuchyn.

The Piarist college in Lida had operated since 1756. In 1783, it was designated as a sub-department school. Under the Commission's requirements, the school was controlled by school inspectors once a year. In 1782 and 1783, the school inspectors were appointed by the Commission, and subsequently, visitations were conducted by school inspectors appointed by the Main School. Most likely, visitations were conducted every year, but the archives indicate only the following years: 1782, 1783, 1786, 1787, 1788 and 1789<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Jan Michałowski to Marcin Poczobut, VUL, F2 DC 105; *Raporty...*, 161, 264, 309, 418, 511.

<sup>12</sup> D. Teofilewicz, *Działalność Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w województwie podlaskim 1773—1794*, Białystok, 1971, 102; *Raporty...*, 263, 413, 416—417.

<sup>13</sup> J. Trynkowski, *Gimnazjum. Z dziejów Gimnazjum Białostockiego (1777) 1802—1915*, Białystok, 2002, 29; D. Beauvois, *Wilno...*, 108.

<sup>14</sup> *Raporty...*, 53—55, 122—123, 171, 266—267, 316—317, 468—471; H. Pohoska, *Wizytatorowie...*, 305—309, 345, 350.

During nearly the entire period of KEN operation, until 1793, Priest Aleksander Wolmer (1732—1802) was the school's rector. He had most likely been connected with the Lida Piarists since 1756, and it was here that he had achieved his Order distinctions. He filled the positions of teacher, prorector and prefect. Wolmer deserves credit for, prior to the Lida college's incorporation in the KEN structure, creating a school theatre. During the KEN time, Wolmer displayed his care for suitable living, working and teaching conditions.

Like many other schools of the Lithuanian Department, the Lida school mainly educated sons of nobles and townsmen. It can be indicated by the names originating undoubtedly from Lithuanian nobility families, more wealthy and less wealthy alike, e.g. Jundziłł, Jurewicz, Kuncewicz, Narbutt, Stecewicz, Wierzbicki.

Amongst the school's graduates was Stanisław Bonifacy Jundziłł (1761—1847), of the Lida County. He began his studies in 1774, so the period of his education coincided with the first years when the school operated under KEN supervision. After four years of studies in Lida, he joined the Piarist Order, where he received further education. That was where he received his training to work as a teacher. He went on to study at the Main School of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and abroad. In Vilnius, he subsequently became professor of natural history and was involved in the creation of a botanical garden<sup>15</sup>.

Following the Third Partition, the Lida school was subject to Russian regulations. After 1797, when all of the Commission's secondary schools were brought under the supervision of religious orders, the Lida school remained in the Piarists' possession and was designated as a county school. The monks continued their work in accordance with the KEN's Acts<sup>16</sup>.

The Shchuchyn school owes its origins to the funding by Jerzy Józef Hlebicki, who brought the Piarists to Shchuchyn in 1718 and funded the establishment of their college. As time went by, it became an important school offering an extensive programme of education. The KEN incorporated the college in its structure and exercised its control over it. Most likely, school inspectors visited the school every year, but reports have been preserved only for the following

<sup>15</sup> J. Jundziłł, "Wiadomość o życiu i pracach naukowych księdza Stanisława Jundziłła", *Biblioteka Warszawska* 1, 1850, 18; W. Grębecka, "Stanisław Bonifacy Jundziłł — wybitny uczony polskiego oświecenia (1761—1847)", in *Wkład pijarów do nauki i kultury w Polsce XVII—XIX wieku*, ed. I. Stasiewicz-Jasiukowa, Warsaw—Kraków, 1993, 239—263; J. Kamińska, *Universitas Vilnensis 1793—1803. Od Szkoły Głównej Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego do Imperatorskiego Uniwersytetu Wileńskiego*, Warsaw, 2012, 199—200; M. Ausz, "Jundziłł Bonifacy", in *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej 1773—1794. Słownik...*

<sup>16</sup> L. Zasztowt, *Kresy...*, 175; D. Beauvois, *Wilno...*, 469; M. Ausz, "Szkoły pijarskie na terenie Białorusi", *Studia Białorusinistyczne* 11, 2017, 15.

years: 1782, 1783, 1786, 1787, 1788 and 1789. In most cases, school inspectors assessed the school's operation as good<sup>17</sup>.

Aside from Jundziłł, also Ferdynand Serfinowicz was employed as a teacher at the Shchuchyn school, where he conducted speech instruction. Serfinowicz was one of the school's outstanding teachers, and he tied his subsequent professional life with the Main School; at the time of the Partitions of Poland, he was appointed there as assistant professor of Latin and provided instruction in Roman literature<sup>18</sup>.

As was the case of other KEN secondary schools, the Shchuchyn school most likely educated the youth of nobility and townsmen's families from Shchuchyn and its environs. The schools' students included Józef and Adam Narbutt, sons of Józef Mikołaj Narbutt, Lida standard-bearer, as well as Leopold Scypio, son of Ignacy Scypio, owner of Shchuchyn. The school was not a big one, the attendance amounted to 50 to 119 students.

Among the school's most remarkable students was Jan Fryderyk Wolfgang (1776—1859), who developed an interest in natural science, in particular chemistry and pharmacy. Wolfgang received a scholarship from a Shchuchyn pharmacist to study at the Main School in Vilnius. After his studies, as a *magister* of pharmacy, as a way of compensation for his scholarship, he returned to Shchuchyn, where he worked at a pharmacy for about a year. Subsequently, he went back to Vilnius and ran the Wagner's pharmacy, and in 1806, he began his work as assistant professor at the Imperial University of Vilnius, where he was appointed professor in 1810<sup>19</sup>.

After the collapse of the Commonwealth, Shchuchyn was situated within the Russian Partition, and the school was in the possession of the Piarists<sup>20</sup>.

## Merkinė

The Merkinė school had Jesuit origins. Most likely, the Order founded a college before 1726. After the Jesuit suppression, in 1776, the school was handed over to the Dominicans<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> *Raporty...*, 51—53, 105—106, 171—172, 267—269, 318—319, 465—468; H. Pohoska, *Wizytatorowie...*, 305—309, 345, 350.

<sup>18</sup> J. Kurkowski, "Wybitni nauczyciele i uczniowie szkoły pijarskiej w Szczuczynie (1718—1832)", *Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki* 40, 1995, 91; J. Kamińska, *Universitas Vilnensis 1793—1803*, 144; E. Aleksandrowska, "Serafinowicz Ferdynand", iPSB <ipsb.nina.gov.pl/a/biografia/ferdynand-seraferinowicz> (seen: 3 April 2018); M. Ausz, "Serafinowicz Ferdynand", in *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej 1773—1794. Słownik...*

<sup>19</sup> J. Bieliński, *Uniwersytet...*, 3, 358; D. Beauvois, *Wilno...*, 216—217; J. Kamińska, *Universitas Vilnensis 1793—1803*, 266—267.

<sup>20</sup> L. Zasztowt, *Kresy...*, 178; D. Beauvois, *Wilno...*, 580.

<sup>21</sup> "Merecz", in *Encyklopedia...*, 416.

The first general visitations in 1782 and 1783 were conducted by school inspectors appointed by the Commission of National Education, and subsequently, school inspectors were appointed by the Main School of Lithuania. Post-visitations reports of the following years have been preserved: 1782, 1783, 1786, 1787, 1788, 1789, 1790 and 1791<sup>22</sup>.

In the years 1773—1776, four ex-Jesuits were employed at the Merkinė school. After the school was taken over by the Dominicans, Priest Karłowicz became its prefect and preacher. The remains of the sources suggest that Karłowicz adamantly fulfilled his duties.

The Merkinė school was characterised by a significant turnover of teachers. The years 1781—1791 saw the total of 23 Dominicans work at the school. The appointment of a monk to work at the school was determined by decision of the Merkinė monastery prior, Priest Jacenty Samochołowicz, who was regarded as an educated man and a good caretaker, who took proper care of the recruitment of teachers.

Jan Styrpejko was a teacher with quite a long tenure at the Merkinė sub-department school, where he worked in the years 1784—1790. He began his work as a preacher, but a year later, he was working as a teacher, and subsequently, was appointed prefect. Styrpejko fulfilled his duty properly, combining it with the work of a teacher, and received good evaluations from the visiting school inspectors. He provided instruction in mathematics and natural subjects. After concluding his work in Merkinė, Styrpejko became a teacher and prefect of the Grodno school. That was where he prepared for publication of his works in mathematics and physics<sup>23</sup>.

The school educated a rather small number of students, and the school inspectors gave it high grades<sup>24</sup>.

After the collapse of the Commonwealth, the Merkinė sub-department school was situated in the territory of the Russian Empire. Most likely, it did not operate in the years 1794—1797, but it resumed its operation in the school year 1797—1798 and remained in the possession of the Dominicans<sup>25</sup>.

## Pastavy

The Pastavy school had Jesuit origins. After the Jesuit suppression, the KEN took over the facility, and Priest Ignacy Chodźko (1724—1792), who was put

<sup>22</sup> *Raporty...*, 91—93, 107, 163, 269—270, 319, 423—427, 517, 544; H. Pohoska, *Wizytatorowie...*, 305—309, 350.

<sup>23</sup> Styrpejko's manuscripts are stored by the Manuscript Department of the Vilnius University Library, F3: *Traktaty i prace naukowe*, F3-551, F3-552, F3-2532.

<sup>24</sup> *Raporty...*, 93.

<sup>25</sup> L. Zasztowt, *Kresy...*, 156, 166—167; D. Beauvois, *Wilno...*, 358, 394, 436.

in charge, took care of its proper state, which was reflected by the fact that he raised funds for its maintenance<sup>26</sup>.

Most likely, visitations were conducted every year, but the post-visit reports have been preserved for the following years only: 1782, 1783, 1786, 1787, 1788, 1789, 1790 and 1792<sup>27</sup>.

The school was under the management of Priest Jan Romanowski (1738—post 1792), a former Jesuit, who ensured stable employment until 1791. He had gained his professional qualifications in the Order. Romanowski had received education in philosophy and theology at the Grodno college. He also studied architecture under the guidance of Gabriel Lenkiewicz (1722—1798) in Polatsk. The Jesuit suppression found him in Rome, where he was most likely pursuing his studies. On his return home, he assumed his duties in Pastavy. It therefore was his first post under the governance of the KEN<sup>28</sup>.

Amongst the Pastavy school students was Ignacy Horodecki (1776—1824), a *Diligentiae* Medal winner, who became a candidate for the academic estate at the Main School, i.e. he was preparing for his teaching profession, on completing the Pastavy school. Aside from studying the subjects intended for prospective teachers, Horodecki enrolled in natural subjects, and was in particular interested in physics, natural history and chemistry. In 1799, he completed his education and for 10 years provided instruction at a Vilnius gymnasium, and subsequently, in 1811, he became an assistant to Jędrzej Śniadecki at the chemical laboratory at the Vilnius University. In 1814, Horodecki was appointed assistant professor, and in 1822, professor, at the Department of Chemistry. The special object of interest of his scientific study was mineralogy which at that time set itself apart from natural history as a distinct scientific discipline. Therefore, Horodecki was one of the Vilnius scientists who pioneered the development of this discipline<sup>29</sup>.

Amongst the Pastavy school graduates was also Leon Borowski (1784—1846), with a passion for literature, which swayed him to continue his studies in that field. From 1801, Borowski attended university lectures at the Main School. Among other lecturers, he listened to Filip Neriusz Golański (1753—

<sup>26</sup> X. Ignacy Chodźko to the Commission of National Education, 8 June 1775, RGADA, F 1603-1-84, 62—62v.

<sup>27</sup> *Raporty...*, 25—26, 66—67, 141—142, 177—181, 215—217, 345—346, 383—384, 554—555; H. Pohoska, *Wizytatorowie...*, 305—309, 350.

<sup>28</sup> *Encyklopedia...*, 526, 574; A.P. Bieś, "Romanowski Jan", in *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej 1773—1794. Słownik...*

<sup>29</sup> Z. Kosiek, "Horodecki Ignacy", in *Polski słownik biograficzny*, ed. K. Lepszy et al., 10, Wrocław—Warsaw—Kraków, 1960, 1; J. Kamińska, *Universitas Vilnensis 1793—1803*, 269—270.

1824). A diligent student, during the time of the Imperial Vilnius University Borowski received an award from the Department of Literature and Liberal Arts for accomplishments in his study. On graduating, he became a teacher of speech and poetry at the gymnasia in Svislač and Vilnius, and subsequently, while at university, he was appointed assistant professor<sup>30</sup>.

Following the Second Partition, Pastavy was situated in the territory of Russia and the school ceased its operation, but it was not until 1820 that the school was closed down and the teachers transferred to Babruysk<sup>31</sup>.

## Vidzy

The Vidzy school had Jesuit origins owing to the funding provided in 1754 by Antoni Wawrzecki, Braslaw Master of the Hunt, for a mission station in that location. The monks established a school which educated only a small number of students. In Vidzy, the KEN opened a county school, but like in the Jesuit days, with only a small number of students attending. That was the fact that swayed the Commission to close down the school<sup>32</sup>.

## Vilnius

After the Jesuit Order's suppression, a secondary school was derived from the Vilnius Academy, which under the then regulations of the Commission of National Education, became a province school. On the enactment of the Draft Acts of the Commission of National Education, the Vilnius province school was converted into a department school. In mid-1783, so after the announcement of the Acts, it lost its status, however, and by the Commission's decision, it became a sub-department school. That change was a result of the creation of a new school structure and establishment of school departments. The school remained, however, a highly organised facility, with six classes, employing six teachers.

Initially, direct supervision over the school was exercised by the Vilnius Academy, i.e. the Main School of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, from 1781. On enactment of the Acts, the school was brought under the supervision of the Grodno department school. In practice, however, all matters were resolved

<sup>30</sup> J. Bieliński, *Uniwersytet...*, 1, 334, 2, 780, 3, 138—142; S. Pigoń, "Borowski Leon", in *Polski słownik biograficzny*, ed. W. Konopczyński, 2, Kraków, 1936, 349; J. Kamińska, *Universitas Vilnensis 1793—1803*, 271—273.

<sup>31</sup> L. Zasztowt, *Kresy...*, 187; D. Beauvois, *Wilno...*, 358, 473.

<sup>32</sup> *Raporty...*, 68, 142; K. Mrozowska, "Uniwersytet Wileński i jego szkoły w latach 1795—1803", in *Studia z dziejów Uniwersytetu Wileńskiego 1579—1979*, ed. K. Mrozowska, Warsaw—Kraków, 1979, 78—79; *Encyklopedia...*, 256, 304, 487.

directly by the Main School, and its relations with the department school remained very tight. This was reflected by the fact that the department school used university rooms for educational work, and that both schools celebrated various ceremonies together<sup>33</sup>.

The school's operation was controlled by school inspectors initially appointed by the KEN, and subsequently, by the Main School. Their reports informed the Commission about the school's state, teaching process, teachers and current needs. School visitations were conducted in the following years: 1782, 1783, 1785, 1786, 1787, 1788, 1789, 1790 and 1791<sup>34</sup>.

At first, the school was headed by Jan Erdman (1729—1798), former Jesuit, and a graduate of the Vilnius Academy in mathematical and physical subjects. He was succeeded in 1783 by Priest Michał Piotrowski (1741—?), a former Jesuit, who had received his philosophical and theological education in the Order. Piotrowski made a doctoral degree in theology, liberal arts and canon law. He also worked as an assistant at the Vilnius Academy's Department of Philosophy. After the Jesuit Order suppression, Piotrowski worked as the prefect of the Vidzy county school, and on its shut-down, he was assigned to go to Vilnius. On the whole, Piotrowski had a good reputation. He stepped down in 1790, and in 1791, he began work as a general school inspector. After Piotrowski left, former Jesuit Józef Hołyński (1751—1816), who had also received his education in the Order, was appointed prorector. In the first years of the KEN governance, Hołyński was a teacher in Minsk, and later on, he looked after students at the *convictus* dormitory for impoverished nobility youth in Vilnius<sup>35</sup>.

The high turnover of teachers at the Vilnius school was reflected by the fact that it employed 29 teachers during the time of KEN governance. In the beginning, the teaching staff were dominated by former Jesuits, with several secular teachers and Piarists, but from 1785 onwards, secular teachers had begun coming to provide instruction there, having received training at the Main School's teacher training seminary. Gradually, they were taking place of former Jesuit teachers. The first one of them to take up teaching duties in 1785 was Szymon Malewski (1759—1832). He was one of the teacher trainees who had set off

<sup>33</sup> W. Tekieliński, *Opis dzienny szkół wileńskich, Akademii i Uniwersytetu oraz Diarjusz znaczniejszych wypadków w Wilnie od roku 1781 po rok 1824 nastających*, Vilnius, 1876.

<sup>34</sup> *Raporty...*, 55—61, 108—111, 148—149, 205—209, 212—215, 341—344, 381—383, 499—502, 532—534; H. Póhoska, *Wizytatorowie...*, 304—309, 350; L. Piechnik, "Rzut oka na powstanie, rozwój i likwidację jezuickiego Collegium Nobilium w Wilnie", in *Studia z dziejów oświaty i kultury umysłowej w Polsce XVIII—XIX w.*, ed. R. Dutkowska, J. Dybiec, L. Hajdukiewicz, Wrocław—Warsaw—Kraków, 1977, 85—86.

<sup>35</sup> I. Szybiak, *Nauczyciele...*, 123; B. Topij-Stempińska, "Hołyński Józef", in *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej 1773—1794. Słownik...*



with Hieronim Stroynowski (1752—1815) to study at the Crown's Main School as a group of Lithuanian students preparing for the teaching profession<sup>36</sup>.

Tomasz Życki, one of the good teachers interested in mathematical subjects, was another graduate of the teacher training seminary that taught at the Vilnius school. In 1791, the Main School offered him to take up the position of vice-professor and give lectures in elementary mathematics. Życki accepted this offer and his subsequent career was tied with the Main School and the Vilnius University<sup>37</sup>.

Stefan Stubielewicz (1762—1814) was another secular teacher. He had received excellent education and was qualified to provide instruction, with his interests concentrated on physics. Before long, after the collapse of the Commonwealth, Stubielewicz transferred to the Main School to be appointed vice-professor of experimental physics. He developed his expertise under the guidance of Professor Józef Mickiewicz, and on his studies abroad<sup>38</sup>.

A sizeable number of students — from some 300 to north of 500 — attended the Vilnius school. They mostly came from nobility families, and some from townsmen's families<sup>39</sup>.

Students' future lives arguably ensued in diverse ways. The limited group of people indicated by school inspectors consists of those who continued their studies at the Main School, most of whom were preparing for the academic estate in order to become teachers, and those who went on to work at the university after the partitions.

Among them were: Kazimierz Kontrym (1776—1836), who filled the post of school secretary in the years 1803—1805, and subsequently, became an assistant to the librarian. Kontrym actively engaged in the cultural and social life of Vilnius. He was a co-editor of the periodicals *Gazeta Literacka Wileńska Weekly* and *Dziennik Wileński*, where he also worked as its editor-in-chief in the years 1815—1817. Kontrym also wrote articles for *Tygodnik Wileński*. The greatest fame was brought to him by his involvement in the creation of *Wiadomości Brukowe* — a periodical of the Rogues' Society [Towarzystwo Szu-

<sup>36</sup> *List kandydatów stanu akademickiego do rektora Szkoły Głównej W. Ks. Lit.*, RGADA, F 1603-1-104, 284; I. Szybiak, *Szkolnictwo...*, 132, 166; I. Szybiak, *Nauczyciele...*, 145—146.

<sup>37</sup> I. Szybiak, *Nauczyciele...*, 125; D. Beauvois, *Wilno...*, 96; J. Kamińska, *Universitas Vilnensis 1793—1803*, 159—160.

<sup>38</sup> L. Klimka, R. Kivilšienė, *Fizikos ir taikomųjų mokslų pradžia Lietuvoje*, Vilnius, 2005, 32, 34; D. Beauvois, *Wilno...*, 106; J. Kamińska, "Stubielewicz Stefan", in *Polski słownik biograficzny*, ed. A. Romanowski, 45, Warsaw—Kraków, 2008, 100—103; J. Kamińska, *Universitas Vilnensis 1793—1803*, 168—169.

<sup>39</sup> *Raporty...*, 382.

brawców]. Besides, he was part of the founding group of the Society for Support of University Students in Need [Towarzystwo Wspierania Niedostatnich Uczniów Uniwersyteckich], established in Vilnius in 1821<sup>40</sup>.

Jan Chodźko (1777—1851) was another graduate of the Vilnius school, and he most likely also studied law at the Vilnius University. Having completed his studies, he settled in his family's estate in the environs of Minsk. Chodźko was involved with management of his estate, but he also wrote novels and theatre plays, and performed the profession of a lawyer as president of the Minsk Main Court. He also promulgated agricultural knowledge among peasants and was concerned about the state of the education system. His concern about raising the living standards of the rural population was expressed by the publication of his book *Pan Jan ze Swistoczy, kramarz wędrujący*, which the Vilnius University found as useful reading for parochial schools.

The entrance by Russian troops into Vilnius in May 1792 caused the school to be temporarily closed down. The break lasted seven years, from the school year 1792—1793 until 1799. In 1803, under new Russian imperial laws, the Vilnius school was converted into a gymnasium, which was under direct supervision of the Vilnius Imperial University<sup>41</sup>.

## Vishnyeva

The school in Vishnyeva had Jesuit origins, and after the Jesuit Order suppression, it was brought under the governance of the KEN. The first KEN visitations were conducted in 1782. The following visits were carried out by school inspectors appointed by the Main School. Post-visitiation reports have been preserved for the following years: 1782, 1783, 1785, 1786, 1787, 1788 and 1789<sup>42</sup>.

The school inspectors praised the school for work in accordance with the KEN's guidance, i.e. with the Acts. After 1783, the Vishnyeva school was under supervision of the department school in Grodno.

The school was supported by Joachim Chreptowicz, who was also the owner of the town. This was why he took so much care about the development of education, which care resulted in construction of a school building.

<sup>40</sup> M. Brensztejn, *Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Wilnie do roku 1832*, pref. S. Rygła, Vilnius, 1925, 36—37; Z. Skwarczyński, *Kazimierz Kontrym. Towarzystwo Szubrawców. Dwa studia*, Łódź, 1961, 57; J. Kamińska, *Universitas Vilmensis 1793—1803*, 280, 321; J. Kowal, "Rola wileńskiego typografa Józefa Zawadzkiego w rozwoju czasopiśmiennictwa polskiego na Litwie w epoce porobiorowej", *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis. Folia Litteraria Polonica* 16, 2016, 286—287.

<sup>41</sup> VUL, F2 KC 232, 15; W. Tekieliński, *Opis...*, 94; K. Mrozowska, "Uniwersytet...", 96—97; L. Zasztowt, *Kresy...*, 44—52; D. Beauvois, *Wilno...*, 365 and subsequent.

<sup>42</sup> *Raporty...*, 64—65, 116—117, 148—149, 240—242, 339—341, 398—399; H. Pohoska, *Wizytatorowie...*, 305—309, 350.

During the time under KEN governance, the school was headed by Jan Kłodnicki (1723—?) from the Order of Priests Communitarians, the priest of the Vishnyeva parish. Kłodnicki was extremely dedicated to school matters and cared about education of young people. He paid a lot of attention to the issue of organisation of education. He should be credited for ensuring stability of the teaching staff. The fire of the school building was a big blow. Then, Kłodnicki lent his parish buildings for operation of the school.

The students came from Vishnyeva and its environs, mainly from the Ashmyany County, but also from the Lida County and other regions. Only a limited number of students attended the Vishnyeva school. In the beginning, until the passing of the Acts, there were from 20 to 52 of them<sup>43</sup>.

It is hard to identify today the biographies of Vishnyeva school students. It is worth pointing out that Joachim Chreptowicz's son, Kazimierz, was a student there. In the opinion of his teachers, he was a mediocre student, of sound health and good manners, i.e. of impeccable conduct<sup>44</sup>. Józef Oleszkiewicz (1777—1830), later a well-known painter, attended the Vishnyeva school for one year only before going on to study at the Main School. He had been enrolled in the Vishnyeva school at the age of 10, and was one of ailing students, with limited educational achievements, but he was calm and well-behaved. Oleszkiewicz came from impoverished nobility from the Minsk County, and perhaps too high living costs prevented him from continuing education. During his studies in Vilnius, he was dwelling on the premises of the university and was financially supported by Professor Józef Mickiewicz<sup>45</sup>.

After the collapse of the Commonwealth, Vishnyeva found itself in the territory of the Russian Empire. In 1799, the school was taken over by the Baruny school. In 1801, the Vishnyeva school was taken over by the Lyskovo school, run by missionaries<sup>46</sup>.

## Vawkavysk

The Vawkavysk school was founded on the basis of a small post-Jesuit school that had since 1747 operated in the Order's missionary station. After the Jesuit suppression, it was brought under the authority of the KEN. The first visitations to the Vawkavysk school were conducted in 1782 and 1783 by school inspector Franciszek Bieńkowski, appointed by the Commission. The subsequent

<sup>43</sup> VUL, F2 DC 85, 12v—13, 17v—18 and subsequent; VUL, F2 DC 122, 51—52v.

<sup>44</sup> VUL, F2 DC 85, 22v—23, 25v—26.

<sup>45</sup> J. Kamińska, *Universitas Vilnensis 1793—1803*, 302.

<sup>46</sup> K. Mrozowska, "Uniwersytet...", 78—79; J. Kamińska, "Komisja Edukacyjna Litewska a Uniwersytet Wileński 1797—1802", in *Szkola polska od średniowiecza do XX wieku — między tradycją a innowacją*, ed. I. Szybiak, A. Fijałkowski, J. Kamińska, Warsaw, 2010, 93—94, 97.

visits were carried out by school inspectors appointed by the Main School. In the opinion of school inspectors, the school performed its obligations generally well<sup>47</sup>. The school's weakness was its poor working conditions, especially the bad state of the school building.

Priest Jakub Kolnicki (1744—1793), ex-Jesuit, remained for many years as the school's prorector. He had received full education in the Order. After initially studying the humanities, Kolnicki completed a philosophy study in Navahrudak, and next, a theology study there. In 1776, he received a bachelor's degree in philosophy and liberal arts at the Vilnius Academy, and in 1777, he began his work in Vawkavysk. Kolnicki was considered as a very good school organiser and manager. He always received very good opinions from school inspectors who emphasised his professionalism and dedication to organising school operation. He also provided teachers with joint meals and generally helped ensure a good working atmosphere among the teaching staff<sup>48</sup>.

Kolnicki continued working at the Vawkavysk school until the end of his life. Priest Józef Raszkowski (1746—after 1818), ex-Jesuit and a current teacher at the Grodno school, came in to replace him. Raszkowski had received education in the Order, first at the Reszel college, and next, at the Navahrudak college in philosophy and at the Grodno college in theology. He arrived in Vawkavysk in December 1793, so only after the Second Partition. He found the facility in poor condition, as the school had suffered as a result of the Kościuszko Uprising<sup>49</sup>.

In terms of numbers, the Vawkavysk school was fairly small, as a rather moderate number of students attended there — from 58 to nearly 100. Like in other schools, Classes 1 were the most populous, and in subsequent classes, the numbers of students clearly diminished. The students mostly came from nobility families inhabiting the Vawkavysk County and its environs. It is very likely that also townsmen's children attended the Vawkavysk school.

Students' lives centred largely on class attendance, preparation for lessons, monthly and school inspection exams, as well as participation in holy masses and school ceremonies<sup>50</sup>.

It is hard to track down future lives of the Vawkavysk school's graduates. Like most of the students graduating from KEN schools, they filled official and administrative positions, and were involved with management of their estates. Such was the case of Dominik Tyszkiewicz (died 1813), son of Count Felicjan Tyszkiewicz-Łohojski (1719—1792), Strzałkowski County Governor. In the

<sup>47</sup> *Raporty...*, 19—20, 104—105, 147—148, 172, 259—260, 299—301, 471—475, 502—504, 532—534; H. Pohoska, *Wizytatorowie...*, 305—309, 350.

<sup>48</sup> *Raporty...*, 172.

<sup>49</sup> J. Ochmański, *Historia Litwy*, Wrocław—Warsaw—Kraków, 1990, 178—179.

<sup>50</sup> *Raporty...*, 473.

years 1807—1811, Tyszkiewicz held the post of Barysaw Marshal, and it was in the Barysaw area that he governed his estate.

Piotr Bispink (Biszping) (1777—1848), son of a marshal, was another graduate of the school who in 1812 engaged in the Napoleonic campaign. As he enjoyed broad public trust, he joined the delegation of the Governmental Commission and encouraged the public to defend the homeland. He organised an infantry batallion with his own funds all by himself<sup>51</sup>. Another graduate, Franciszek Jelski, was a chamberlain of Vawkavysk. Ignacy Żegota Onacewicz (1780—1845), a well-known historian and bibliophile, also graduated from the Vawkavysk school. He began his education in 1789 and went on to study in Grodno and at the teacher training seminary in Elk. In 1802, he received a scholarship from the king of Prussia, who funded his philosophy studies at the Königsberg University. That was where he also studied the Polish and Russian languages. Next, he set off to Petersburg, but after a short stay, he returned to Lithuania and took up further education at the Vilnius University, where he made a *magister* (master's) degree. In 1811, he was appointed professor of international history of the Vilnius University. Onacewicz stayed in this position for two years, and next, between 1813 and 1817, he taught literature, history and German at the Białystok gymnasium. In 1818, he returned to the Vilnius University to take up his position at the Department of International and Polish History<sup>52</sup>.

After the Third Partition, the school's building housed first instance courts. The prorektor was assured by the Russian authorities that students and teachers would have the rooms and private lodgings in town ready before the school year 1795—1796. This did not materialise, however, and even on 30 September the school buildings were not ready to accommodate the students. The teachers and first students had already begun arriving. It is likely that on 13 October 1795 as few as 36 students were present.

\*

This overview of particular schools of the Lithuanian Department demonstrates only a small fragment of their operations. The monograph I have prepared will unveil a broader perspective. It will take into account the roots, working conditions of teachers and students, school inspectors' evaluations, as well as their everyday life and reception by the public. However, not all aspects were possible to investigate. Further research is required into financial matters,

<sup>51</sup> D. Nawrot, *Litwa i Napoleon w 1812 roku*, Katowice, 2008, 407.

<sup>52</sup> J. Bieliński, *Uniwersytet...*, 3, 282—284; I. Szybiak, "Onacewicz Ignacy Żegota Bazyli", in *Polski słownik biograficzny*, ed. E. Rostworowski, 24, Wrocław—Warsaw—Kraków, 1979, 63—64.

e.g. funds provided by the KEN for school maintenance, raising funds from donors or costs of maintenance in the relevant city. It would also be worthwhile to explore biographies, in particular those of teachers and students. Certainly, answers to many questions need to be searched for in Vilnius archives and regional archives in Lithuania and Belarus, as well as at the Russian State Archive of Ancient Documents in Moscow.

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