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## CARE FOR ORPHANS IN NINETEENTH CENTURY WARSAW

The nineteenth-century European philanthropic movement supported every private charity which supplemented former assistance generated by religious motifs. Rapid industrialisation considerably increased the scope of poverty. Social groups demanding aid included workers living in extremely unsatisfactory conditions. Those changes led to the coexistence of traditional religious charity and modern conceptions of the participation of the government and private persons in the organisation of help. In Warsaw, the coexistence of both those different manners of activity, accompanied by a rapid growth of the town population, offers the historian a fascinating object of observation. It was precisely this town which during the partition era reflected, as in a kaleidoscope, all the social and political problems experienced in the Russian partition area. Warsaw was also a model for charity undertakings pursued in other towns, such as Łódź and Lublin. In contrast to Western Europe, in which the functions of a custodian were slowly taken over by the state, responsibility for the poor was shouldered by society. Charity organisations in the capital, the only legal social institutions acting with the consent of the tsarist authorities, concentrated their attention on a much wider range of issues, and pursued patriotic activity under the cover of philanthropic aid.

The topic of my paper is care for abandoned children in Warsaw during the nineteenth century. I intentionally use the terms “abandoned children” and “orphans” interchangeably, since I did not seek out information about their family situation. Instead, I followed the fate of the children through the prism of the institutions, which cared for them during the period under discussion. It is worth recalling the sort of institutions officially involved in organising help for orphans, including social orphans.

In 1830–1870 a basic role was played by the Main Custodian Council (*RGO*), established by a tsarist decree, and Special Councils for particular

charity institutions. At this time, the Council supervised the following institutions dealing with abandoned children: the Home for Foundlings at the Infant Jesus hospital, orphanages for boys and girls, the St. Casimir Institute as well as Jewish and Evangelical homes for orphans.

Other institutions of this variety owed their existence to private initiative. A particular role was played by the Warsaw Charity Society, founded in 1814, which in 1840 opened a Department of Care for Children, whose specialized section supervised orphanages.

The Main Custodian Council was dissolved on 26 September 1870 as result of post-uprising repressions. The subsequently introduced changes exerted an unfavourable impact upon the system of care for abandoned children, mainly due to a lack of state support. Consequently, this type of activity had to be entrusted to the inhabitants of Warsaw. It is characteristic that during the period of greatest national suppression, when all Polish organisations, with the exception of charity, were banned, the latter, despite enormous bureaucracy and obstacles created by the Russian authorities, developed extremely vigorously. Such a tendency was particularly visible in the case of the Warsaw Charity Society, which after 1870 assumed a leading role in organising help for orphans.

This brief introduction is followed by a presentation of the situation of foundlings and orphans in nineteenth-century Warsaw.

### **The Home for Foundlings**

The Infant Jesus hospital and adjoining Home for Foundlings were opened on 31 July 1754 upon the initiative of Piotr Gabriel Baudouin<sup>1</sup>. In 1838, the Home was handed over to *RGO*. The situation in the ward for foundlings and children was outright dramatic despite the fact that: "Amidst the hospital buildings there was [...] a separate ward for foundlings, rather comfortably arranged, but with wet nurses of the worst possible variety, recruited from among women sent to the hospital by the police, and frequently among the homeless, etc., rarely with fresh milk, and employed for two and three years; furthermore, each usually nursed three or four infants. This was the reason for the unprecedented death rate of the children; lists show that out of a total of 800 infants admitted annually, 500 died while under the care of the hospital wet nurses. Indubitably, this state of things exerted an equally harmful impact upon children entrusted to the village wet nurses; once neglected in the hospital, they could not always be nourished back to health

<sup>1</sup>Piotr Gabriel Baudouin (1689–1768) was a French priest from the Congregation of Fathers Missionaries. From 1717 in Warsaw, where he founded charity institutions, i.a. the home for foundlings at the Infant Jesus hospital and in 1761 the General Hospital for the Poor, *Nowa Encyklopedia Powszechna PWN (New General Encyclopaedia of the PWN Scientific Publishers)*, Warszawa 1995, vol. 1, p. 379.

and as a result some 200 infants died a year"<sup>2</sup>. A special committee, established in order to prevent this situation, ordered the removal of all children with the exception of foundlings, who could be left in a "wheel" (turnstile) next to the hospital gate, or admitted by the hospital office in return for a small fee. The wages received by the hospital and village wet nurses were raised, and members of the second group of women were sometimes permitted to keep the foundlings. At the same time, the Special Council created the institution of so-called parish custodians to control the village wet nurses and to supervise children brought up outside the institution. Those infants who were not taken back by their parents or sent to the countryside remained in the hospital until the age of 7; if it proved impossible to find a home for them, they left the institution at the age of 10–12 and, as a rule, became servants or apprentices. Children sent to the village were given special zinc seals, hung on their necks — one side of such a seal had the embossed number of the ward, under which a child was registered in hospital documents (so-called lineage), and on the other side — the inscription INFANT JESUS HOSPITAL IN WARSAW. The seals were placed in such a way that the strings on which they were suspended: red for girls and blue for boys, could not be broken. The infants were outfitted by the hospital with two shirts, a summer or winter dress, a long down-filled pillow, swaddling cloths and two diapers. The wet nurses arriving for the children were required to show a certificate issued by the local authorities, confirming excellent moral conduct and the ability to bring up a child. At the hospital, the women were subjected to a medical examination and, upon receiving the child, presented with a special booklet containing its data<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup>F. Sobieszczański, *Rys historyczno-statystyczny wzrostu i stanu miasta Warszawy od najdawniejszych czasów aż do 1847 roku* (*An Historical-statistical Outline of the Growth and State of the City of Warsaw from the Most Distant Past to 1847*), Warszawa 1974, pp. 279–280; J. Bartosiewicz, *Opis szpitala Dzieciątka Jezus w Warszawie* (*A Description of the Infant Jesus Hospital in Warsaw*), in: *Rys historyczno-statystyczny szpitali i innych zakładów dobroczynnych w Królestwie Polskim* (*An Historical-statistical Outline of Hospitals and Other Charity Institutions in the Kingdom of Poland*), vol. I, Warszawa 1872, p. 412; *Zdanie sprawy z czynności Rady Głównej Opiekuńczej Instytutów Dobroczynnych w roku 1839* (*A Report on the Activity of the Main Custodian Council of Charity Organisations in 1839*), Warszawa 1841, pp. 20–28.

<sup>3</sup>“[...] a. the lineage of the child, i. e. name, surname, religion, date of admittance to the institution, date of birth, noted down upon the base of a certificate or documents, if found on the child, and in the case of the absence of that proof [...] the number of the lineage book, name and surname of the wet nurse and her husband, if she is married, manner of earning a living and place of residence; b. a copy of a certificate issued by the local authorities upon whose basis the child was handed over; c. a certificate issued by the hospital doctor about an examination of the child and his health at the time of handing him over; d. a certificate of a successful pox vaccination”, L. Paprocki, *Dom podrzutek przy Szpitalu Dzieciątka Jezus w Warszawie* (*The Home for Foundlings at the Infant Jesus Hospital*), “*Ekonomista*” 1871, fasc. 8, p. 473.

The children left behind at the hospital were baptised and registered in records (lineages), whose abstracts were sent to registry offices, in order to prepare a birth certificate containing the name and surname found on the child or given to him by the hospital<sup>4</sup>. New regulations produced the anticipated effect, and although the number of foundlings grew, the death rate dropped decidedly<sup>5</sup>. When in 1840 fees for admitting the infants were liquidated and children could be only left in the turnstile, their number continued to rise, and in 1846 totalled 1,715<sup>6</sup>. As a result, a special office for open admittance was created in the following year. Its task was to assess which of the infants were to be admitted free of charge and which required a small fee. The authorities were well aware of the fact that a large number of persons would never wish to come to the hospital openly; consequently, the office worked only during the day, and the “turnstile” was available at night. The application of the new solution reduced the number of children by 273 in contrast to the previous year<sup>7</sup>. Data about the number of foundlings given by sources vary greatly, and it is impossible to present reliable ascertainment upon their basis. One fact remains obvious, namely, the rapidly growing number of the foundlings in the 1860s. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Infant Jesus hospital admitted 800–1,000 infants annually, while in 1850–1870 their number oscillated between 4,500 and 5,000, although other sources mention even 8,000<sup>8</sup>. Indubitably, one of the causes of such a sudden growth was the considerable rise of the population of Warsaw<sup>9</sup>; the journalists and moralists of the period conceived this phenomena a commonplace decline of morals. In this context, the division of the foundlings, entrusted to the Infant Jesus Hospital, into particular categories proposed by the hospital authorities appears to be particularly interesting:

“1. Abandoned by mothers due to shame or poverty.

2. Victims of the shocking profiteering committed by women who abandon a child in order to obtain the comfortable job of a wet nurse, or of the industriousness of intermediaries who incite mothers of new born babies to become private wet nurses, and who abandon the infants at the hospital,

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 471–472; “Przegląd Tygodniowy” 1870, № 22, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>F. Sobieszczanski, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 281; *Zdanie sprawy z czynności Rady Głównej Opiekuńczej Instytutów Dobroczyńnych w roku 1841 (A Report on the Activity of the Main Custodian Council of Charity Organisations in 1841)*, Warszawa 1843, pp. 9–16.

<sup>7</sup>F. Sobieszczanski, *op. cit.*, p. 282.

<sup>8</sup>L. Paprocki, *op. cit.*, p. 469 mentions 5,500, J. Bartoszewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 270 claims that in 1869 the number totalled 8,165.

<sup>9</sup>1832 — 127,000; 1864 — 222,000; 1875 — more than 300,000; 1897 — 594,000; *Encyklopedia Warszawy (Encyclopaedia of Warsaw)*, Warszawa 1994, pp. 442–443.

at times keeping the money swindled from the child's mother or the persons hiring her and supposedly intended for covering the hospital fees.

3. Legitimate children of poor parents, who thus free themselves from the burden of bringing up their offspring by abandoning them at the hospital.

5. Children of Jewesses or Jewish parents, who sometimes abandon them despite the attachment to offspring well-grounded in this class of the population.

6. Children brought in by the police authorities.

7. Children of wet nurses working in the institution.

8. Children of hospital patients.

9. Children of women giving birth in the Maternity Institute at the Infant Jesus hospital, the majority of whom are abandoned after birth [...] To those one must add infants left by mothers on the deathbed and the deceased"<sup>10</sup>.

In 1871, the growing number of foundlings and the financial difficulties experienced by the Infant Jesus Hospital led to a liquidation of the turnstile and the admittance of children only via the hospital office<sup>11</sup>. Open admittance was a lengthy procedure, and in reality the hospital admitted children abandoned on city streets, children deprived of mother's milk due to the illness or death of the mother, and children of families living in extreme poverty. Despite the changed principles of admittance, the number of infants did not decline; consequently, the instruction issued in 1878 permitted the admittance only of children of mothers living in Warsaw for at least a year. At the same time, no plans were made for opening homes in other localities, and the only such institution at the Infant Jesus hospital was now inaccessible for the majority of children who continued to be born. An increasing death rate was produced both by neglect and the growing number of cases of infanticide<sup>12</sup>. It is not surprising that this situation occupied the attention of medical doctors, journalists, social activists and the public opinion. The press initiated a lively discussion, whose participants wrote: "Our town, similarly to every great population concentration, produces sombre figures pertaining to illegitimate births. Today [...] the number of illegitimate births probably totals about 7,000 while the number of foundlings reaches about 3,000 a year [...]. The press is correct in voting unanimously in favour of the restoration of the 'Baudouin turnstile', which would eliminate all difficulties connected with the admittance of foundlings"<sup>13</sup>. Public opinion was

<sup>10</sup>L. Paprocki, *op. cit.*, pp. 470–471

<sup>11</sup>W. A. Sułkowski, *Z dziejów dobroczynności publicznej 1870–1884 (From the History of Public Charity 1870–1884)*, Warszawa 1886, p. 189.

<sup>12</sup>"Niwa" 1890, N° 5, p. 79–80.

<sup>13</sup>"Kraj" 1890, N° 8, pp. 12–13

startled by recurring information about infanticide and even crimes committed against children, described as “the production of little angels — a horrible, bitter and ironic term, borrowed from Paris”.

Dr. Kamieński, director of the Home for Foundlings, declared: “The children who are brought in from town [...] are [...] unkempt, starving, and so dirty that it is difficult to wash them clean in a single day [...] The institution has not enough room, and the mothers are forced to wait for weeks for the admittance of their children. Such mothers are frequently homeless [...] it is not surprising, therefore, that the children live in dirty conditions, that the mothers lose the ability to breast feed, and that the artificially and irrationally nourished child becomes sick and frail”<sup>14</sup>. Dr. Kamieński perceived a solution in the employment of following measures: an increased number of places available at the Home, a larger group of hospital wet nurses, the improved quality and hygienic properties of the milk used for additional feeding, an increased number of sisters of mercy, to be assisted by supervisors (at last one for every ten infants), raised fees for the village wet nurses and prolonged terms of payment for admittance. The foremost requirement was larger funds. Those changes were, in the opinion of the author, especially important on the eve of a planned transference of the Infant Jesus hospital and the Home<sup>15</sup>.

The discussion conducted in the press on the plight of the unwanted children did not abate after the Home was moved to a new building; it was recommended to separate the Home from the hospital, to erect new institutions of this sort, and to create a network of the distribution of sterilised milk, patterned on the French *L'oeuvre philanthropique du lait*, and agencies which would offer advise to nursing mothers<sup>16</sup>.

Such suggestions did not produce anticipated results, and at the threshold of the new century the situation of the foundlings was far from ideal. Public opinion was concerned with the fate of the unwanted children — sporadic cases of devotion and self-sacrifice as well as attempts at rendering help to the infants were noted, but the problem itself remained unresolved, since it called for much deeper social and political transformations. Similarly to other domains of charity, philanthropy alone could be of no assistance.

<sup>14</sup>S. Kamieński, *Warszawski Dom Wychowawczy w świetle statystyki porównawczej (z powodu artykułu “Niwy Polskiej”)* (*The Warsaw Educational Home in the Light of Comparative Statistics / in Connection with an Article in “Niwa Polska”*), “Gazeta Lekarska” 1901, N<sup>o</sup> 7, pp. 177–180.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 181–182.

<sup>16</sup>“Prawda” 1893, N<sup>o</sup> 2, p. 22; N<sup>o</sup> 22, p. 262; “Wiek”, 15 March 1903 “Dodatek Niedzielnny”, pp. 1–2.

## Orphans

The first educational institution conducted by the Warsaw Charity Society was the elementary school for children deprived of care, established in 1822. In 1842, it became an orphanage for boys and girls<sup>17</sup>, divided into two departments: the S. Jachowicz Orphanage for Boys and an Orphanage for Girls.

The first was situated in a building erected by the Warsaw Charity Society in Nowy Świat Street, and financed by voluntary dues<sup>18</sup>. The Home admitted boys aged 3 to 9, but “in exceptional cases it is permitted to admit older [children — E. M.], i. e. up to the age of 12, although only after a careful examination in search for bad inclinations and addictions”<sup>19</sup>. The first custodian of the boys was Stanisław Jachowicz<sup>20</sup>. In 1861, the wards were already exclusively Catholic, and several years later (1868) the orphanage staff included sisters of mercy, who were “entrusted with economic management and care of laundry, clothes and cleanliness”<sup>21</sup>. On 1 August 1879, the Orphanage for Boys was transferred to the refurbished former Dominican building in Freta Street, granted to the Warsaw Charity Society by the tsarist authorities in 1867. “When one recalls the state of the boys brought up in the Orphanage of the Warsaw Charity Society at the time when that institution existed in the Home in Nowy Świat Street, those pale faces, idiotic glances, foolish grins, and dull answers, then one will be pleasantly surprised by the present-day condition of the children [...] What is responsible for this miracle? Let us say this openly — it is air, light and cleanliness. In the old days, the children slept crowded together and often dirty, regardless of their age and habits, which left very much to desire [...] Today, the transference to a building in Freta Street resulted in larger and airier rooms, with plenty of air and light”<sup>22</sup>.

The situation in the new orphanage is illustrated by a report from 1888<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>17</sup>Z. Grotowski, *Rozwój zakładów dobroczynnych w Warszawie (The Development of Charity Institutions in Warsaw)*, Warszawa 1910, p. 175.

<sup>18</sup>*Kalendarz wydany przez Warszawskie Towarzystwo Dobroczynności na rok zwyczajny 1863 (Calendar Published by the Warsaw Charity Society for the Year 1863)*, 1863, pp. 130–13

<sup>19</sup>*Historia Warszawskiego Towarzystwa Dobroczynności od roku 1814–1852 (History of the Warsaw Charity Society from 1814 to 1852)*, in: *Kalendarz wydawany przez WTD na rok zwyczajny 1863*, p. 86.

<sup>20</sup>Stanisław Jachowicz (1795–1857) was an author of fairy tales and a pedagogue. An active member of the Warsaw Charity Society and organiser of care for orphans. The creator of Polish children's and didactic literature, *Nowa Encyklopedia*, Warszawa 1995, vol. 3, p. 115.

<sup>21</sup>“Gazeta Świąteczna” 1891, no 549, p. 1.

<sup>22</sup>“Przegląd Tygodniowy” 1873, N° 27, p. 210.

<sup>23</sup>“Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1890, N° 20, p. 319.

The Home housed 160 orphans “[...] children of parents from various social estates; the majority, 95 children, are those of artisans, although others include the children of labourers, factory workers, civil servants, private officials and even bankrupt owners of landed estates and town real estate. The institution admits basically orphans with no parents, but, space permitting, also so-called half-orphans, especially children of widows, since those of widowers apply less frequently. A necessary condition for admittance is residence in the Warsaw commune and birth in the capital [birth certificate — E. M]; children born outside Warsaw are admitted only in exceptional cases”<sup>24</sup>.

Upon leaving the Home, its wards were sent by a special committee to learn a trade. Their teachers included celebrated craftsmen of the period, e. g. Stanisław Hiszpański, the shoemaker, or Józef Juszczyk, the tailor. Thanks to careful training, in 1842–1872 350 wards out of a total of 640 became apprentices. Their professional careers followed the following course: five became merchants and achieved considerable prosperity, 50 became masters and owners of their own workshops, 191 worked as journeymen, and 81 remained apprentices. The fate of the other 113 is unknown.

The Orphanage for Girls, located in the main building of the Warsaw Charity Society in Krakowskie Przedmieście Street and in a branch in Czerniakowska Street<sup>25</sup>, was also founded in 1842. Public opinion was much less interested in the fate of the girls; hence, information about them is scarce.

The girls remained under the surveillance of sisters of mercy, who also taught them reading, writing, arithmetic and needlework<sup>26</sup>. Up to 1873 the lessons were conducted in Polish; subsequently, tsarist authorities permitted only Polish language and religion to be taught in Polish as the language of instruction<sup>27</sup>. The wards remained in the orphanage until the age of 16, and then were employed as servants<sup>28</sup>. The outcome of their education was regarded as unsatisfactory, as evidenced by a polemic conducted in the press: “[...] although the effects of outdated routine are horrifying, the methods remain the same [...]. Annually, more than ten girls aged 16 leave the institute [...]. We know that the girls are outfitted but what sort of a dowry do they receive in the form of skilled work which could secure their

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<sup>24</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>25</sup>*Sprawozdanie WTD za rok 1896 (Report of the Warsaw Charity Society for the Year 1896)*, Warszawa 1897, p. 15.

<sup>26</sup>*Sprawozdanie WTD za rok 1890*, Warszawa 1892, pp. 20–21

<sup>27</sup>C. Kępski, *Towarzystwa dobroczynności w Królestwie Polskim 1815–1914 (Charity Societies in the Kingdom of Poland 1815–1914)*, Lublin 1993, p. 161.

<sup>28</sup>Z. Grotowski, *op. cit.*, p. 175.



future? Reading, some writing and a little sewing will not provide a girl with independence, while embroidery and crocheting are a luxury which occupies time necessary for useful lessons [...]. Inhabitants of Warsaw complain of a lack of talented cooks, nannies and governesses. The graduates of the orphanage are not trained in those professions, and once employed, prove to be lazy, unwilling and incapable of any sort of useful work”<sup>29</sup>.

Several years later, the system of educating the girls must have changed, as testified by an article published in the periodical “Bluszcz” (Ivy) in 1893: “This year the home for orphaned girls maintained by the Warsaw Society [...] housed 74 wards [...]. An exhibit day of the art of cooking, sewing, embroidery and other similar women’s occupations demonstrated satisfactory progress; examined by the sisters of mercy on school subjects the girls answered well and sensibly; this part was followed by choral singing and the presentation of prizes in the form of books and gifts. The trend of the work conducted by the institute proved to be favourable and practical”<sup>30</sup>.

In 1900, the girls’ orphanage was transferred to a new, spacious building in Rakowiecka Street<sup>31</sup>.

Apart from the above mentioned orphanages, Warsaw had private homes for girls — the St. Casimir Institute managed by sisters of mercy, and boys — orphans of workers, opened by the foundation of barons Leon and Seweryn Lenval. In 1842, the St. Casimir Institute was granted a Special Custodian Council, which aided the sisters who up to then ran the home on their own. The conditions for admittance were precise: the admitted girl had to be a legitimate child, a Catholic, no younger than 9 and no older than 12. It was also demanded that she “would not be deformed, highly scrofulous, suffering from scurvy, elflock, ulcers or herpes on her body, the itch or an infectious rash on her head, of good sight and capable of needlework”<sup>32</sup>. Furthermore, the parents or guardians of the girl or orphan were to present the sisters with the following documents: a request addressed to the Special Custodian Council, explaining the reasons for wishing to enroll the girl in the Institute, a birth certificate, a marriage or death certificate of the parents or a certificate of poverty confirmed by local authorities<sup>33</sup>. On the average, the St. Casimir Institute housed 100 wards. The sisters concentrated their

<sup>29</sup>“Przegląd Tygodniowy” 1874, N<sup>o</sup> 16, pp. 126–127.

<sup>30</sup>“Bluszcz” 1893, N<sup>o</sup> 31, p. 246.

<sup>31</sup>“Ziarno” 1900, N<sup>o</sup> 50, p. 913

<sup>32</sup>J. Kulesza, *Opisanie szpitala i Instytutu św. Kazimierza oraz Zgromadzenia Sióstr Miłosierdzia (A Description of the St. Casimir Hospital and Institute as well as the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy)*, in: *Rys historyczno–statystyczny szpitali i innych zakładów dobroczynnych w Królestwie Polskim*, Warszawa 1872, vol. I, p. 22.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 2.

attention primarily on religious upbringing. "Apart from theoretical religion, the girls observe daily Christian practices such as: the daily Our Father, morning prayers and others for the founders and benefactors. At 7 in the morning they attend Holy Mass in the chapel [...] and sing. During the day, they listen to or read to each other fragments of suitable books, and before dinner and supper as well as after dinner say short prayers of thanksgiving; at night, before bed, they say their evening prayers [...] they are taught to read, write and beginner's arithmetic, but only to an extent in which this knowledge could prove to be useful in future life"<sup>34</sup>. The girls learned to sew, embroider and assorted household chores. Similarly as in other homes, they stayed at the Institute until the age of 16, and then returned to their families or, in the case of orphans, were employed as servants recommended by the sisters<sup>35</sup>.

The Barons Lenval foundation, which in 1883 offered 60 000 rubles in cash and a legacy worth 30,000 rubles, was intended for a special category of boys — orphans of workers. In 1885, the founders purchased a square in Litewska Street and commenced the reconstruction of a house, in which the wards arrived in 1889<sup>36</sup>.

The Lenval institute admitted boys aged 7–14, who received an elementary education and then were trained in the crafts or worked in the factory belonging to the benefactors. Due to an incessant lack of funds, the home could admit only 20 boys<sup>37</sup>. The goal of the orphanage "[...] is to bring up strong and healthy youngsters, prepared for harsh living conditions and heavy physical labour. The institute wishes to educate a group of professionally skilled factory workers who, with installed moral principles, would become honest craftsmen"<sup>38</sup>.

The principles were undoubtedly lofty, but comprised a drop in the sea in the needs of abandoned and neglected children in Warsaw during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Other institutions rendered assistance to non-Catholic children. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Protestants recognised that the best form of helping orphans was to place them in the private homes of poorer families, in return for suitable remuneration. Without resigning from this

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23–24.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 24–25; *Zbiór Przyborowskiego (The Przyborowski Collection)*, vol. 36, p. 236.

<sup>36</sup> K. Horoszewicz, *Warszawski dom sierot po robotnikach (The Warsaw Home for Orphans of Workers)*, "Biesiada Literacka" 1888, № 412, p. 5; "Zdrowie" 1896, № 507, pp. 265–271.

<sup>37</sup> W. K o l e ż a k, *Nowy Przytułek (A New Home)*, "Kłosy" 1889, № 1238, p. 182; "Prawda" 1890, № 19, p. 227.

<sup>38</sup> "Przegląd Tygodniowy" 1888, № 52, p. 681.

idea, an orphanage was opened in 1854 at the old people's home of the Protestant community.

The Russian Orthodox population had its own charity society which founded a home for foundlings and orphans in Bednarska Street. Children were admitted without the documents required by Catholic social care centres. The bad repute of this institution was due to the belief that the facilitations it offered were a mere cover for the Russianization policy of the partitioning authorities.

The Jewish orphanage dated back to 1834 and, like its Protestant counterpart, was located at an old people's home. The admitted boys and girls were no older than 12 years old, and subsequently trained as craftsmen or for some other profession. Jewish charity enjoyed an excellent reputation, and was envied for its solidarity and lack of financial problems, since neither time nor money was spared for assorted forms of philanthropic activity. Each orphan had a custodian in the Jewish community. Every Saturday boys who trained as apprentices gathered for meetings with their custodians, while the girls went on Sunday walks with one of the female custodians.

Philanthropic care of children in Warsaw during the second half of the nineteenth century was totally insufficient. The scale of the lack of care was terrifying, and the increasing population of the capital led to a rising number of homeless, neglected and hungry children, who could not rely on systematic assistance. Philanthropic institutions, with the exception of homes for foundlings, segregated children according to the criterion of religion and birth, accepting only, e.g. orphans of workers, as in the case of the home of the barons Lenval, or girls born exclusively in legitimate marriages. Philanthropy itself was unable to alter and improve the existing situation, and other solutions assisted by the government were impossible in a situation characterised by the absence of a state, freedom and sufficiently rapid social changes which could guarantee the poor, including the children, a fit place in society.

*(Translated by Aleksandra Rodzińska-Chojnowska)*