

*Michał Piekarski*

Institute for the History of Science, Polish Academy of Sciences  
(Warsaw, Poland)

**A POST-DOCTORATE IN MUSICOLOGY:  
BRONISŁAWA WÓJCIK-KEUPRULIAN AND HER PATH  
TO A SCIENTIFIC CAREER**

**Abstract**

The musical milieu of Lwów in the first half of the twentieth century was characterised by dynamic activities of women, particularly as music school students, which was the reverse of the situation prevailing in the other schools – particularly, tertiary schools. This fostered the female students' keen interest in musicology, especially that Musicology was launched as a new major at the local university in 1912. Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian was its first graduate ever (in 1917). In 1934, she was the first woman in the history of Polish science to receive a post-doctoral degree (so-called *habilitation*) in Musicology at a Polish university. This was accompanied by multiple complications, including those caused by the Head of the Chair of Musicology. Yet, the applicant's resolve brought about a successful end.

**Keywords:** musicology, Lwów, university, conservatoire, *habilitation*/post-doctoral degree

Characteristic about the musical milieu of Lwów in the first half of the twentieth century were dynamic activities of women, particularly as students of local schools of music. The number of females attending such schools significantly outnumbered the attending men, which was opposite to the proportion prevalent at the University of Lwów (not to mention of other Polish tertiary schools). A variety of factors contributed to the situation in question.<sup>1</sup>

First, in the beginning of the twentieth century Lwów was a city where musical life was flourishing. In the period referred to as the

---

<sup>1</sup> Article based on the project funded by the National Science Centre afforded under decision no. DEC-2012/05/N/HS3/01636.

'Galician autonomy', Lwów's role was supra-local as an important social and cultural hub not only for Poles in Austrian Galicia itself but also for the Poles from other part of Polish country divided between Russia and Prussia/Germany. One contributing factor was the development of various institutions, including schools of music, which – taking advantage of the liberal Austro-Hungarian policies – promoted Polish culture and patriotism.<sup>2</sup> In 1910, the city, whose population was 206,000, boasted over fifty music schools at a time;<sup>3</sup> such accessibility of musical schooling was unique indeed.<sup>4</sup>

Second, similarly to their West European counterparts, the conservatoires functioning in Lwów offered music instruction to amateurs as well as future professionals who chose music as their main trade; this situation lasted until the Second World War.<sup>5</sup> The conservatoires were private vocational schools posing upon students no age limit, nor even the *matura* (secondary-school finals) completed (a rare occurrence with females before the First World War, in any case); thus, elementary- and secondary-school students were educated there in parallel with tertiary students.<sup>6</sup> The teaching system was organised, based on the attendees' skills, into courses, including 'low-level', 'medium-level', 'higher-level', and 'concert-oriented', all run within a school.<sup>7</sup> Graduation from a high-level course offered qualifications equivalent to those of professional musicians – holders of a 'virtuoso' or 'pedagogue' diploma.<sup>8</sup> Some ten to twenty students within a school would have all the courses completed each year, thus gaining an *absolutorium* certificate (completion without a degree thesis

<sup>2</sup> Grzegorz Mazur, *Życie polityczne polskiego Lwowa 1918–1939* (Kraków, 2007), 16.

<sup>3</sup> Leszek Mazepa and Teresa Mazepa, *Śljax do muzyčnoji akademii u L'vovi*, 2 vols. (Lviv, 2003), 118.

<sup>4</sup> In Galicia, neither its territory nor natural resources within it influenced the social welfare. This largest country within the Austrian part of Austria-Hungary was the poorest province in the region.

<sup>5</sup> William Weber, *Conservatoires*, iii: 1790–1945. 1. 'Introduction', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie, vi (London, 2001), 314–15.

<sup>6</sup> Elementary, secondary and tertiary students were educated by such schools at the same time. Cf. Mazepa and Mazepa, *Śljax do muzyčnoji akademiji*, 128.

<sup>7</sup> In a number of the schools, the 'lower-level' course took one to three years, 'medium-level' – 3 years, 'higher-level' – 3 years, and 'concert' course – 1 to 3 years. The projected length of a given course was extended from time to time; *ibidem*, 129–30, 169.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, 136–67, 186.

submitted).<sup>9</sup> Let us mention that not all of the students completed their education with any diploma; many women students never took a graduation examination at their conservatory, discontinuing their education the moment they got married, for instance.<sup>10</sup> There were women, though, who did get their graduation diploma, thus becoming full-fledged professional musicians. There were almost only men among composers and conductors; those women who dealt with music outside their households were singers or pianists, took headships of the music schools they ran, or obtained instruction in the area of musicology.

The major school of music in early-twentieth-century Lwów included the Music Conservatoire of the Galician Music Society (GTM) (turned into a Polish Music Society [PTM] in 1918), the Lwów Institute of Music, and the 'Mykola Lysenko' Higher Institute of Music (a Ukrainian school).<sup>11</sup> The statistics showing how numerous their female students were is worth quoting. The GTM/PTM Conservatoire hosted much more female than male students already before the First World War, with over 60 per cent of females attending in 1926.<sup>12</sup> The Lwów Institute of Music had 67 per cent women attending as of 1928,<sup>13</sup> whilst the 'M. Lysenko' Higher Institute hosted 54 per cent women of the total of 258 students in 1924.<sup>14</sup> What is more, these schools employed women teachers: the famous pianist Helena Ottawowa, teacher of singing Zofia Kozłowska or composer Stefania Lachowska worked at the PTM Conservatoire, for that matter. A number of local schools of music were run and managed by women, including the Lwów Institute of Music as well as the private schools of Helena Ottawowa and Malwina Reyssówna (the latter was attended by Wojciech Kilar, the pianist and composer of international renown).

---

<sup>9</sup> Most students completed their education at the lower levels, satisfying themselves with attaining the skills that enabled home music-making. As an example, the respective numbers of graduates for the years 1910, 1911, 1912, and 1913 were fourteen, twenty-one, twenty, and seven; *ibidem*, 165.

<sup>10</sup> Roman Palester, *Śluch absolutny. Wspomnienia i refleksje*, the University of Warsaw Library [BUW], Gabinet Zbiorów Muzycznych, MS, sht. 106.

<sup>11</sup> According to Leszek and Teresa Mazepa, present-day Lviv Academy of Music was preceded by the GTM/PTM Conservatoire, the Lwów Institute of Music, and the 'M. Lysenko' Higher Institute of Music; these authors do not separately deal with S. Kasparówna's School; see Mazepa and Mazepa, *Śljax*, 2 vols., *passim*.

<sup>12</sup> Mazepa and Mazepa, *Śljax*, i, 181.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, 205.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, 243.

Sabina Kasparkówna's School was among the establishments of renown. Active between 1909 and 1939,<sup>15</sup> it was a 'higher-level' school, for apart from the basic and medium course it ran a higher course as well. The teaching staff included some outstanding people, one of whom was Jerzy Lalewicz, who travelled to Lwów from Vienna to give piano lessons at the School.<sup>16</sup> Choral singing was taught by Henryk Jarecki, composer and conductor with the Lwów Opera for a number of years.<sup>17</sup> Many of the School teachers were members of a young generation and favoured or promoted the development of new currents in music.<sup>18</sup>

Musicology appeared in Lwów in 1912, the moment Adolf Chybiński, musicologist and graduate of the Munich University, introduced Musicology classes at the local University;<sup>19</sup> this came not long after Guido Adler created, in 1898, the world's first Institute of Musicology, at the University of Vienna. Chybiński officially headed the Chair of Musicology at the Lwów University in 1917–39, whereas between 1919 and the end of 1939 the unit operated as part of John Casimir University (Uniwersytet Jana Kazimierza, abbreviated as UJK). Chybiński's own interest as a researcher mainly focused on historical musicology, including early Polish music and, to a lesser extent, the music of the 'Young Poland' period (the most recent at the time), as well as the musical folklore of the Podhale region. While he mainly offered his students a reliable foundation for pursuit of studies in

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, 122. The School (renamed then) operated also during the Soviet occupation. Anna Czekanowska, who was Adolf Chybiński's student in the post-war years, attended the School in her schoolgirl years; see Anna Czekanowska, *Świat rzeczywiście, świat zapamiętany. Losy Polaków we Lwowie (1939–1941)* (Lublin, 2010), 116, 135–9.

<sup>16</sup> Adolf Chybiński remarks that Lalewicz commuted every month from Cracow, but worked there only in 1905–12. In 1912–19, he was a professor with the Viennese Academy of Music, and then artistic director of Sabina Kasparkówna's school of music. See Adolf Chybiński, *W czasach Straussa i Tetmajera. Wspomnienia*, ed. by Anna i Zygmunt Szwejkowscy (Kraków, 1959), 155; Jan Prosnak, 'Jerzy Lalewicz', in Józef Chomiński (ed.) *Słownik Muzyków Polskich*, vol. i: A–Ł (Kraków, 1961), 317.

<sup>17</sup> Elżbieta Wąsowska, 'Henryk Jarecki', in Elżbieta Dziębowska (ed.), *Encyklopedia Muzyczna PWM*, iv (Kraków, 1997), 429.

<sup>18</sup> Chybiński, *W czasach Straussa*, 154–5.

<sup>19</sup> State Archive of Lviv Region (*Derzhavnyi arkhiv L'viv's'koï oblasti* [hereinafter: DALO]), f. 26, op. 5, spr. 2014, Philosophical Faculty – schedule of classes, 18 Nov. 1912, sht. 63.

early music, they could submit essays or theses concerning other periods too (such as nineteenth-century music, contemporary music, ethnomusicology).<sup>20</sup>

A candidate student would be admitted based on demanding entrance examination, which encompassed a command of Latin, two modern languages, propaedeutics of musical theory and harmonics.<sup>21</sup> As was the case with the other majors or degree courses, the candidate had to have the *matura* done in order to finally get a degree (though initially s/he could attend the classes without it). Practical musical training was compulsory for musicologists, and was tantamount to a completed conservatoire (not necessarily at a higher-course level).<sup>22</sup> Thus, the students came from environments where musical education was part of the educational canon. Such education was pretty common at that time among the middle class residing in larger cities. Importantly, the requirements in respect of musical background were of no problem particularly for a number of women, many of whom attended the conservatoires.

Adolf Chybiński immediately launched lectures focused on ambitious topics, never dealt with in Lwów before, rendering his students acquainted with aspects of mediaeval and renaissance music. As he remarked years later, these topics “tested the endurance of my students. Well, women students turned out to be more enduring”.<sup>23</sup> The early music problems he tackled did not enjoy broad interest then; hence, the lecturer’s approach and choice of classes is noticeable, all the more that his senior colleagues advised him to make newer music his teaching focus instead.<sup>24</sup>

Until 1939, altogether twenty-two students graduated from musicology at the University of Lwów;<sup>25</sup> in fact, less than a quarter of all

---

<sup>20</sup> Michał Piekarski, *Przerwany kontrapunkt. Adolf Chybiński i początki polskiej muzykologii we Lwowie 1912–1944* (Warszawa, 2017).

<sup>21</sup> *Księga Pamiątkowa ku czci Prof. Adolfa Chybińskiego w 70-lecie urodzin (1880–1950): rozprawy i artykuły z zakresu muzykologii* (Kraków, 1950), 15.

<sup>22</sup> Zofia Lissa, ‘Organizacja twórczości muzykologicznej’, *Kwartalnik Muzyczny*, vii, 25 (1949), 216.

<sup>23</sup> Chybiński, *W czasach Straussa*, 158.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>25</sup> A total of twenty-four dissertations were produced in the Faculty, as Józef Chomiński and Jan Józef Dunicz successfully submitted their master as well as doctoral theses.

students ever completed the course. Graduates received the degree of doctor ('Philosophy Doctor in Musicology') or Master (new rules in this respect were gradually introduced in the early thirties; the first Master degrees in Musicology were bestowed at the UJK in 1932).<sup>26</sup>

Between 1912 and 1918 the Department of Musicology only issued one graduate, who was a woman; this took place in 1917, five years after the new discipline was made part of the University. Regarding the whole history of the Department (which ended in 1939), female graduates noticeably outnumbered their male peers (thirteen versus nine);<sup>27</sup> it was only in the 1930s that the proportion became reversed.<sup>28</sup> Female graduates in Musicology amounted to 1.6 per cent among the 780 women who received degrees from the Lwów University between 1903 and 1939. The first woman student at the University was a certain Flora Ogórek, who entered the Faculty of Medicine in 1897.<sup>29</sup> The first graduation of a woman took place in 1903. In the years 1903–39, women students received a total of 410 degrees in Medicine, eighteen in Law, and 352 PhDs.<sup>30</sup> Given the statistics, Musicology appeared to be a thoroughly feminised major, though run by a man.

For comparison, the situation in Poland's other two musicological hubs – the Jagiellonian University in Cracow (1911–39) and the Poznań University (1919–39) is worth summarising. A total of twenty-four people graduated in Musicology at the former by 1939 – mostly, men (sixteen, versus eight women). The first graduation of a woman took place in 1923 (two years after the first male graduate).<sup>31</sup> Compared to the Universities of Cracow and Lwów, the Poznań University had an even larger share of men (seventeen male, against five female,

<sup>26</sup> Jarosław Jastrzębski, *Państwowe szkolnictwo akademickie II Rzeczypospolitej. Zagadnienia systemowe* (Kraków, 2013), 73–85.

<sup>27</sup> Altogether, fifty-five women received their PhDs with the Lwów University before 1918; cf. Jadwiga Suchmiel, *Działalność naukowa kobiet w Uniwersytecie we Lwowie do roku 1939* (Częstochowa, 2000), 94.

<sup>28</sup> Kornel Michałowski (ed.), *Bibliografia polskiego piśmiennictwa muzycznego* (Kraków, 1955), 220–1; Uliana Hrab, *Muzykologia iak uniweryteć'ka dyscyplina. Lviv's'ka muzykologična škola Adolfa Khibins'koho (1912–1941)* (Lviv, 2009), 69–70.

<sup>29</sup> Beata Kost, *Kobiety ze Lwowa* (Warszawa, 2017), 23.

<sup>30</sup> Suchmiel, *Działalność naukowa kobiet*, 70. From 1918 to 1939, a total of 663 women got their doctorates at the UJK. Compared to the preceding period, the proportion of female students grew by almost 30 per cent; see Jolanta Kamińska-Kwak, *Inteligencja województwa lwowskiego w okresie międzywojennym* (Rzeszów, 2005), 78.

<sup>31</sup> *Bibliografia polskiego piśmiennictwa*, 217–22.

graduates); the first female graduate only appeared in 1935 (ten years after the first graduation of a man).<sup>32</sup> Thus, Lwów's Musicology Department was feminised to a much higher degree than any other peer establishment within Poland. It is therefore possible that women dwelling in Lwów were more independent and more frequently educated into music than the female dwellers of Cracow or Poznań. Beside this, women offered themselves to do the musicological studies in Lwów ever since the opportunity opened up; no application submitted for a female candidate was a unique situation indeed.<sup>33</sup> It is reasonable, given the high representation of women in Lwów conservatoires, where they accounted for more than a half of the students. Consequently, musicology was a discipline where women of Lwów had, since the beginning, equal opportunities with men, since they were appropriately prepared to take up such studies.

In Western Europe, single women graduates in musicology appeared in the same period as their Polish peers (second decade of the twentieth century), though several hubs (such as Vienna, Berlin, Paris, and elsewhere) had launched the discipline earlier than Lwów or Cracow did.

## I

### BRONISŁAWA, A MUSICOLOGY STUDENT

Bronisława Wójcikówna (married Wójcik-Keuprulian), born 1890 in Lwów, was the first woman who graduated from the Lwów University's Department of Musicology. Reputed as the most famous woman musicologist of the interwar period, she was born into a Lwów-based family of modest means. Her father, Józef Wójcik, was a Polish philologist and junior-secondary-school (*gimnazjum*) teacher.<sup>34</sup> The family rented apartments in smart tenement houses populated by better-off medium-

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>33</sup> As Wójcikówna wrote to Chybiński in 1921, "A significant symptom, not one has turned up as yet"; Cracow, the Jagiellonian Library (*Biblioteka Jagiellońska* [hereinafter: BJ]), Special Collection Section (*Oddział Zbiorów Specjalnych* [hereinafter: OZS]), Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/39, Bronisława Wójcikówna's letter to Adolf Chybiński, Lwów, 27 Sept. 1921, MS, n.p.

<sup>34</sup> This biographical fact has been shared by Jadwiga Turczyńska; Jurij Smirnow, 'Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian – muzykolog, działaczka Archidiecezjalnego Związku Ormian we Lwowie', *Biuletyn Ormiańskiego Towarzystwa Kulturalnego*, xlvi/xlvii (2006), 3.

class tenants.<sup>35</sup> Having completed the renowned local private *gimnazjum* for girls run by Zofia Strzałkowska in Lwów and her secondary-school finals in 1911, she began her studies at the University of Lwów, where she attended lectures in philosophy and mathematics.<sup>36</sup> Being a ‘preppy girl’, she was educated in music at Sabina Kasparkówna’s School, where Jerzy Lalewicz taught her piano. History of music at the School, let us add, was taught then by Adolf Chybiński. In 1913, she received a State diploma, qualifying as a secondary-school teacher of music:<sup>37</sup> in contrast to a number of other women, she thus did not satisfy herself with attending a conservatoire without graduating or receiving a degree. Since her school years, Wójcikówna was involved in extramural social activities (including as part of a socio-political organisation ‘Zarzewie’).<sup>38</sup>

Wójcikówna appeared at the Lwów University’s Philosophical Faculty in the academic year 1912–13 as one of the first students of Musicology, the then-new major. Her interest in the field turned out abiding, and she chose Musicology as her main subject.<sup>39</sup> From the very outset, she got involved in the organisation of a new educational institution: in 1913, having completed the first year of her studies, she (unofficially) became the first librarian with the then-newly-established Department of Musicology.<sup>40</sup> Adolf Chybiński appreciated Wójcikówna’s abilities; as he commented years afterwards, “I had the best of my

<sup>35</sup> In Lwów, the Wójcik family resided until October 1915 at 14 Gliniańska St., then on floor 1st of a representative tenement house at 4 Kadecka St. Bronisława’s letters to Chybiński tell us also about her mother, Maria née Krystyniatycka, and about a grandmother and a sister who shared the apartment with them; BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/7, Bronisława Wójcikówna’s letter to Adolf Chybiński of 9 July 1915, MS, n.p.; class. no. W24/20; Bronisława Wójcikówna’s letter to Adolf Chybiński of 12 Oct. 1915, MS, n.p.

<sup>36</sup> DALO, f. 26, op. 7, spr. 1967, Curriculum vitae of Bronisława Wójcikówna, 23 June 1917, MS, shts. 3–5.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>38</sup> It was still in her earlier school years that Bronisława was an active member of ‘Zarzewie’, who smuggled banned literature into the Russian Partition; when a student, she translated from foreign languages booklets and pamphlets on military affairs, for use of the Polish Legions (then under formation); cf. Stanisław Donigiewicz, ‘Z żałobnej karty. Śp. dr Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian’, *Posłaniec Św. Grzegorza*, ii (1938), 36.

<sup>39</sup> DALO, f. 26, op. 7, spr. 1967, Curriculum vitae of B. Wójcikówna, 23 June 1917, MS, shts. 3–4.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem.*



women students at the time, Bronisława Wójcikówna, appointed to do these activities”.<sup>41</sup> Apart from being a devoted student, Chybiński thus gained an assistant helpful in the organisational work, who was particularly in demand at the moment the new discipline was being introduced into the curriculum. Bronisława completed her course of studies in 1917, submitting a doctoral thesis on seventeenth-century instrumental music.<sup>42</sup> Woman the first graduate was perhaps not quite surprising to Professor Chybiński: in his own words, “women students were more enduring” as attendees of musicology classes; moreover, the first woman known to have gained a degree in the field studied once together with him in Munich. Yet, in fact, this was the only woman then attending the Munich University’s Musicological Seminar,<sup>43</sup> while in Lwów most of the students were female, since the very beginning.

At the universities in Western Europe, women began graduating in the decade when Wójcikówna got her degree in Lwów. The literature implies that the first known female PhD holder in Musicology was Bertha Antonia Wallner (1876–1956), who in 1910 got the degree at the Munich University (Chybiński graduated there in 1908); another one was Alicja Simonówna from Warsaw (1879–1957), who studied at the University of Berlin but obtained her PhD from the University of Zurich in 1914; then came Kathi Meyer-Baer (1892–1977), a 1916 Berlin University graduate.<sup>44</sup> In the other Central European countries, the renowned female musicology graduates were a generation younger than Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian, their professional successes mostly dated after 1945; suffice it to mention Zdenka Bokesová-Hanáková

---

<sup>41</sup> Chybiński, *W czasach Straussa*, 159–60.

<sup>42</sup> The dissertation’s topic was *Johann Fischer (ca. 1650–1721) as a suite composer*; DALO, f. 26, op. 7, spr. 1967, Office of the Dean of the Philosophical Department, University of Lwów; a dissertation submitted for appraisal, 3 July 1917, sht. 1.

<sup>43</sup> Namely, Bertha Antonia Wallner. Chybiński did not think very high of her intellectual potential, but appreciated her friendly and helpful attitude; Chybiński, *W czasach Straussa*, 74.

<sup>44</sup> Don L. Hixson and Don A. Hennessee, *Women in Music. A Bibliography* (New Jersey, 1975), 305–6; Alfons Ott, ‘Wallner Bertha Antonia’, in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (hereinafter: MGG), F. Blume (ed.), xiv (Kassel, 1968), 177; Wiesława Berny-Negrey, ‘Kathi Meyer-Baer’, in *Encyklopedia Muzyczna PWM*, Elżbieta Dziembowska (ed.), iv (Kraków, 2000), 227–8; Leon Tadeusz Błaszczyk, *Żydzi w kulturze muzycznej ziem polskich w XIX i XX wieku. Słownik biograficzny* (Warszawa, 2014), 224.

(1911–1962) and Theodora Straková (1915–2010) as representatives of science in Czechoslovakia.<sup>45</sup>

Thus, before 1939, alongside the University of Berlin,<sup>46</sup> the Lwów University was among Europe's leading tertiary schools as far as the number of female graduates in Musicology is concerned. In this respect, it was ahead of French-speaking universities<sup>47</sup> and many a German-speaking university (let alone English-speaking universities, none of which had a musicology unit set up until the Second World War). This conclusion becomes apparent when taking into account women involved after studies in activities related to their education background and, consequently, mentioned in the literature.<sup>48</sup>

Before 1939, women educated in musicology often assumed the posts of librarians, including with prestigious institutions. Such were the cases of Kathi Meyer-Bayer (who worked at Paul Hirsch's musical library in Frankfurt am Main, and organised a music section at the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek in *that city*); Alicja Simonówna (managed the musical section of the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, in 1924–8, and a counterpart section of the State Collection of Art in Warsaw, 1929–39);<sup>49</sup> Yvonne Rokseth (organised the Department

<sup>45</sup> See Hixon and Hennessee, *Women in Music*, 176–7.

<sup>46</sup> Kathi Meyer-Bayer (1916), Dora Julia Rittmeyer-Iselin (1928), Lucie Dikemann-Balmer (1934), Anne Amalie Abert (1934) are the Musicology graduates of the Berlin University (before 1939), whose names are mentioned in the literature; see Hixon and Hennessee, *Women in Music*, 305–6.

<sup>47</sup> The known Sorbonne graduates include Marie-Jeanne-Pauline Long (1921) and Yvonne Rokseth (1930). After receiving her *diplôme d'études supérieures* at the Sorbonne, Geneviève Thibault (1902–75) prepared a doctoral thesis under tutelage of Prof. André Pirro (though never completed it). See Hixon and Hennessee, *Women in Music*; 'Geneviève Thibault', in MGG, xiii (1966), 331.

<sup>48</sup> Hixon and Hennessee mention thirty-three women dealing with musicology (not all of them with a degree) born before 1920. With use of encyclopaedia entries and the internet, twenty-three (PhD or MA) degree holders have been identified among them; five out of the latter (who all graduated before 1939) completed their studies with a Polish university, mostly (four) the University of Lwów (namely, Bronisława Wójcikówna, Maria Szczepańska, Stefania Łobaczewska, and Zofia Lissa) and one with the University of Poznań (Jadwiga Sobieska). Apart from Alicja Simon, the publication mentions six musicology graduates born within the Polish territory (they accounted for a quarter of the group). Moreover, Anna Czekanowska is mentioned as a Polish woman musicologist born after 1920. See Hixon and Hennessee, *Women in Music*, 305–6.

<sup>49</sup> Katarzyna Morawska, 'Simon, Alicja', in *Encyklopedia muzyczna PWM*, ix (Kraków, 2007), 273.

of Music with the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris); Edith Schnapper (employed with the Paul Hirsch Library, which was made part of the Cambridge University Library).<sup>50</sup> Apart from being the first degree holder in Musicology with a Polish university, Bronisława Wójcikówna was thus one of the first such women graduates in Europe. Her contact with Professor Chybiński, which during her studies markedly exceeded a teacher-student relationship, did not end with her graduation or employment as a librarian, though.

## II AS ASSISTANT LECTURER

For several years, from 1913 to 1919, Bronisława Wójcikówna acted unofficially as an assistant lecturer. Such status had initially to do with the informal status of the Department, a situation that lasted until January 1917.<sup>51</sup> During Chybiński's absences from Lwów, she took care of the university unit as well as Adolf's private apartment.<sup>52</sup> Since her own financial situation (probably caused by her father's death) did not allow Bronisława to work 'for pleasure': remaining single, she had to run a household together with her mother and younger sister, and thus it was necessary for her to find a gainful activity. Willing to quit private piano lessons,<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup> Berny-Negrey, *Encyklopedia*, 227; 'Geneviève Thibault', 'Rokseth Yvonne', MGG, xi (1963), 645–6; Charles L. Cudworth, 'Schnapper Edith', MGG, xi, 1889–1890. Another person worth mentioning in this context is Emilia Zanetti (active after 1939), who was served for many years as a director of the Biblioteca del Conservatorio di Musica 'Santa Cecilia' in Rome; cf. <http://siusa.archivi.beniculturali.it/cgi-bin/pagina.pl?TipoPag=prodpersona&Chiave=54653> [Accessed: 30.03.2018].

<sup>51</sup> The Department of Musicology operated informally until Chybiński, the establishment's director, was appointed professor. The official appointment document from the Vienna-based Ministry of Confessions and Education is dated 10 Jan. 1917; DALO, f. 26, op. 5, spr. 2014, Ministerium für Kultus und Unterricht, 10 Jan. 1917, sht. 135. This opened the way for the first doctoral promotion in Musicology at the Lwów University.

<sup>52</sup> Chybiński dwelled at that time at 20 Kalcza St. The distance between Długosza and Kalcza Sts. was rather short, a fifteen-minute walk, at maximum. The assistant lecturer's informal responsibilities (when the Professor was out on holiday) included looking after his private apartment, including airing it out, watering the palms kept inside, and even eradicating moths. In the period under discussion, such a situation was not peculiar with assistants.

<sup>53</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/31, Bronisława Wójcikówna's letter to Adolf Chybiński, 10 Sept. 1916, MS, n.p.

she got employed in September 1916 with Kazimierz S. Jakubowski's bookstore and publishing enterprise (Księgarnia Nakładowa) as an editor with the musical publishing section (until 1929).<sup>54</sup> With a five- to six-hour working day, the job ensured her financial stability.<sup>55</sup> She never thought about quitting her duties with the University, and thus agreed with Jakubowski upfront that her work hours would have to be reduced once the academic year started.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, in 1920–1 she had a job with the Polish Music Society's Conservatoire in Lwów as a lecturer in history of musical forms and harmonics, which she owed to Chybiński, who had a close relationship with the Conservatoire's Director Mieczysław Sołtys.<sup>57</sup> She quit the job as her situation in the Lwów University got stabilised (of which more will be said hereafter).

Still as a student, Bronisława participated in conducting classes at the Musicology Department since autumn 1915, making musical illustrations on the piano as an unofficial 'demonstrator'.<sup>58</sup> Before her graduation in 1917, she co-run the classes, mainly in analytical practice and counterpoint.<sup>59</sup> Thus, her responsibilities – all unofficial – included those of librarian, assistant lecturer, and demonstrator. Such situation lasted for several following years.

Since February 1919 – once Poland was re-established as an independent country – Adolf Chybiński sought with the Ministry of Religious Confessions and Public Enlightenment, responsible for education (hereinafter referred to as MWRiOP from its Polish acronym) in Warsaw to afford his Department "an auxiliary scientific force, with regular emolument".<sup>60</sup> In his will to offer an appropriate organisation

<sup>54</sup> Zbigniew Kościów, *Kultura muzyczna Ormian polskich* (Wołomin, 2011), 77–8; Jan Prosnak, 'Wójcik-Keuprulian, Bronisława', in *Słownik muzyków polskich*, ii: M–Ż, ed. by J. Chomiński (Kraków, 1967), 294.

<sup>55</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/31, Bronisława Wójcikówna's letter to Adolf Chybiński, 10 Sept. 1916, MS, n.p.

<sup>56</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/33, Bronisława Wójcikówna's letter to Adolf Chybiński, 16 Sept. 1916, MS, n.p.

<sup>57</sup> BJ OZS, *Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego*, folder S18/1, class. no. S19/6, Mieczysław Sołtys's letter to Adolf Chybiński, 9 Sept. 1920, MS, n.p.

<sup>58</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/17, Bronisława Wójcikówna's letter to Adolf Chybiński, 5 Oct. 1915, MS, n.p.

<sup>59</sup> DALO, f. 26, op. 7, spr. 1967, Curriculum vitae of Bronisława Wójcikówna, 23 June 1917, MS, sht. 4.

<sup>60</sup> DALO, f. 26, op. 5, spr. 320, [Adolf Chybiński's letter] To the WRiOP Ministry [MWRiOP], 5 Feb. 1919, sht. 143.

of labour to the didactic establishment under development, and a permanent employment opportunity for Bronisława Wójcikówna, he gave clear arguments in support of the need to have an assistant employed, which de facto sought to sanction the long-lasting situation. However, his application was initially turned down.

In November 1919, a group of professors of the John Casimir University's (so named since 1919) Philosophical Faculty resolved to request the MWRiOP<sup>61</sup> that an assistantship be formed at the Chair of Musicology.<sup>62</sup> The decision was based on a twofold increase in the number of attendees and the unsatisfactory scope of responsibilities of the demonstrator (limited to illustrations on the piano during classes), combined with the increasing need for assistantship: an assistant would have to "sort out, on average, twenty-four papers per week" regarding theory, aesthetics, analysis, history, and musical palaeography. The application also summarised the actions thitherto performed by Bronisława Wójcikówna.<sup>63</sup>

On presenting these arguments, the professorial team postulated that Wójcikówna be formally employed (after six years of serving on an informal basis) "with a regular assistant-lecturer pay" for the period of 1 October 1919 to 30 September 1920.<sup>64</sup> Such a temporary post as assistant lecturer was part of the binding procedure at the time, regardless of the assistant's sex.

In spite of the application submitted to the MWRiOP, Adolf Chybiński was not offered an opportunity to have Wójcikówna employed as assistant lecturer; the Ministry claimed it only had funds available to hire a demonstrator.<sup>65</sup> This being the case, Bronisława Wójcikówna was officially appointed demonstrator only (since 4 February 1920). In any case, her work for the Faculty was finally officially sanctioned. Obstacles to make her assistant lecturer did not cease in the subsequent

---

<sup>61</sup> DALO, f. 26, op. 5, spr. 320, Dean's Office for the Philosophical [Faculty], University of Lwów, to the WRiOP Ministry [MWRiOP], 26 Nov. 1919, sht. 1.

<sup>62</sup> The archival documents inconsistently use the unit's name: *katedra* ['chair'] and *zakład* ['department'] are used alternately.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>65</sup> DALO, f. 26, op. 5, spr. 320, WRiOP Ministry [MWRiOP] to the Dean's Office for the Philosophical [Faculty], University of Lwów, 10 Jan. 1920, sht. 5.

academic year. A Governorship's<sup>66</sup> letter to the Academic Senate mentions the fact that the latter had appointed Ms. Wójcikówna a junior assistant lecturer;<sup>67</sup> this particular document is the first to have confirmed her employment. Wójcikówna thus joined the ranks of those women who were more and more frequently employed as assistant lecturers in the Interbellum years;<sup>68</sup> the post became the most popular among women in tertiary schools.<sup>69</sup> Motions for getting Wójcikówna's employment as assistant lecturer extended were submitted year by year – in 1921 (first-degree senior assistant), 1922, and 1923 (for a two-year period).<sup>70</sup>

In her capacity as assistant lecturer, Wójcikówna could officially manage the Department of Musicology while Chybiński was out. For instance, in the autumn term of 1921, Chybiński stayed in Zakopane until mid-November, on a research leave.<sup>71</sup> As the academic year was on, Bronisława began her work with the students, and reported to him, "we are working at the Department six hours a week".<sup>72</sup> Her involvement allowed Chybiński to free himself for several months from the Department's organisational chores. When the Professor was

---

<sup>66</sup> In spite of Poland's regained independence, a Governorship [Namiestnictwo] office, established under the Russian Partition, still functioned in Lwów in 1920 (without a Governor [Namiestnik] in office, though).

<sup>67</sup> DALO, f. 26, op. 5, spr. 320, From the Governorship to the Academic Senate of the University of Lwów, Nov. 1920, sht. 11.

<sup>68</sup> For instance, twenty-eight women altogether conducted classes at the Jagiellonian University in 1914–18; cf. Mariola Kondracka, 'Kobiety na uniwersytetach', in Anna Żarnowska and Andrzej Szwarz (eds.), *Równe prawa i nierówne szanse. Kobiety w Polsce międzywojennej*, (Warszawa, 2000), 279.

<sup>69</sup> The posts of 'auxiliary scientific/educational forces' were actually the easiest to attain by women in tertiary-level schools (higher-level positions were a rarity due to a scarce number of females with a postdoctoral degree); cf. Suchmiel, *Działalność naukowa kobiet*, 137.

<sup>70</sup> DALO, f. 26, op. 5, spr. 320, Request for extension of the appointment of the Assistant Lecturer, 28 June 1921, sht. 15; DALO, f. 26, op. 5, spr. 320, Request for extension of the appointment of the Assistant Lecturer, 24 May 1922, sht. 17; DALO, f. 26, op. 5, spr. 320, Motion for extension of the appointment of the Assistant Lecturer, 6 Dec. 1923, sht. 25; DALO, f. 26, op. 5, spr. 320, Decree of the Academic Senate, 7 Dec. 1923, sht. 34.

<sup>71</sup> DALO, f. 26, op. 5, spr. 2014 [MWRiOP] Do Dziekanatu Wydziału Filozoficznego UJK, 10 Nov. 1921, sht. 212.

<sup>72</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/40, Bronisława Wójcikówna's letter to Adolf Chybiński, 22 Oct. 1921, MS, n.p.

not in, and no lectures were delivered, classes were (now, officially) run by his assistant.

Although Wójcikówna had waited for years before she was officially appointed, the post she held appeared not satisfactory to her. With twelve years of acquaintance with Professor Chybiński, and eleven years of various responsibilities with the Department, Bronisława wrote in August 1924 an extensive and serious letter concerning her further cooperation: "I have long been gnawed, quite intensely at times, by the awareness that my cooperation with you in the University is a sort of 'incidental activity' for me. Presently, the idea that in a few weeks' time I will again actively practicing this 'incidental activity' has become tedious, and unbearable, for me. Therefore, I have resolved to offer to you, Professor, simply and sincerely, my intention to quit the assistantship".<sup>73</sup>

As has been mentioned, Wójcikówna combined, since 1916, her responsibilities with the Musicology Department with those at the K.S. Jakubowski bookstore; in contrast to the former, the latter was a source of regular income for her: the wage ratio was 3:1 (600 złoty versus 200 złoty), of which she also made Chybiński aware. The need to schedule her bookstore duties in combination with those of assistant lecturer "in a 80 per cent to 20 per cent proportion, which means, to the detriment of the Department", completely hindered her research activities, which she otherwise did not intend to quit. Finally, however, the question of income became key, although the 'voice of her heart', as she wrote, suggested that she stuck to the Department. She believed she would devote the time she could save by quitting the University job to her own research activity. Albeit she would renounce the post, she did not think about severing the contacts with the Department or the musicological milieu at large.<sup>74</sup> On preparing Mr. Chybiński for her decision to quit, she endeavoured to help him find an appropriate successor; to this end, she proposed the Rev. Hieronim Feicht, who was preparing his doctoral thesis then, or Maria Szczepańska. Expecting that Chybiński would endeavour to keep his long-standing assistant within the Department, she gave strong arguments for her decision: "Please do not use any arguments

---

<sup>73</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/48, Bronisława Wójcikówna's letter to Adolf Chybiński, 15 Aug. 1924, MS, n.p.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibidem*.

to dissuade me from what I have resolved. The preceding year was for me nightmarish and afflicting enough”.<sup>75</sup> In spite of her official employment until the end of 1924, Wójcikówna requested to be released from her duties as from 1 October 1924; this gives us an idea of how important her decision was. On the other hand, the tone of her letter was calm, and the described need to make the decision was embedded in ill-concealed regret.

In regard of Wójcikówna’s dismissal, a letter to Adolf Chybiński, dated 8 November 1924, has survived – being the first official document produced by Bronisława which is extant among the Professor’s letters.<sup>76</sup> The sender concluded her official letter with a less official phrase, and a word of thanks for the cooperation that was nearing an end.<sup>77</sup> In spite of her intent to leave at the beginning of a new academic year, she officially held her position until end March 1925<sup>78</sup> – the date that set a definite end of her formal employment with the John Casimir University and the twelve years of her association with its Musicology Department. Those who followed her as assistant lecturers were the Rev. Hieronim Feicht (1924–6), Maria Szczepańska (1926–39), and Jan Józef Dunicz (1932–9).<sup>79</sup>

It is hard to describe in detail the situation of assistant lecturers in musicology at West European universities.<sup>80</sup> Although the aforementioned Bertha Antonia Wallner did cooperate after graduation with her professor, Arnold Sandberger (they co-edited the volume series *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Bayern*), she is not mentioned as his assistant at the University.<sup>81</sup> Instead, the literature speaks of Anne Amalie Abert (1906–96), who, with her doctorate obtained in 1934 at the Berlin University, was employed since 1935 as assistant lecturer

<sup>75</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>76</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/49, Bronisława Wójcikówna’s letter to Adolf Chybiński, 8 Nov. 1924 [MS], n.p.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>78</sup> The chronologically latest document preserved in the Wójcikówna files of the UJK Archive, regarding the withholding of payment of salary to the “fmr assistant lecturer at the Chair of Musicology”, is dated 31 March 1925; DALO, f. 26, op. 5, spr. 320, Letter from the Rectory to the UJK Bursar’s Office, 31 Mar. 1925, sht. 37.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Piekarski, *Przerwany kontrapunkt*, 247.

<sup>80</sup> To this end, all the annually issued lists of members of staff for West European universities – particularly, the ones of Berlin, Vienna, Munich, Leipzig, the Sorbonne, etc. – would have to be reviewed.

<sup>81</sup> Ott, *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 177–8.



with the Christian-Albrechts-Universität in Kiel.<sup>82</sup> Not much is known about the other musicology graduates at West European universities at the time Bronisława Wójcikówna acted as assistant lecturer. Gaining more complete knowledge in this respect may be hindered by the fact that such assistants probably did informal work similar to that performed by Bronisława before 1919. In Poland, apart from Lwów, there were women assistants employed with the University of Poznań's Department of Musicology. An official list of the University's staff tells us that this was so since the academic year 1929–30 when the name of Hanna Rudnicka is mentioned for the first time (previously, assistant lecturers in Musicology were men only). She was followed by Maria Pleussówna; since the academic year 1934–5, apart from a male assistant lecturer, Jadwiga Sobieska, née Pietruszyńska worked there; after completion of her studies in 1935, she became an assistant with the Regional Phonographic Archive at the Musicology Department.<sup>83</sup> The Poznań University's Musicology Department employed Felicja Niemczewska as assistant lecturer in 1937–9, with male assistants working there as well.<sup>84</sup> Thus, the decade 1929–39 saw altogether four female assistants work at the Department in question, with men assistants employed as well. There were not as many assistants in Lwów, since replacements occurred very rarely (four assistants, including two women, worked there between 1919 and 1939). There was only one assistant lecturer in Musicology (namely, Włodzimierz Poźniak) employed at the Jagiellonian University, where the post was only set up in 1930.<sup>85</sup> Of Polish musicological establishments, Poznań had the highest number of assistant lecturers (men and women alike), but Lwów had begun employing women in this capacity ten years earlier. For the 1930s, no real difference is perceptible between female and male assistant lecturers employed with these institutions.

<sup>82</sup> 'Abert Familie', in MGG, i (1949–51), 43.

<sup>83</sup> 'Sobieska Jadwiga z d. Pietruszyńska', in *Encyklopedia muzyczna PWM*, x (Kraków, 2007), 19.

<sup>84</sup> *Uniwersytet Poznański. Skład Uniwersytetu w roku akademickim 1929/1930* (Poznań, 1930), 39; *Uniwersytet Poznański. Skład Uniwersytetu w roku akademickim 1931/1932* (Poznań, 1932), 29; *Uniwersytet Poznański. Skład Uniwersytetu w roku akademickim 1934/1935* (Poznań, 1935), 44; *Uniwersytet Poznański. Skład Uniwersytetu w roku akademickim 1938/1939* (Poznań, 1939), 56.

<sup>85</sup> *100 lat muzykologii krakowskiej 1911–2011*, [http://www.uj.edu.pl/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=56fa4ac5-2f67-418a-89c2-f019695c3053&groupId=6464892](http://www.uj.edu.pl/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=56fa4ac5-2f67-418a-89c2-f019695c3053&groupId=6464892) [Accessed: 4 March 2018].

### III BRONISŁAWA AND HER PROFESSOR

The relationship between Bronisława Wójcikówna and Adolf Chybiński were not limited to the University- or Department-related issues. It was already in her first letter to Professor Chybiński, from summer 1913, that – on the occasion of the output of Johann Fischer of Augsburg (later on to become the subject of her PhD thesis) – she dared confess a number of private things. In the opening phrases, telling him about her will to deal with science, she made a remark on the relationships prevailing amongst the academicians: “it is pretty obvious that now-a-days, much more ardently than formerly, I am standing under the banner of labour for science as such and for its sake, absolutely purified of anything that smacks of partiality, localism, or dogmatism”.<sup>86</sup>

This letter makes it apparent that Adolf became for Bronisława, after just a year of their acquaintance, not only a man of authority in the field of Musicology as well as a confidant whom she told her non-scientific reflections. Bronisława many a time revealed to Adolf her scepticism regarding the skills of women and their inferiority to men. This must have had to do with female scientific careers being a rare phenomenon in Lwów, including university careers (although female students appeared there since the late nineteenth century).

In Bożena Muszkalska’s opinion, Bronisława felt alienated among the other women.<sup>87</sup> Chybiński certainly became for her a sounding board of the most personal confessions, as is testified by a the following fragment of a letter: “I would rather yell – why should I be bothering you, Sir, with my own business – for I have no-one to tell things to, this is it”.<sup>88</sup> In the same letter she shared with Adolf her observations on the infirmity of female nature. It is not obvious whether she also had intellectual limitations in mind (with the related impossibility

---

<sup>86</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/1, Bronisława Wójcikówna’s letter to Adolf Chybiński, 15 Aug. 1913, MS, n.p.

<sup>87</sup> Bożena Muszkalska, ‘Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian – niepokorna uczennica Profesora’, *Muzyka*, ccxxvii, 4 (2012), 47–70, points to the fact (p. 50) that Bronisława made friends with none of Professor Chybiński’s famous (female) graduates; for instance, she never mentions Zofia Lissa in her letters to him. However, Lissa began her studies in 1924, the moment Wójcikówna resigned as assistant lecturer. However, Bronisława did have a close relationship with her mother and sister.

<sup>88</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/25, Bronisława Wójcikówna’s letter to Adolf Chybiński, 3 Aug. 1916, MS, n.p.

to practice real science); it is possible, though, that she wanted to draw Chybiński's attention to herself, sought support with him and wanted her singularity confirmed.<sup>89</sup>

As B. Muszkalska remarks, convinced about her uniqueness, and repeatedly calling woman's abilities into question, Wójcikówna "used these features as her own asset".<sup>90</sup> Hence, through exchanging thoughts on private affairs and addressing issues related to her own personality, Bronisława rendered the bond between her and Adolf – between a student/assistant and the professor – gradually tighter and tighter. This is reflected in the phrases used in their letters; Bronisława would address him 'Gracious Master!', for instance,<sup>91</sup> whilst signing herself (since 1915) more and more often simply as 'Bronka' (a diminutive of Bronisława).<sup>92</sup> The tightening relationship and the issues touched upon in the letters probably were probably not too pleasing for Adolf's wife Maria, née Gawełkiewicz. (The couple got married in 1904; when Adolf met Bronisława, he had twelve years of marriage behind him. Bronisława was fourteen years' junior of Maria, who in turn was four years her husband's elder.) This is attested by a 1928 letter in which, having quoted an anecdote, Bronisława adds, "Please do not read this out to your Spouse, for she it might make her lose any good idea she may have for me!"<sup>93</sup>

Wójcikówna confessed to Adolf her unfulfilled scholarly aspirations, which she found most deplorable given the way she perceived her own value; as she wrote in 1928, "Of 'temptations' of scholarly nature, there is nothing I can say. I do regret time and again that I have wasted, or am wasting, myself".<sup>94</sup>

This letter attests that, in spite of her plans to deal with scientific work, which she put into practice from 1924 onwards, she was unsuccessful at this point after more than three years of effort. Her dismissal

<sup>89</sup> *Ibidem*, 1–2.

<sup>90</sup> Muszkalska, 'Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian', 50.

<sup>91</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/11, Bronisława Wójcikówna's letter to Adolf Chybiński, 31 July 1915, MS, n.p.

<sup>92</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/6, Bronisława Wójcikówna's letter to Adolf Chybiński, 30 Jan. 1915, MS, n.p.

<sup>93</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/73, Bronisława Wójcikówna's letter to Adolf Chybiński, 26 Aug. 1928, MS, n.p.

<sup>94</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/70, Bronisława Wójcikówna's letter to Adolf Chybiński, 28 Apr. 1928, [MS], n.p.

did not break her close relationship with Chybiński, who did not cease to be a confidant to whom she revealed most secret thoughts. The relationship was now social only, since their correspondence was no more related with their partnership at the University.

#### IV A POST-DOC? YES!

In 1929, Bronisława Wójcikówna, then aged thirty-nine, married an Armenian, Garabed Keuprulian, who was an engineer (dwelling in Lwów since 1909).<sup>95</sup> There is no mention of this fact in her letters to Chybiński; a letter first signed 'Dr Bronisława Keuprulian, née Wójcik', was written on 12 December 1929.<sup>96</sup> Chybiński ever since sent his letters to the new address, being the residential address of his former assistant once she moved out from her mother's and sister's place.<sup>97</sup> In correlation with her marriage, Bronisława altered her denomination, from Roman Catholic into Armenian Catholic, which testifies to her new, and strong, ties with Armenian culture, reflected not only in her assumed surname.<sup>98</sup> A daughter was born to Bronisława and Garabed less than three years afterwards (she was forty-two at the time); she was named Anahid, and was baptised at the Armenian Catholic Cathedral in Lwów.<sup>99</sup>

Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian refocused her scholarly interest at that time: beginning with early music (PhD), she turned, with time,

---

<sup>95</sup> Garabed Keuprulian (born 1884 in Edirne, Turkey; died 1939 in Lwów) was an Armenian living in Poland (since 1909, in Lwów). A Lwów University-of-Technology graduate, he was employed with the local municipality and since 1934 was a teacher of Armenian at the UJK; see Stanisław Donigiewicz, 'Śp. inż. Garabed Keuprulian', *Posłaniec Św. Grzegorza* 1939, no. 3, p. 130; Kościów, *Kultura muzyczna*, 78.

<sup>96</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/90, Bronisława Wójcikówna's letter to Adolf Chybiński, 31 Dec. 1929, [MS], n.p.

<sup>97</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Keuprulian settled down in Lwów at 7 Bodnarówka St.

<sup>98</sup> S. Donigiewicz remarks that Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian, though originally born into a family with Catholic traditions, was of the Armenian Catholic religion (thus, her conversion must have followed from the marriage); cf. S. Donigiewicz, 'Z żałobnej karty. Śp. dr Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian', *Posłaniec Św. Grzegorza* 1938, no. 2, 35.

<sup>99</sup> Testimonium ortus et baptismi [copy of birth certificate of Anahid Keuprulian], Lwów, 19 May 1929, ms; kept in Jadwiga Turczyńska's family collection. I hereby thank Mrs. Jadwiga Turczyńska for making the item available to me.

toward analysis of the works of Frédéric Chopin, systematic of the discipline, and ethnomusicological research – with a special focus on Armenian music. The latter had to do with Bronisława's involvement, from 1929 onwards, with Armenian organisations operating in Poland – the illustrated monthly *Posłaniec Św. Grzegorza* ['St Gregory's Messenger'] and the Archdiocesan Union of Armenians in Lwów. Such interest stemmed from her marriage with Garabed Keuprulian; there is no indication that Bronisława might have shown it before. On the other hand, local community of Armenian descent had become extremely scarce by the twentieth century, accounting to one per cent of the city's population. In any case, Poles were prevalent in Lwów before 1939; that the city was home to the other ethnicities too (notably, Jewish and, much smaller, Ukrainian) did not make the city much different from the other urban hubs in Central Europe then. Jews assimilating into Polish culture was, for a change, a considerable phenomenon locally – with a quarter of Judaic confessors quoting Polish as their home language.<sup>100</sup> Hence, Polish cultural circle was the environment for Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian until her marriage; as has been mentioned, she strove (in the ranks of 'Zarzewie') to contribute to reinforce it in what had until 1914 been the Russian-partitioned Polish territory.

In 1929, the time he was getting married, Bronisława Wójcikówna started her endeavours for post-doctoral degree (*habilitation*) in Musicology at the University of Lwów; in this regard, she exchanged lively correspondence with Adolf Chybiński. Her letter of 8 August 1929 might be called a 'speech in her defence'.<sup>101</sup> His former student openly expressed her scientific views, which differed from those of Chybiński: whilst she recognised the need for herself to choose another field of study than the one represented by Chybiński, he remained thoroughly focused on historical musicology and documentation monuments of early Polish music.<sup>102</sup>

This particular exchange of opinions began with Chybiński's negative opinion on his once-graduate student's further scholarly plans. Expressing her regret that the Professor had not been willing

<sup>100</sup> Cf. Piekarski, *Przerwany kontrapunkt*, 75–6.

<sup>101</sup> Muszkalska, 'Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian', 62.

<sup>102</sup> Chybiński's other fields of interest included the 'Young Poland' music (particularly, works of Mieczysław Karłowicz) and musical folklore of the Podhale region.

to discuss the matter in a conversation, Wójcikówna felt forced to reply in written form. She started by touching upon certain questions being “actually side issues to the matter of *habilitation*”: she could not pass over them in silence, though, as they were related to Chybiński’s evaluation of her qualifications and interests as a scholar. Chybiński charged her of ‘aversion’ toward early music, which was apparent (in his opinion) to her underdeveloped research techniques and their practical application, including ignorance of counterpoint.<sup>103</sup> The charge was pretty serious, given the fact that Wójcikówna happened from time to time to hold classes in this particular subject. Her counteroffensive reply expressed regret against her former Professor – for the first time ever in their correspondence – that she had been unsatisfactorily educated in the course of her studies. Her letters moreover expressed unprecedented bitterness due to the fact that her self-taught studies forced her afterwards to thoroughly make up for the backlogs accrued during her official studies.<sup>104</sup>

Her scholarly ‘creed’ uttered in one of the letters to Chybiński comprised – again, as never before in the letters they exchanged – her different views on her own possible *habilitation* as well as the discipline in question as such.<sup>105</sup> At age thirty-nine, Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulia finally gained complete autonomy from her Professor – once, a ‘Gracious Master’. In spite of the doubts addressed in her earlier letters with regards to the abilities and skills of women, she now proved capable of defending her position, giving precise and to-the-point arguments. Having presented her individual views on post-doctorate work, Wójcikówna resolutely stated that Chybiński’s adverse attitude toward her scientific plans would nowise affect her: “I will continue working on the issues that are of real interest to me, in contrast to some other. And once I recognise that my labour has any values, I will have it published”.<sup>106</sup> Given the situation, she added, she would seek support outside the Lwów Department of Musicology and Professor Chybiński himself. She considered the choice

<sup>103</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/85, Bronisława Wójcikówna’s letter to Adolf Chybiński, 8 Aug. 1929, [MS], n.p.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>105</sup> Touched upon in the letter to Chybiński, the difference in perception of the discipline as such (otherwise, quite an engrossing issue) is omitted herein.

<sup>106</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/85, Bronisława Wójcikówna’s letter to Adolf Chybiński, 8 Aug. 1929, [MS], n.p.

of a research direction concordant with her views more important than a career as lecturer with her home university. Yet, she did think of such a career. She gave the addressee a hint that she was not completely excluded from academic milieus. Appreciating her own personal independence, she spoke in negative terms of those who could, under similar circumstances, quit their own plans and subject themselves to a Professor: "I disapprove of scholars 'fabricated on commission'".<sup>107</sup> At the same time, she wished Chybiński to have a student that would be a 'real historical talent' and could satisfy his Professor's scientific designs;<sup>108</sup> on the other hand, she admitted she could identify no such individual at the moment (1929). Interestingly, she would not even mention either of her successors as assistant lecturers at the Musicology Department – namely, the Rev. Hieronim Feicht or Maria Szczepańska. The latter was employed as such since the academic year 1926–7, until 1939 (being in the twenties Poland's only female assistant lecturer in Musicology).

It may be assumed that Wójcik-Keuprulian had her in mind while referring to musicologists 'fabricated on commission'. As Muszkalska finds, in her disobedient attitude, Wójcik-Keuprulian was the exact opposite of Maria Szczepańska.<sup>109</sup> The violent exchange of views in August 1929 was not confined to Bronisława's post-doctoral pursuit but extended to a conflict between Chybiński, herself, and Szczepańska. Bronisława had reportedly warned Maria "that people are getting interested in her in a way that is detrimental and hurtful to her"; having learned of this, Chybiński came to the conclusion that, in her intent to 'indirectly beat against' him, Bronisława "chose Szczepańska as a tool to this end".<sup>110</sup> All this led to a marked breakthrough in Bronisława's relationship with Adolf, which was partly due to their differing views on post-doctoral work in the area of musicology, and partly to the antagonisms occurring between Chybiński, Wójcik-Keuprulian, and Szczepańska. In this particular case, the scholarly and professional affairs were strictly correlated with the private relationship.

---

<sup>107</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>109</sup> Muszkalska, 'Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian', 69.

<sup>110</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/86, B. Wójcikówna's letter to A. Chybiński, 12 Aug. 1929 [MS], n.p.

Views on musicology differing from those advocated by Chybiński increasingly came to the fore in Poland in the late 1920s/early 1930s among members of the younger generation. There were Lwów musicology graduates among them, including Wójcik-Keuprulian and Stefania Łobaczewska, along with Seweryn Barbag, a Vienna University's musicological graduate residing in Lwów. These scholars felt it right to redefine the scope and needs of their academic discipline, in their strife to verify the model placing a bet on historical musicology then dominant in Poland (particularly, in Lwów).

The first significant token of the difference as to the underlying idea was *Systematyka muzykologii*, a book authored by Seweryn Barbag and published in Lwów in 1928 (dedicated, by the way, to Chybiński)<sup>111</sup> and criticising a musicology where historical issues are predominant. The author pointed out to the infirmities of this field of science – notably, scarcity of faculties of philosophy of music and natural musicology, and an “overly desultory lecturing in sociology” (as clearly influenced by Guido Adler who had initiated research in sociology of music).<sup>112</sup> Thus, Barbag identified the need for extending the scope of research thitherto pursued in Poland, by (re)focusing of non-historical sections of musicology that ought to be approached equivalently, reciprocally complementing one another. He also believed that a too-narrow specialisation led to a one-sided perception of the phenomenon under investigation. What Chybiński's direct response to the book was like, is not known. Importantly, he did admit different views of his (former) students than his own: this is testified by the fact that a positive appraisal of Barbag's book – a review by Wójcik-Keuprulian – was published in *Kwartalnik Muzyczny*, the quarterly Chybiński edited.<sup>113</sup> The publication of the Barbag book helped establish a closer relationship between the author and Bronisława, whose conflict with Chybiński intensified since 1929.

<sup>111</sup> Seweryn Barbag, *Systematyka muzykologii* (Lwów, 1928).

<sup>112</sup> See Mosco Carner and Gabriele Eder, 'Adler, Guido', in Stanley Sadie (ed.) *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, i (London, 2001), 158.

<sup>113</sup> See Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian, [a review of] *Barbag Seweryn*, 'Systematyka muzykologii', *Lwów 1928*, in *Kwartalnik Muzyczny*, x/xi (1931), 323–6.



V  
OPINIONS ON BRONISŁAWA

With respect to her expected post-doctoral qualification, Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian strictly adhered to her concept she had summarised to Chybiński in her letter of August 1929. At that time she dealt with the melodic in Frédéric Chopin's piano works. In spite of the differences in the scientific field, she requested Adolf Chybiński in September 1929 (just above a month after the sharp exchange between them) for 'reviewing the proof-read version' of her almost-completed book entitled *Melodyka Chopina*. She sought Professor Chybiński's opinion before submitting the book for print.<sup>114</sup> After the book was published (Lwów, 1930), Chybiński did express his positive opinion appreciating the study's scientific qualities.<sup>115</sup> Bronisława expressed her gratitude to Adolf for his appreciation.<sup>116</sup>

The book *Melodyka Chopina*<sup>117</sup> did not ensure an opportunity for Bronisława to get 'habilitated' at the Lwów University. Instead, it aroused interest and a very positive opinion of Zdzisław Jachimecki, who ran the Seminar in History and Theory of Music at Cracow's Jagiellonian University [UJ].<sup>118</sup> Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian finally gained an opportunity, in 1934, to submit and defend her post-doctoral thesis at the UJ. In Anna Czekanowska's opinion, the topic she had chosen, 'non-historical' as it was, might have not aroused Chybiński's interest; thus, Cracow became a better place for her to receive the *habilitation*.<sup>119</sup> Apart from anything else, UJ was known as more favourable a hub for women willing to pursue a scholarly career, with the first such post-doctoral qualification received in 1920. A total of

---

<sup>114</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/88, Bronisława Wójcikówna's letter to Adolf Chybiński, 24 Sept. 1929 [MS], n.p.

<sup>115</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/93, B. Wójcikówna's letter to A. Chybiński, 29 June 1930 [MS], n.p.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>117</sup> Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian, *Melodyka Chopina* (Lwów, 1930).

<sup>118</sup> Twenty years later, Zdzisław Jachimecki so wrote of *Melodyka Chopina*: "The study, excellent as it is in regard of the method, may serve as a benchmark for stylometric research regarding the issue of melodic in general"; Zdzisław Jachimecki, *Muzykologia i piśmiennictwo muzyczne w Polsce* (Kraków, 1948), 43.

<sup>119</sup> Anna Czekanowska, 'Adolf Chybiński jako pedagog i historyk', ed. by Jurij Jasinowski, *Musica Humana* (Lviv, 2003), 52.

fifteen female students got 'habilitated' there before 1939, of whom two received professorial posts.<sup>120</sup>

Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian was the first woman in the world to have received a post-doctoral qualification in musicology. She was followed by Swiss-born Lucie Dikenmann-Balmer (1902–80), who in 1933 received her PhD in Musicology at the University of Berlin, followed by a post-doctoral degree in 1936 at the Bern University and an engagement as *Privatdozentin* in musicology; in 1947, she became the first-ever woman musicologist to obtain associate professorship.<sup>121</sup> Post-doctorate qualification was also granted to Anne Amalie Abert (1943, at the Kiel University), who in 1950 became Europe's first woman professor in musicology.<sup>122</sup> Both Dikenmann-Balmer and Abert were a dozen years younger than Wójcik-Keuprulian, and so had their musicology studies completed at a later date. Worth mentioning is also the French musicologist Yvonne Rokseth (née Rihouët, 1890–1948). Born in the same year as Bronisława, she started her musicological studies at the Sorbonne in 1920 and completed her PhD there in 1930; she was made assistant professor in 1937.<sup>123</sup> It is hard to find whether, and to what extent, Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian may have been in touch with the other woman who pursued careers in musicology in Western Europe; actually, she might have had such contacts as she had a command of languages and contributed to foreign journals, including the *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft*, *Revue de Musicologie*, and *La Revue Musicale*.

Bronisława's post-doctoral qualification lecture, entitled *The position of musicology within the system of sciences*,<sup>124</sup> was recognised by the UJ's Faculty Council as satisfying the requirements. Chybiński was notified by Bronisława of the successful course of the qualification, forthwith (just two days later) and meticulously. As she concluded, "I am encouraged to report this to you, Sir, by the conviction that

<sup>120</sup> Kondracka, 'Kobiety na uniwersytetach', 279, 281.

<sup>121</sup> Lucie Dikenmann-Balmer, 'Dikenmann-Balmer, Lucie', in MGG, iii (1954), 475. Cf.: <http://musicsack.com/PersonFMTDetail.cfm?PersonPK=100043015> [Accessed: 29 March 2018].

<sup>122</sup> Friedrich Blume, 'Abert Familie', in MGG, i, 43.

<sup>123</sup> Geneviève Thibault 'Rokseth, Yvonne', 645–6.

<sup>124</sup> An article on the topic was published in the same year: Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian, 'Stanowisko muzykologii w systemie nauk', *Rozprawy i Notatki Muzykologiczne*, i (1934).

you, Most Esteemed Professor, will find pleasing this commendation in a foreign area of a John Casimir University student, doctor, and assistant lecturer".<sup>125</sup> Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian thereby proved that in spite of the controversies occurring at the UJK, she could fulfil her plans elsewhere. It should be remarked that there was a long-standing conflict between the Lwów musicology unit and its Cracow counterpart, due to some misunderstandings between Adolf Chybiński and Zdzisław Jachimecki, which had begun in 1911 and did not cease until then. Being a former student of Chybiński's, the first woman to have graduated from the Lwów-based Department and a for many years Chybiński's trusted assistant, Wójcik-Keuprulian submitted her *habilitation* thesis in an institution that was suspicious or inimical toward her home Department. After she obtained the qualification, Chybiński wrote to Ludwik Bronarski: "Who on earth could have been habilitated by Mr. Jachimecki amongst his students, whilst he possesses no-one such, apart from those doctorised and masterised petty dabblers".<sup>126</sup> Even though Chybiński did not think too high of Bronisława's abilities, he still considered them superior to those of the Cracow graduates. However, he would not conceal his irritation with the independent move made by his once-student. This put a definite end to the exchange between Adolf Chybiński and his former assistant.

Thinking that Bronisława would plan to transfer the docent position (readership) she had gained in Cracow to Lwów, Chybiński expressed his indignation in a letter to Ludwik Bronarski, pointing out, again, to her underdeveloped proficiency and adding that her actions "may qualify her for a docentship in Cracow, but not with me".<sup>127</sup>

He was wrong, though: not only did his former graduate receive her post-doctoral qualification (approved by the MWRiOP on 6 December 1934),<sup>128</sup> but moreover was offered to give classes at the UJ. She took the offer and, from the academic year 1935–6 to 1937–8, taught (appealing) aspects of melodic, musical ethnography, Armenian music, and style in Chopin's works.<sup>129</sup> She thus became conspicuous as

---

<sup>125</sup> BJ OZS, Korespondencja A. Chybińskiego, folder W-24/1-129, class. no. W24/127, B. Wójcikówna's letter to A. Chybiński, 30 Apr. 1934 [MS], n.p.

<sup>126</sup> Muszkalska, 'Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian', 67.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibidem*, 67.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. Muszkalska, 'Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian', 68.

<sup>129</sup> *Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie. Spis wykładów na rok akademicki 1935/1936* (Kraków, 1935), 73; *Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie. Spis wykładów na rok akademicki*

the one who made ethnomusicology classes part of the Jagiellonian University musicological curriculum (there were no such classes in Lwów).<sup>130</sup> In spite of all the adversities, she eventually managed to bring her scientific and scholarly plans into effect – and take up work as a university lecturer. On top of all this, she was the only woman employed at the Cracow musicology faculty before 1939.

Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian was one of Europe's first women to lecture in musicology at a university. After the First World War, women were increasingly becoming musicology lecturers in Western Europe (not all of them holding a post-doctoral qualification, though). One of the first was Marie-Jeanne-Pauline Long (1885–1953), a Sorbonne graduate in Music, since 1921 a *Privatdozentin* at the Geneva University (without post-doctoral degree);<sup>131</sup> Switzerland was also the workplace, since 1936, of Dora Julia Rittmeyer-Iselin (1902–1974), as docent in Musicology at the Handelshochschule St. Gallen;<sup>132</sup> Lucie Dikenmann-Balmer was from 1936 onwards a *Privatdozentin* in Musicology with the University of Bern.<sup>133</sup> Thus, Switzerland had woman lecturers in musicology at its three tertiary schools, which is actually quite meaningful, given the fact women received suffrage in this country only in 1971. Although all three were Swiss-born, they were educated abroad (two in Berlin and one in Paris). In France, Yvonne Rokseth lectured in Musicology since 1937 at the Strasburg University (she is at times described as first female university lecturer in musicology).<sup>134</sup> In Britain, it was only in 1944 that Evelyn Myra Kisch (1912–1945) began lecturing at the Durham University.<sup>135</sup> In the United States, Mina Curtiss (1896–1985) is mentioned as a musicologist who got in 1920 a Master of Arts at the Columbia University, and a PhD with the Radcliffe College in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In 1920, she was

---

1936/1937 (Kraków, 1936), 77; *Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie. Spis wykładów na rok akademicki 1937/1938* (Kraków, 1937), 79.

<sup>130</sup> Piotr Dahlig, 'Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian (1890–1938) – the First Union of Musicology and Chopin Research', *Musicology Today*, 9 (2012), 75.

<sup>131</sup> Willy Tappolet, 'Long Marie-Jeanne-Pauline', in MGG, viii (1960), 1187–8.

<sup>132</sup> <http://www.hls-dhs-dss.ch/textes/d/D9371.php> [Accessed: 30 March 2018].

<sup>133</sup> Dikenmann-Balmer, *Dikenmann-Balmer Lucie*, in MGG, iii, 475.

<sup>134</sup> Leo Schrade, 'Yvonne Rokseth: In Memoriam', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, ii, 3 (1949), 171–4.

<sup>135</sup> William D. Rubinstein, Michael A. Jolles and Hillary L. Rubinstein, *The Palgrave Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish History* (New York, 2011), 521.

made Associate Professor in English Literature (there is no *habilitation* qualification in the U.S.) at the Smith College.<sup>136</sup>

In the year 1934, Wójcik-Keuprulian was invited to contribute permanently to the Fryderyk Chopin Institute in Warsaw; she took the offer and worked for the Institute until her death, as part of the team working on a collection of Chopin's complete works under chief editorship of Ignacy Jan Paderewski.<sup>137</sup> Thus, again, she was appreciated 'on a foreign soil' – this time, by a prestigious capital city-based institution. In consequence of this appointment, she moved in October 1934, together with her husband, to Warsaw, where she resided at 53 Narbutta St. (ap. 6).<sup>138</sup>

At that time, Bronisława kept in touch with the historian Łucja Charewiczowa, who like herself had once attended the Strzałkowska junior high school in Lwów. Charewiczowa got her PhD from the John Casimir University in 1924, and in 1937 received her *habilitation* there, second only to Karolina Lanckorońska, who completed her post-doctorate qualification in 1935, the first woman at the UJK to have done so.<sup>139</sup> Łucja dealt with the history of Lwów; her interests extended to women's activities in the field of science. In 1935, Bronisława thus described her own accomplishments in a letter to Łucja: "You might have noticed in one of the daily papers my recently announced appointment as Docent in Musicology at the Jagiellonian University. Since I am aware that you, Dear Madam, have always been interested in female scholarly work and use your historical quill to record the major (so difficult to attain in this country, though!) successes of women in the area of Polish science, I hereby should like to draw your attention to this fact and request you, in case you should deem it appropriate to give it some 'publicity' in the press".<sup>140</sup> She added: "I would be glad, though, if it might draw attention amongst broader circles that a woman native of Lwów, by parentage and education, has been habilitated at the Jagiellonian University".<sup>141</sup>

<sup>136</sup> Mina Curtiss, 'Curtiss, Mina', in MGG, ii (1952), 1825.

<sup>137</sup> Piotr Dahlig, 'Wójcik-Keuprulian Bronisława', in *Encyklopedia Muzyczna PWM*, xii (Kraków, 2012), 268.

<sup>138</sup> [no author], 'Osobiste', *Posłaniec Św. Grzegorza*, 9–10 (1934), 88 (see the fn. below).

<sup>139</sup> Kost, *Kobiety ze Lwowa*, 28–9, 35.

<sup>140</sup> Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian's letter to Łucja Charewiczowa, Warsaw, 21 Jan. 1935, MS. I owe a copy of this letter to Professor Bożena Muszkalska.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibidem*.

Thus, Bronisława clearly marked her will to include her output in the countrywide endeavours of women in respect of earning their degrees and pursuing academic careers, highlighting Lwów as one of the hubs. She attached to the letter a list of her studies and achievements; what is notable, she placed her daughter Anahid as the ‘crown’ of her accomplishment.

The period in Bronisława’s life related to the Jagiellonian University and the Fryderyk Chopin Institute did not last long: she died prematurely, on 11 April 1938. One of the quoted reasons was her health, overtaxed in manifold ways, which was pestering her at least from 1920 on (she suffered from Basedow’s disease).<sup>142</sup> Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian was interred at the Łyczaków Cemetery in Lwów (her grave has perished – a 1990s monument to the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen is erected today on the site).<sup>143</sup> Her husband, Garabed Keuprulian, deceased a year later. Bronisława’s sister Jadwiga Wójcikówna and their mother took care of Anahid then.<sup>144</sup>

The loss thereby incurred by Polish science passed almost unnoticed at the time. Apart from a fairly extensive obituary published by *Posłaniec Św. Grzegorza*, the April 1938 issue of the Warsaw-based journal *Muzyka Polska* only published a very short encyclopaedic-style note as part of its ‘Chronicle of Musical Events’ section.<sup>145</sup> The other periodicals did not publish widely on Wójcik-Keuprulian’s death. Lastly, *Muzyka Polska* published a large recollection of the deceased scholar, which opened with the very telling words: “This same respective silence which had accompanied the musicological successes of the late Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian, accompanied lately her early death”. Posthumously, she did deserve recognition, as is testified by the appraisal that followed the above remark: “Now, let us be fair in our evaluation: one of the greatest Polish musicologists of our time, an excellent authority in Chopin’s music, has passed away”.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>142</sup> Based on information received from Jadwiga Turczyńska.

<sup>143</sup> Stanisław Donigiewicz, ‘Z żałobnej karty. Śp. dr Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian’, in *Posłaniec Św. Grzegorza*, 2 (1938), 36.

<sup>144</sup> Based on Jadwiga Turczyńska’s explanation. Anahid Keuprulian (b. 1932, Lwów; d. 2012, Boboluszki, Opole Voivodeship) was expatriated from Lwów in 1946, together with her aunt Jadwiga and grandmother Maria, and arrived in Katowice in a repatriation transport.

<sup>145</sup> ‘Kronika’, *Muzyka Polska*, 4 (1938), 192.

<sup>146</sup> Stanisław Zetowski, ‘Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian’, *Muzyka Polska*, 6 (1938), 253.

## VI CONCLUSION

Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian has left a distinctive mark in the history of European science, as a member of a narrow circle of women who developed their academic career, with a successful outcome, before 1939. She accomplished her purpose with Polish universities, as the first graduate in Musicology at the University of Lwów. She was the first woman worldwide to receive post-doctoral qualification in musicology, and the only Polish woman to have completed a *habilitation* in this field before the Second World War. She was, moreover, among the first women in Europe to lecture in musicology at a university. And, she was the first so known and merited female musicologist in Central Europe, where it was the subsequent generation that had successful women in this particular discipline.

The professional biography of Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian reflects, on the one hand, a student's struggle for assistantship, which was typical of the first half of the twentieth century – whilst, on the other hand, displaying the difficulties related to her endeavours for post-doctoral degree, where her sex did not make things easier at all. Although, like a number of other European women of the time, first took a job as a librarian, her research temper would not let her stay confined to such activity. Bronisława's professional and scientific struggle is commendably reflected in the correspondence she exchanged with Adolf Chybiński, initiated in after the first year of their acquaintance (1913) and continued long after she completed her studies, extending to the years of their professional relations – lasting, altogether, over twenty years. Like most of the women involved in a university work, Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian had to observe orderliness and devotion for her sake. She associated herself with the once-small and emerging musicology unit where she had no opportunity to compare herself with any peer (there was no other assistant lecturer, for that matter): the only one to compare herself against was her Professor, in respect of whom she saw herself on the other side of a severe intellectual abyss. Her finally-obtained and very long-awaited post of university assistant eventually turned out not to give her financial stabilisation, or even enable individual scholarly development. There were two reasons behind it: the time-consuming and burdensome duties with the Department, combined with

unsatisfactory income that forced her to simultaneously take another job. At the time, more and more women embarked on careers with tertiary schools, mostly as assistant lecturers, often not due to a need for a gainful job.<sup>147</sup> For Wójcikówna, owing to her father's death and her single status, the necessity to earn a living became unavoidable. She could not work due to idealistic reasons – contrary to most of those scarce-in-number women employed in Polish universities, for whom the decisive factor was the desire to pursue their individual development as scholars and fondness for research.<sup>148</sup>

Like most of the women working at a university in her time, Bronisława lived long without a husband or offspring. Her marriage of 1929 opened a new, active period in her life. On the one hand, she gained a financial stability (an engineer, Mr. Keuprulian was employed with the Municipality of the City of Lwów); on the other, she developed serious interest in Armenian culture. These years also mark a change in Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian's hierarchy of values, as she recognised marriage and maternity as the important means to fulfil her life plans. The nine years of her marriage turned into a period of her most remarkable professional success, including the successful post-doctoral promotion, the docentship at the Jagiellonian University, and the collaboration with the prestigious Fryderyk Chopin Institute. It is perhaps not quite easy to determine what bearing her financial stability had on her career: the support she received from her man, which (among other things) allowed her to distance herself from the Professor, was perhaps not the least important factor. In 1928, she still confessed to Chybiński that she had 'wasted her opportunities' in the scientific field, but a year later quit her sentimental tone and started an intensive offensive, paving the way to attain her target.

In her 'plea', she opposed the Professor's will for the first time, and presented her own, completely different, scientific views. The research option she chose became indisputable for her. The situation in Polish musicology meant for her a need to work out a musicological description in respect of musical theory and formal analysis of musical works. This was interrelated with the underlying methodology for musicology and its place within the system of sciences. Making use of her broad-mindedness as a research scholar, she marked out – in

---

<sup>147</sup> Suchmiel, *Działalność naukowa kobiet*, 134–7.

<sup>148</sup> Kondracka, 'Kobiety na uniwersytetach', 282.



line with the views described in her letter to Chybiński – a new direction in the research into Chopin’s works, proposing a new type of their analysis (particularly with respect to melodic), consisting in a combination of knowledge on music theory with history and musical ethnography.<sup>149</sup> She thereby showed that musicology ought not to be limited to historical research.

Such views increasingly came to the fore in the late 1920s and early 1930s among members of the generation subsequent to that of Chybiński – Wójcik-Keuprulian and Barbag among them. They felt the need to broaden the research conducted at their time in Poland, based on a refocus on off-historical sections of musicology which, they believed, should have been approached on an equal footing. This would lead to a verification of the then-prevalent (especially, in Lwów) model that was almost entirely oriented toward historical musicology.

In her 1929 letter to Chybiński, for the first time since 1913 (which marks a distance of sixteen years) Bronisława touched upon research issues, whose reoccurrence was loaded with extreme emotion. Only ten years her Professor junior, this woman student represented a different generation. Although she addressed him in the letter with due respect, this posed no obstacle to a resolute expression of her *own* views. She no more presented her stance from the position of a student writing to her ‘Master’, but spoke to an interlocutor of equal rank. With seventeen years of their close acquaintance, the many years of assistantship, incessant mastering of her techniques, deepening of knowledge and skills, this was a legitimate behaviour. As Bożena Muszkalska observes, Wójcikówna’s letters to Chybiński show a significant, and meaningful, linguistic and thematic transition. Clearly, writing these letters must have helped the Bronisława “getting mature as a scholar, and as a human being”.<sup>150</sup> Initially so uncertain of herself, Wójcik-Keuprulian finally learned how to value her own independence. She highlighted that she valued it even higher than her career; the latter would anyway have been difficult to pursue at the Lwów University, where making a woman a docent or a professor was by no means easily acceptable by the academic staff.<sup>151</sup> Chybiński was indisposed toward Wójcikówna’s *habilitation*, firstly because its

<sup>149</sup> Dahlig, ‘Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian (1890–1938)’, 9, 77.

<sup>150</sup> Muszkalska, ‘Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian’, 50.

<sup>151</sup> Suchmiel, *Działalność naukowa kobiet*, 143.

topic would have been outside the confines of historical musicology; moreover, he was reluctant to have a woman do her post-doctoral qualification – as pointed out by Wójcik-Keuprulian's biography penned by Maria Szczepańska, who for years was a loyal and devoted assistant of Chybiński (including after the Second World War). Maria herself never gained a *habilitation* and remained subordinate to her Professor over the years of her activity (and unmarried till the end of her days). An opposite disposition enabled Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian to pursue a different model of career, leading to multiple successes, professional and private. The first-ever woman graduate in musicology from a Polish university, the interwar-period science in Poland has significantly contributed to the work and achievements of female research scholars, outpacing many a European country in this respect. This fact is not broadly known outside Poland yet.

*trans. Tristan Korecki*

#### SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Chybiński Adolf, *W czasach Straussa i Tetmajera. Wspomnienia*, ed. by Anna i Zygmunt Szwejkowscy (Kraków, 1959).
- Czekanowska Anna, 'Adolf Chybiński jako pedagog i historyk', ed. by Jurij Jasinowski, *Musica Humana* (L'viv, 2003).
- Czekanowska Anna, *Świat rzeczywisty, świat zapamiętany. Losy Polaków we Lwowie (1939–1941)* (Lublin, 2010).
- Dahlig Piotr, 'Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian (1890–1938) – the First Union of Musicology and Chopin Research', *Musicology Today*, 9 (2012).
- Dahlig Piotr, 'Wójcik-Keuprulian Bronisława', in *Encyklopedia Muzyczna PWM*, ed. by Elżbieta Dziebowska, xii (Kraków, 2012).
- Hrab Uliana, *Muzykoložia iak uniwerytec'ka dyscyplina. L'vivs'ka muzykoložična škola Adolfa Xibins'koho (1912–1941)* (L'viv, 2009).
- Jachimecki Zdzisław, *Muzykologia i piśmiennictwo muzyczne w Polsce* (Kraków, 1948).
- Jastrzębski Jarosław, *Państwowe szkolnictwo akademickie II Rzeczypospolitej. Zagadnienia systemowe* (Kraków, 2013).
- Kamińska-Kwak Jolanta, *Inteligencja województwa lwowskiego w okresie międzywojennym* (Rzeszów, 2005).
- Kondracka Mariola, 'Kobiety na uniwersytetach', in Anna Żarnowska and Andrzej Szwarz (eds.), *Równe prawa i nierówne szanse. Kobiety w Polsce międzywojennej* (Warszawa, 2000).
- Kost Beata, *Kobiety ze Lwowa* (Warszawa, 2017).
- Kościów Zbigniew, *Kultura muzyczna Ormian polskich* (Wołomin, 2011).
- Księga Pamiątkowa ku czci Prof. Adolfa Chybińskiego w 70-lecie urodzin* (Kraków, 1950).

- Lissa Zofia, 'Organizacja twórczości muzykologicznej', *Kwartalnik Muzyczny*, vii, 25 (1949).
- Mazepa Leszek and Mazepa Teresa, *Šliax do muzyčnoji akademji y L'vovi*, 2 vols. (Lviv, 2003).
- Mazur Grzegorz, *Życie polityczne polskiego Lwowa 1918–1939* (Kraków, 2007).
- Michałowski Kornel (ed.), *Bibliografia polskiego piśmiennictwa muzycznego*, (Kraków, 1955).
- Muszkalska Bożena, 'Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian – niepokorna uczennica Profesora', *Muzyka*, ccxxvii, 4 (2012), 47–70.
- Nowik Wojciech, 'Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian (1890–1938) – w cieniu zapomnienia', *Rocznik Chopinowski*, xxi (1995).
- Piekarski Michał, *Przerwany kontrapunkt. Adolf Chybiński i początki polskiej muzykologii we Lwowie 1912–1944* (Warszawa, 2017).
- Prosnak Jan, 'Lalewicz, Jerzy', in *Słownik Muzyków Polskich*, vol. i: A–Ł, ed. by J. Chomiński (Kraków, 1961).
- Prosnak Jan, 'Wójcik-Keuprulian, Bronisława', in *Słownik muzyków polskich*, ii: M–Ż, ed. by J. Chomiński (Kraków, 1967).
- Smirnow Jurij, 'Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian – muzykolog, działaczka Archidiecezjalnego Związku Ormian we Lwowie', *Biuletyn Ormiańskiego Towarzystwa Kulturalnego*, xlvi/xlvii (2006).
- Suchmiel Jadwiga, *Działalność naukowa kobiet w Uniwersytecie we Lwowie do roku 1939*, (Częstochowa, 2000).
- Weber William, *Conservatoires. iii: 1790–1945*. 1. 'Introduction', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie, vi (London, 2001), 314–15.
- Wójcik-Keuprulian Bronisława, *Melodyka Chopina* (Lwów, 1930).
- Wójcik-Keuprulian Bronisława, 'Stanowisko muzykologii w systemie nauk', *Rozprawy i Notatki Muzykologiczne*, i (1934).
- Zetowski Stanisław, 'Bronisława Wójcik-Keuprulian', *Muzyka Polska*, vi (1938).

**Michał Piekarski** – 20th-century history of Polish musicology and music education; assistant professor at the Institute for the History of Science, Polish Academy of Sciences; e-mail: [michal.piekarski@interia.pl](mailto:michal.piekarski@interia.pl)