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Female Managers of Social Care Institutions in Riga: the Case of Minority Asylums (1918–1940)

Sievietes – pārzines sociālās aprūpes iestādēs Rīgā: mazākumtautību nespējnieku patversmju piemērs (1918–1940)

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Summary

One of the features of the Social Welfare Department of the interwar Riga Municipality was the division of the inmates of social welfare institutions according to national and religious affiliation, which was a legacy of the asylums founded in the 19th century. The article is based on the biographies of three female managers of the Riga municipality's minority asylums for the disabled: Baltic Germans Emilia Tiedeman (1880–?) and Emma Goerke (1865–?) – and also Latvian Orthodox, who managed a Russian asylum, Eizhenia Arent (1871–1939) and their career path to higher positions in the Social Welfare Department of the Riga Municipality. Although 81% of the staff in the Social Welfare Department of the Riga Municipality were women, most of them were employed in lower positions than male colleagues and very few women were managers of children and disabled persons' shelters in social care institutions. Minority women, unlike Latvian women, were even less likely to become managers of social care institutions. The common trend among both Latvian and minority women was that men were more often appointed as managers of children's shelters. For the three women, analysed in the article, the focus on social care work was a continuation of family tradition, most often the work of the husband after his death.

Kopsavilkums

Viena no starpkaru Rīgas pašvaldības Sociālās apgādības departamenta iezīmēm bija sociālās aprūpes iestāžu iemītnieku iedalījums pēc nacionālās un reliģiskās piederības, kas bija 19. gadsimtā dibināto patversmju mantojums. Raksta pamatā ir trīs Rīgas pašvaldības mazākumtautību patversmju vadītāju: vācbaltiešu Emīlijas Tīdemanes (1880–?) un Emmas Gērķes (1865–?), kā arī Eiženijas Ārentes (1871–1939), latviešu pareizticīgās, kas vadīja krievu patversmi, biogrāfijas un viņu karjeras ceļš uz augstākiem amatiem Rīgas pašvaldības Sociālās aprūpes departamentā. Lai gan 81% Rīgas pašvaldības Sociālās aprūpes departamenta darbinieku bija sievietes, vairums no viņām strādāja zemākos amatos un ļoti maz sieviešu bija patversmju vadītājas. Mazākumtautību sievietes, atšķirībā no latviešu sievietēm, vēl retāk kļuva par sociālās aprūpes iestāžu vadītājām. Trīs rakstā aplūkotajām sievietēm pievēršanās sociālās aprūpes darbam bija ģimenes tradīciju turpinājums, visbiežāk tas bija vīra darba turpinājums pēc viņa nāves.

Introduction

In the European democratization process, the development of municipal social care in the late 19th century played a crucial role. The modernization process of big industrial European cities had negative side effects, too. It increased the number of marginal inhabitants, who did not obey social norms and were considered as dangerous to others. Volunteer organizations, such as Christian and Jewish religious charity organisations, temperance organisations, rich philanthropists, various middle class ladies' clubs, were not able to deal with the problems caused by such individuals, because the decentralised model of charity was outdated. Moreover, the practices implemented by central institutions, where marginalised groups were taught discipline and norms to be integrated in urban society, became understood as the best practices to deal with the poor. Only gradually it was concluded that care for the poor was not a matter of private and church initiatives, but one of the basic tasks of the municipality and state. In reality, however, private services assisting the poor were integrated in the public policy (Fejtová, Hlavačka 2017: 12, 15). It is crucial to note that European social care developed from individual charity and only in the 19th century modern, centralised and institutionalised protection for the poor was mentioned in the City Law. For example, in the 1830s the British Law on the Poor postulated that only those poor, who were willing to work in coercion could be financially supported. In the Domicile Act (1862 and 1863) of the Austro–Hungarian Empire it was stipulated that the community is obliged to care for its poor in a village or municipality. Consequently, social care became an essential component in municipal policies and a requirement to establish a modern and socially responsible city.

Riga, the capital of Latvia, was the third most industrialized city in the Russian Empire (1721–1917); therefore, it faced social problems that were common in other European cities. Latvian social policy was developed on the basis of the welfare policy entailed in the municipal and rural laws of the Russian Empire in the 19th century, similarly to most European countries. The City Law was adopted in Riga in 1877. The City Law of Riga also mentioned the municipality's responsibility for its poor (except Jewish citizens, who were not addressed in this Law). In addition, it also implemented the best practices in municipal legislation of Europe due to the influence of Baltic Germans that made Riga part of the West European development in the late 19th century sharing similar social values (Smirnova 2021b). The Russian Empire followed the German Elberfeld social system, where the Baltic German humanitarian voluntary organisations of the social elite pioneered the core modern ideas and played an

important role in the law developing process. As mentioned previously, volunteer organisations and the municipality took care for the city's poor by cooperating. Therefore, the development of social care in Latvia emerged in the cities, was municipalized and assigned to a responsibility of a special department. Social care in the 19th century was administered by the Riga City Council but financed by private organisations.

After World War I, the two most essential aspects of European democratization were (1) establishing new democratic states (Latvia among them) and (2) developing modern social care policies. Gradually, social care was understood not as a charity provided by 'good persons' but as a right of an individual in need (Kuhlmann 2003: 102–103). Social care policy can also be seen as a democracy indicator; therefore it is crucial to investigate the development of the national social care.

In the democratization process in the 19th century, females were important actors because they overtook all practical responsibilities and often communication activities to help their husbands in aiding the poor due to the increase of people in need in industrial urban areas (Walton 1975: 1–3, 11–12, 152; Crawford, Greenwood, Bates, Memel, 2021: 96; Pierson, 2021:106–107). The professionalization of social care is also connected with the female agency – female activists such as French activists Jeanne Deroin (1805–1894) and Pauline Roland (1805–1852), or American suffragette and social worker Laura Jane Addams (1860–1935) or “the British originator of workhouse reform” Louisa Twining (1820–1912) (King 2004: 29–30) and many others, included social issues in their political programmes. Female agents, who fought for social welfare laws, fought mainly for the equal rights and social reforms; however, they were not so active in the suffrage movement for democratic laws advocating women particularly (Walton 1975: 66, 69); however, female employees in social work were agents carrying a lot of social responsibility because they knew the practical management aspects of social care and they tried to solve problems by speaking to males to change the situation (Moller, Paulmann, Storing 2020: 11). World War I shaped the female professionalization in social care – females needed to compensate the men in professions they had limited access to before – mainly medicine and pedagogics (Walton 1975: 91, 167, 227). Practical experience was significant in social care and administrative responsibilities of social work; therefore females were not only accepted, but also needed in these professions. Due to these circumstances, social care, until nowadays, has remained among the professions traditionally connected with females.

Contrary to the fact that social work was created by the partnership of both men and women, female actors historically had a complicated situation in this profession, because not always she “had a voice” in the real policy changing (Walton 1975: 81; Hering, Waaldijk 2003: 11; Moller, Paulmann, Storing 2020: 11). In the 19th century

and the interwar period, female social workers were more significant than male workers, because female employers did almost all the hard and dirty work that male workers considered to be of little value. For instance, male workers were not interested in the issues of mental health of each recipient of social care, nor they understood hygienic matters, etc. However, this did not mean better employment conditions for female social care workers – they were paid less, and they were employed in lower professional positions in social care than male employees with similar knowledge and experience. Also, a male worker, who could change and adopt municipal legislation was privileged (Walton 1975: 105). Such discrimination was internalised by hegemonic values, yet at the same time provided real opportunities for female workers. Moreover, the municipality administration preferred male workers in the role of the administration of the social care institutions. Traditionally, he would have a wife, who would become the household manager. Also, a lot of female workers did not underestimate themselves to be valuable employees and to earn as equal as male colleagues.

The paper aims to analyse the social portrait of female managers of the municipal minority asylums in the multi-ethnic and multi-religious interwar Riga. The social portrait of the female workers will be based on the analysis of their socio-economic status, education and career path in becoming the managers of social care institutions. In this paper the term “minorities”¹ is defined as a nationality-based aspect, referring to all non-Latvians. Partly, this term also refers to the religious denomination; however, in this paper it is of secondary importance, because attention is mostly drawn to municipal and non-church related social care institutions. The author will examine only those female managers of minority asylums that managed asylums in long term, namely, for more than ten years. To reach the aim, three female managers will be examined: Emilia Tiedeman (1880–?), Emma Goerke (1865–?) and Eizhenia Arent (1871–1939). Since this paper aims to reveal the female agency in official municipal social work, the author will focus exclusively on municipal female asylum managers and will not analyse female asylum managers in volunteer charity organizations.

The chronological borders of this study span between the proclamation of the Republic of Latvia in 1918 and the Soviet occupation in 1940. The author will not analyse the situation during the War of Independence (1918–1920). It is important to mention that during the wartime, Emilia Tiedeman, Emma Goerke and Eizhenia

1 Minority in this paper is a complex term that is both ethnicity and religion-based. Minority can also be defined, when a concrete group of people, differing by ethnicity, religious beliefs, culture and spoken language, is identified as such by themselves or others. By such definition, Latvians in the 19th century were a minority not because of the number of inhabitants but because their national awareness was in its early stage. Therefore, just a few of them could actively participate in the cultural, political and economic life of the Riga Municipality.

Arent already participated in social work; only their professional official status changed after the war. In the interwar period (1918–1940), the Riga Municipality took over almost all social care institutions mainly established in the late 19th century. The exception were those institutions that continued to work under the management of private organisations, mostly run by ethnic and religious minorities. There were also some new social care institutions established both by the Riga Municipality and private organisations, such as the municipal Jugla orphanage (est. in 1927) or the asylum in the Bolderāja district (est. in 1927) or the private Jewish asylum *Meišav Zkenim* (est. in 1928). The features were similar to both municipal and private institutions, which continued to run in parallel (both sectors needed funding, professionals and other resources) (Smirnova 2021a).

The field of research presented in this paper is interdisciplinary and covers national history and its development, referring to military, economic, cultural, and ethnic relationships, examining municipal and international policies. Many findings in the paper will open space for future discussions in national history. Historiography so far has been fragmented. The field of research is understudied providing an opportunity for certain mythology to emerge.

One of the most classical books in West European historiography dedicated to the development of professionalization of females in social work was written by Dr Ronald Gordon Walton, a senior lecturer in Social Work at the Cardiff University College, in 1975. The book can be seen as a contribution to the *herstory* studies aiming to reveal the female agency in all spheres of life and examining the development of the professionalization of women in social care from a practical point of view (Walton 1975). Walton's research is very detailed, both from the social worker and social recipient's perspective. However, research is more aimed at social workers, to "learn the good practices" to follow in their work, at times lacking a study of theoretical sources.

Another important source is *History of Social Work in Europe (1900–1960). Female Pioneers and their Influence on the Development of International Social Organisations* (2003) focused on the influence of female social workers and their contribution to the development of humanitarian aid and the professionalization of social work in various European countries (Hering, Waaldijk 2003: 11; Moller, Paulmann, Storing, 2020). As regards the Baltic States, this book contains two chapters on Lithuania, but none on Latvia and Estonia. For researchers, not acquainted with the situation in Latvia, it could lead to a false conclusion that Latvian females did not participate in the national social care development. German professor of education, history of literature and history of social work Sabine Hering is one of the most active researchers in the field of the history of social work. She has also examined the gender aspect in

the history of social work, cooperating with other researchers (Hering, Waaldijk 2003; Hering, Münchmeier 2014; etc.). Hering reveals that female workers not only participated in German social work, but also shaped its history and therefore modernised institutionalised social care is not imaginable without the female social care workers.

The most recent study on the general development of social policy in the United Kingdom is the book by the social work practitioner John H. Pierson, who worked in Cheshire Social Services and after several years started his academic career at the Staffordshire University. Pierson also emphasises the unique female role in the development of social policy arguing that social work developed from gaining the practical skills and experience. To draw a parallel, social work studies as an academic discipline has been only known for some decades. In his chapter *Women Take the Field* Pierson argues that female workers were active fighters for social care reforms, because they understood the vulnerability of the marginals and due to their own vulnerable position in society. He claims that “female friendships, based on shared values” in the late 19th century left an impact on the female status and confidence in social work (Pierson 2021).

Overall, social care studies, especially gender based social care studies, is a topical issue in historical and interdisciplinary research, still lacking a comprehensive and comparative approach. Therefore, this paper will be a starting point to emphasise female minority social workers in Riga in the interwar period. The author offers innovative ideas by examining two understudied topics in Latvian historiography – minorities in social work in Riga and the employment of minority women in the highest positions in social work. The primary sources are statistics and documents from the Latvian State History Archive, whereas academic literature and Latvian press have been used as secondary sources.

Female Workers in Social Care Institutions in Latvia: Introduction to Development of Professionalization

One of the features that characterizes Latvian parliamentarianism in the interwar period was the effort dedicated to establishing various social volunteer organizations. Female activists wanted to participate in all aspects of social life in Latvia, hence volunteer organisations became both an educational and entertaining platform for women. Historically it can be linked to the Prussian Elberfeld social system, which since the 1870s also intended women’s involvement in voluntary social care organizations in industrial cities. Riga was one of the first cities in the Russian Empire, where these ideas were incorporated

(Smirnova 2021b: 122–135; Satka, Moilanen 2011: 43; Hering, Münchmeier 2014: 53–57). In addition, the development of the right of freedom to associations should be seen as a crucial factor in Riga, and especially in the context of ethnic minorities, Latvians being among them in the 19th century (see footnote No 1). One of the first official female charity organizations in Riga, outside the churches and monasteries was Women's Society (*Der Frauenverein*), established as early as 1818. This organization sought solutions for social problems after the Napoleonic War (July–December 1812). The female society was mainly responsible for fundraising. Female members organized knitting classes and cooperated with Elisabethian institutions, namely, orphanages, an asylum for female servants, and a training house for young girls. Another German female institution in the late 19th century was the Young Female Society (*Der Jungfrauenverein*), established in 1842 to help young females in need (Ante, Zeiferts 2018: 53–79; Tobien 1895: 277–292). In the late 1870s, there were Ladies' clubs almost in all social care volunteer organizations. There was also a Female Jewish society that cared for the poor Jewish inhabitants of Riga (*ibid.*). The first Latvian orphanage was the Katrina Orphanage established in 1897 (by Katrīna Dombrovska, 1830–1903) by the Latvian Charity organization (*Rīgas latviešu labdarības biedrība*; however, as the historian of kindergartens Vineta Jonīte points out, it was the first Latvian kindergarten with social functions as well. Later, in 1908, Līvija Mengele (1877–1966) became the head of Latvian Charity organization and started her active social work here. However, the first building of Latvian “kindergarten” was the “Green School”, supported by Latvian entrepreneur and the leader of the temperance organisation Augusts Dombrovskis (1845–1927). The “Green school” is associated with a woman, a long-time director Marta Rinka (1880–1953) (Smirnova 2021b: 131). Traditionally, female charity organisations were aimed at helping mainly other women in need and children, less – at helping adults in need (Zelče 1991: 71–72).

After World War I, humanitarian issues towards children became relevant, like kitchens for the poor and orphanages because the previous breadwinners – husbands, sons, and fathers – had been killed or injured in the war. Therefore, the consequences of World War I led to a situation where many women in the previous territories of the Russian Empire became involved in social work. The so-called merciful sisters/ Sisters of Charity or the Red Cross nurses should be especially emphasised.² Female

2 Russian sociologist Elena Kostina writes that Charity Sisters in the territory of Russia had two directions. First, in Crimea, where the Christovozdvizhenkaya Merciful sisters church was established, the second one was International Red Cross (1863), established in 1867, later became the Russian Red Cross. In addition, these women were taught as merciful sisters, which provided a status in society and trust in the sisters as professional medical workers. However, only women from the upper social class had a chance to become one of the sisters. In the territory of Latvia, it

workers assisted males in the frontlines as well. They needed to learn the military strategy and become familiar with the first aid to help the wounded soldiers and to calm down small children. Also, some women even became soldiers, for example, Līna Čanka (1893–1981).

In the interwar period in all Baltic States, World War I and the War of Independence were catalysts to all social problems in a new modern society. Modern women could obtain higher education and become valued specialists. A modern family model emerged, where both the mother and father were officially employed, and children were raised in pre-school educational institutions. Because of these social changes, social problems became one of the main priorities in internal policies. Social policy was implemented on three levels: (1) state-level, (2) municipality and (3) public organizations. Women in Latvia gained their political right to vote and be elected since Latvia got its independence in 1918, which was earlier than in some other European countries, for example, in Switzerland it was possible only in 1971. However, it does not mean that Latvian women were successful in Latvian Law and politics because patriarchal traditions were still maintained. Another factor was the so-called flexible lists in the election of Latvian parliament – Saeima, as historian Ineta Lipša argues (Lipša 2022). To increase the number of political supporters for Latvian women, the only elected women to Latvian Saeima Berta Pīpiņa (1883–1941) and Emīlija Jurevica (1894–1967) established women's organizations; many of those organizations such as Latvian National Women League (LNWL) / *Latvju Nacionāla Sieviešu apvienība* or Latvian Female Association / *Latvju Sieviešu apvienība* focused on solving social, not political, issues. In Western literature, the connection between the professionalization of women in social work and political agency is quite frequently addressed (Walton, 1975: 91, 256). Female workers, who in the interwar period became professionals and abandoned their roles of housewives of prominent husbands, wanted to be recognized and also to earn the same salary for equal work. Therefore, as Pierson was quoted before, women understood that they needed to unite to have a "stronger voice". Female social workers still depended on political solutions adopted by their male colleagues because they still were seen as "too emotional" to become policy makers and "were reluctant to view the problems through the lens of patriarchy and capitalism" (Satka, Moilanen 2011: 48).

was possible to become a merciful sister from 1879 in Riga and a few years later in Daugavpils. Almost all women taught in Riga and Daugavpils were orthodox Christians. That means that almost none of the Latvian women could become one of the sisters in the late 19th century. National Latvian Charity sisters are linked with Women Relief Corps, established in 1915 and the activity of the Latvian Red Cross in WWI and later in the interwar period (Odina, Salaks 2011; Odiņa, Millere, Circenis, Deklava 2015; Kostina 2003: 83).

An outstanding example is German activist Alice Salomon (1872–1948) – the activist of German female organisations, reformer of social policy, politician and also the one who in 1925 established the first academic institute for social work education in Berlin – *Deutsche Akademie für soziale und pädagogische Frauenarbeit* (German Academy for Women’s Social and Educational Work) (Hering, Münchmeier 2014). Unfortunately, Latvian social policy and education system was not so modern to follow this example because the University of Latvia was newly established at that time. Therefore, the question on the role of female movement organisations and professionalisation of the social work is crucial to understand the education possibilities for social workers in the interwar Latvia (Feustel 2011: 162). The author of this paper defines such organizations as women’s socio-political organizations, namely, organizations that tried to solve both social and political issues. Women tried to be elected in parliamentary and municipal elections through these organizations as evidenced by different researchers (Lipša 2014; Lipša 2022; Smirnova 2016). Other organizations were, for example, religious women organizations, sororities, professional organizations, etc., where members implemented just one main goal and did not deal with the complexities of socio-political issues (Smirnova 2018). Amongst socio-political organizations was Latvian Women Relief Corps (LWRC, Līvija Mengele was one of the members) / *Latvijas Sieviešu Palīdzības korpuss* (LSPK), which was established following the example of the United Kingdom’s Women’s Defence Relief Corps. Unlike other socio-political female organisations, the Corps did not have any nationality or social census. In 1920, when the Latvian War of Independence ended, LWRC established an orphanage for war orphans.

The most active and oldest Latvian national women socio-political organization in Latvia was Latvian National Women’s League (LNWL) / *Latvju Nacionāla Sieviešu apvienība*. It had a section *Mother and Child*, which was linked with two health sections from Lady Pledge missions. There also used to be an organization of children welfare *Mother and Child* / *Bērnu labklājības biedrība “Māte un bērns”* that taught how to examine the health of the child and what a mother must do to improve the physical state of her child. The teaching programme was free of charge and was funded by the Riga Municipality (Smirnova 2018: 29–31).

Another active women’s socio-political organization in the interwar Latvia was the Latvian Women’s Association (LWA) / *Latvju Sieviešu apvienība*, which had the most considerable number of women members and represented themselves as a “working women association.” This organization actively dealt with social issues. For example, it established an institution for unemployed women and established the Green Cross for those who attempted suicide. In the municipal elections of 1931, the organization added childcare related points to their political programme that were missing in the

elections of the Latvian Parliament / Saeima in 1928. In 1931 the programme emphasised the importance of improving the economic situation of the city, as well as the need for reformation of the policy of the Social Welfare Department (*Rīgas Sociālās apgādes nodaļa*) ([Anon.] 1930: 3).

According to the activities of both organisations LNWL and LWA, the leaders of organizations were employed in the Riga Municipality and both in different times of their lives in the Riga Social Welfare Department. The leader of the LNWL, Berta Pīpiņa (1883–1941) worked in the Riga Social Welfare Department from 1925 to 1928. Previously, she had studied for three years in Berlin and was trained to work with defective children.³ Therefore, Pīpiņa was responsible for the management of the work of all municipal social care institutions – orphanages (social care institution exclusively for the poor and/or orphaned children) and asylums (social care municipal institutions for the poor, old and/or people disabled to work) in Riga (Kroders 1928: 252). Another Latvian woman that was active in politics and volunteer organizations was Otilija Riekstiņa (1906–1972), both an active member of LWRC and a member of the “Open door” organization (see more, Lipša, 2022). She worked at the Riga Social Welfare Department from 1921 to 1940; from 1931 until 1943, she was the manager of asylums on Ķīmiņš Street 1 and Telts Street 1 in Riga. The leader of LWA, Emīlija Jurevica, was less successful in politics as evidenced by the fact that she did not have high occupational positions in municipality. Jurevica worked in the children’s summer camp “Baltezers” in the 1940s as a laundry manager (LNA LVVA 2881–2–538).

Women in Social Care in the Riga Municipality: Statistics

Similarly to other cities in Europe, Riga in the interwar period faced problems in the attitude towards female workers in social care. For example, in 1933, in the Riga Social Welfare Department in the Riga Municipality, out of 567 employees 460 were women, constituting around 81% (A.Br 1933: 311–321). However, the majority of those women worked in lower positions than male colleagues (see Fig. 1–8). It can be concluded that in Riga from the 19th century onwards, orphans and disabled people were separated in different orphanages and asylums by nationality and religious denomination, and in the interwar period this principle was still maintained. Historically, it is linked with the modern City Law in 1877 and Public Welfare Law in 1892 that postulated that the city is

3 Term from the interwar period, children with mental or physical illness that needed special care and/or education.

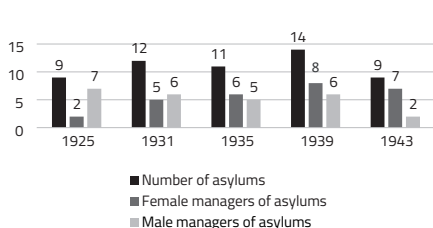


Fig. 1. Number of the asylum managers by gender, 1925–1943.

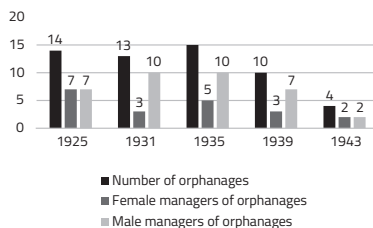


Fig. 2. Number of the orphanage managers by gender, 1925–1943.

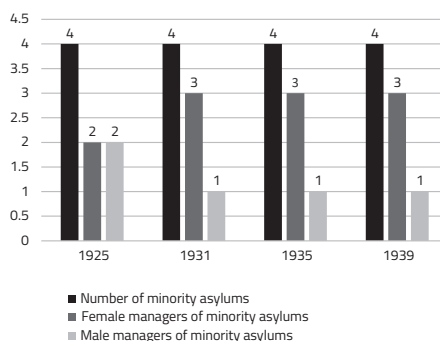


Fig. 3. Number of the asylum managers by gender and nationality, 1925–1939.

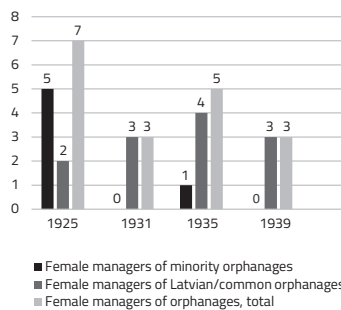


Fig. 4. Number of the orphanage managers by gender and nationality, 1925–1939.

responsible for “its poor” and limited the “poor of the city” only to those registered (Smirnova 2021b: 127). Therefore, access to the municipal aid was limited for the minorities and less for financially stable people. Therefore, Latvians, whose national awareness at the time was still developing, Jews, partly poor Russians (separately Old Believers and Orthodox), also catholic Lithuanians and Poles in need were aided by organizations of their minority. In the interwar period, the Riga Municipality took over the minority social care institutions and the orphanage and asylum residents

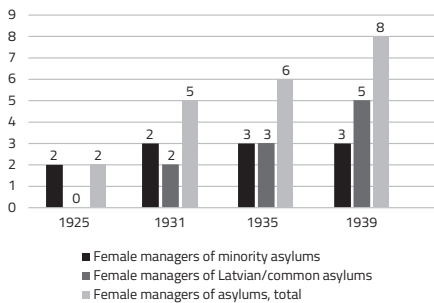


Fig. 5. Number of the asylum managers comparing the number of female managers in minority and Latvian or "common" asylums, 1925–1939.

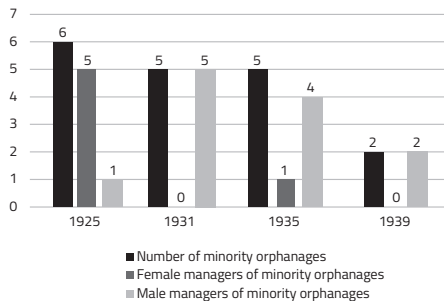


Fig. 6. Number of the orphanage managers comparing the number of female managers in minority and Latvian or "common" orphanages, 1925–1939.

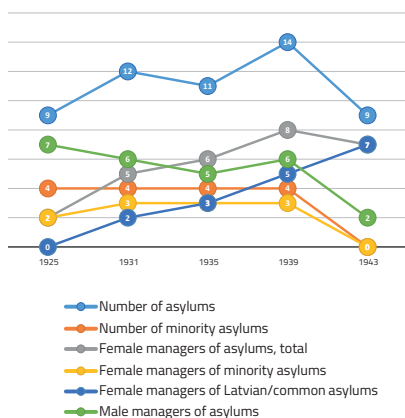


Fig. 7. Number of the asylum managers comparing the number of female and male managers in minority and Latvian or "common" asylums, 1925–1943.

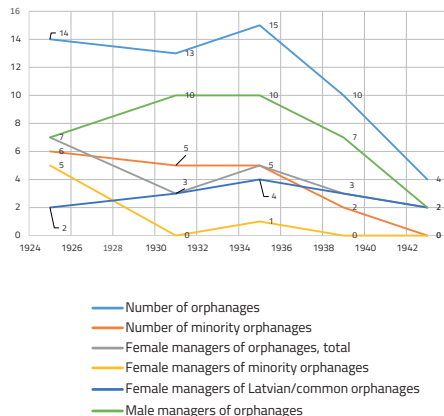


Fig. 8. Number of the orphanage managers comparing the number of female and male managers in minority and Latvian or "common" orphanages, 1925–1943.

Fig. 1–Fig. 8 (Rudzītis 1925: 43, Rīga City Board 1931: 224–229, Rīga City Board 1935: 10–16, Rīga City Board 1939: 11–18, Statistic Board of Latvia 1943: 198–200).

were divided by their nationality and/or religious denomination. Such a multinational factor of Rīga and its democratic municipal policy was one of the characteristics of the social policy of the interwar Rīga.

Interwar statistics reveal that the number of minorities in Latvia in the interwar period differed from the number of minorities in Rīga. The most significant minority

in Latvia were Russians (around 11 %); meanwhile, in Riga the biggest minority was Germans (around 12 %). Jews were the second biggest minority in Latvia (around 5%) and Riga (around 11 % in Riga), whereas the third most significant minority in Latvia were Germans (around 3,2%), whereas in Riga – Russians (9%). Because of the significant number of Germans in Riga, the social portrait of two German female asylum managers is further analysed in this paper.

The choice to study the female managers of the minority asylums is grounded in the controversial fact that female managers of the social institutions were a rare phenomenon in the interwar Riga. At the same time, minority females became asylum managers more often than they became managers of orphanages. Females of ethnic minorities rarely took highest positions in social care in minority asylums. In addition, there were more female managers in minority asylums than male managers in those asylums. For example, in 1925, there were two female and two male managers in four minority asylums, whereas in the period 1931–1939 there were three female managers in four minority asylums. The biographies of these three female minority managers will be examined further in this paper. The number of female managers gradually increased in the interwar period in Riga (in both Latvian and common asylums for different nationalities). The situation with the number of asylums in Riga was favourable, especially in the minority orphanages – there were around 75% of female managers in minority asylums and around 50–60% in Latvian or common asylums (see Fig. 1–8).

As regards the orphanages in the interwar Riga, a common tendency of the orphanages was the monopolization of male managers in orphanages because males were seen as the “strong hand for both genders” of children and for children to be raised following a strong discipline (Smirnova 2018). The same tendency was evident among Latvian and minority orphanages (see Fig. 4, 6, 8).

The biographical research of three female managers further in the text is carried out since a small number of female managers in asylums can be identified. Besides, many females were unable to remain in managers' positions for in a long-term. It can be explained not only by the competition with male social care professionals but also by the lack of time and physical resources because it was complicated to raise children and manage social care institutions. Managing a social care institution was a full-time job, and managers usually lived in the asylums or orphanages they managed, sometimes even with their families. The three female managers analysed further in the text had grown-up children; therefore, they could be asylum managers without sacrificing their family lives.

Social Portrait of Minority Female Asylum's Manager in Interwar Riga

Emilia Anna Tiedeman (Emīlija

Anna Tīdemane) was born in Riga on 10 February 1880 in the family of German Peter Nagler (1847–1881) and his wife Adelaide Nagler (1850–1890). She graduated from the Riga City Girls' School in 1895. One year later, she gained a certificate from Friedrich Froebel⁴ kindergarten female tutor courses, most likely also in Riga. She worked as a governess (19.10.1896–29.12.1903) in baron Samson–Himmelstjern's family. She had a good command of German and Russian and some Estonian and French. Emilia stopped her work as a governess after her marriage with landlord Heinrich Franc Tiedeman on 29 December 1903.⁵ From 1903 until 1905, her husband owned a small farm in the Ogre district, but he had to sell it because of financial difficulties. Heinrich Tiedeman also owned two little Summerhouses in Majori with two and five rooms (LNA LVVA 2881-2-1316).

Emilia's involvement in social care is related to the profession of her husband. From 1906 to 1911, Emilia's husband was a manager of one of the Princess Meschersky manor, but he had to leave because of the illness. In the following year, 1912, Heinrich Tiedeman became a manager in the asylum in Riga, Kuldīgas Street 37, also known as a "Peter house", established in 1910. Emilia was an unofficial manager, helping her husband manage the asylum (LNA LVVA 2881-2-1316). The Tiedeman couple lived in the asylum and were the "soul" of the asylum on Kuldīgas Street before 1921 (LNA LVVA 2881-1-324; LNA LVVA 2881-1-326), when the reorganization and municipalization of the asylums started. They were relocated to another asylum because the asylum on Kuldīgas Street became a Latvian asylum. Neither the Tiedeman couple nor the asylum residents wanted the Tiedeman couple to relocate to another asylum. There were several letters sent to the Riga Municipality, where the residents of this social care institution wrote that "both Baltic Germans and Latvians, did not want manager Heinrich Tiedeman and his Lady to go away" (LNA LVVA 2881-1-325, 60). Also, Heinrich himself wrote an official letter to the Riga Municipality claiming that he refused to become a manager of the German asylum on Matīsa Street because of the bad condition of this asylum (LNA LVVA 2881-1-325, 61–65). Therefore, Edgar Goerke with his Lady became the asylum manager on Matīsa Street (see below). In September 1922, Emilia and Heinrich Tiedeman relocated to

4 Friedrich Wilhelm August Froebel (Fröbel, 21.04.1782–21.06.1852) was a German pedagogue and education reformer who created the concept of "kindergarten" for preschool-aged children to educate and develop their skills and abilities with unique toys, called "Froebel gifts". His ideas spread in Europe, so special education courses were named after him.

5 The couple raised son Valter (born 23.12.1905 in Ogre) and daughter Ruta (born 27.07.1914).



Fig. 9. Emilia Tiedeman.
Latvian National Archive,
Latvian State Historical Archive,
LNA LVVA 2996-18-4618.

the asylum for poor German female teachers on Puškina Boulevard, later Slokas Street, where Heinrich became a manager (LNA LVVA 2881-1-334). The majority of residents were German Lutheran unmarried females (LNA LVVA 2881-1-355). Emilia became the manager (LNA LVVA 2881-1- 336; LNA LVVA 2881-1-337) of the asylum after the death of her husband. She worked from 25 May 1930 till 16 March 1939, when she was dismissed due to Article 14 (negligence in the performance of duties), Article 20 (has not prevented harm to society), and Article 25 (poorly supervised her subordinates or do not follow instructions of the superior) of the disciplinary action of the Riga Municipality. Unfortunately, there is no information about concrete issues Emilia faced. However, at this time, there was no social care institution that did not have issues or conflict situations. The previous order was amended on 1 April 1939, and E. Tiedeman was dismissed from the manager's position at the asylum at her request. After that, she became a manager in the asylum on Brivzemnieka Street (01.04.1939–31.08.1939), and for a little period of time, she worked as an acting manager of asylum (01.09.1939–13.11.1939) on Kalēju Street, before she resigned voluntarily due to the resettlement (*Umsiedlung*) of the German nation to Germany (LNA LVVA 2881-2-1316). Unfortunately, there is no further information about Emilia's life afterwards.

Emma Sophie Goerke (Emma Sofija Gērķe) was born on 27 November 1865 in Riga in one of the most prominent families of Baltic Germans. Her father was a merchant Heinrich Christian Heinrichsen (11.11.1812–1867), and her mother was Emilia von Laurentius (1822–1888). From 1872 to 1882, she studied and graduated from the Glazenap Private School. Emma knew German, French, Latvian and a little bit Russian. In 1885, she obtained a private teacher certificate, and from 1887 to 1886, she worked as a private teacher. From 1890 to 1897, she worked as a secretary in



Fig. 10. Emma Goerke.
Latvian National Archive,
Latvian State Historical Archive,
LNA LVVA 2996-7-13827.

Riga–Orla railway station. On 27 November 1897, she married a merchant Edgar Karl Vilhelm Gustaf Goerke (LNA LVVA 2881-2-417).⁶

Edgar Goerke died in 1925. From 1922 until 1925, Edgar Goerke was a manager in the German asylum on Matīsa Street, the one Heinrich Tiedeman refused to manage. Unfortunately, there is no information about Edgars Goerke's position before the asylum on Matīsa Street. After her husband's death, Emma Goerke became a manager (08.10.1925–17.05.1935) of the asylum on Matīsa Street until she was dismissed by the head of the city of Riga "due to maximum age and lost ability to work". On 1 August 1933, Emma Goerke wrote to the Riga City Board: "I now kindly ask for the consent of the Riga City Board to allow me to work, as I have reached the maximum age, in the service of the city municipality. I have always performed my duties satisfactorily and with the best conscience. My physical health conditions allow me to perform my duties properly. I am a widow, and my husband, an employee of the city of Riga, died without a pension. Because of that, after my husband's death, I started to work for the Riga Municipality. Although I have reached the maximum age, I have not yet received my pension and, in the event of my dismissal, I will be completely deprived of any funds. I have no property, capital, business or other income other than my salary (...)" (LNA LVVA 2881-2-417). In 1939, she needed to resettle to Germany with her youngest son and grandchildren. Unfortunately, there is no further information about Emma's life afterwards.

6 The couple raised sons Hedvigs (18.08.1898–?), Oskars (24.06.1900–1919), Kurts (21.12.1907–?). Son Kurts later lived in Baldone and raised two sons: Eberhards-Oto (08.05.1938–?) and Rolf-Ulrich (24.07.1924–?) ([Anon.] 1939: 4)



Fig. 11. Eizhenia Arent.
Latvian National Archive,
Latvian State Historical Archive,
LNA LVVA 2996-1-15395.

Eizhenia Arent (Eiženija (Jevģenija) Ārente) was born on 27 November 1871 in Odziena, in a family of six children of Latvian Christian orthodox priest Andrejs Ivanovich Kangers (29.01.1839, born in a Lutheran Latvian farmer family in Vidzeme–20.07.1909) and Elisabete (Bistrevska, 19.08.1839–17.07.1908) (LNA LVVA 2881-2-51). Eizhenia’s father Andrejs was highly respected among inhabitants of Riga, especially in the oldest Latvian Orthodox church of the Ascension Church in Riga, where he conducted prayers in Latvian (20 April 1879–20 July 1909) and was a member of the Riga Consistory.⁷ Andrejs Kangers died in his summerhouse in Melluži. He was buried in the Riga Pokrov cemetery (which was a family burial place) near daughters Vera and Olga (died aged four, 1879–11.08.1881), little son and son Aleksandr (1860–17.01.1822, died at the age of 22) (Vidiakina (no date); Gusachenko; Shenikova; Vitols 2019: 383–384).

Eizhenia Arent graduated from the Riga Lomonosov’s Female Gymnasium (LNA LVVA 2881-2-51), which was quite prestigious, but required some funds. On 6 September 1898 she was married to Christian Orthodox priest Jānis (Ivans) Petrovič Arent (17.10.1870–29.08.1911). Jānis Arent studied at St. Petersburg Theological Seminar. From 1897 until 1911, he was a priest in Tukums, where he lived with his family. From 1903 until 1911, Jānis was an editor of *Pareizticīgo Latvijas Vēstnesis* ++

7 A. Kangers received his education at the Riga Diocesan Seminary and the Riga Theological Seminary. A. Kangers led the translation of Orthodox spiritual literature into Russian and Estonian, taught children, also helped orphans and needy children, and engaged in charity. In 1904, he was awarded the St. Order of Vladimir. He arrived in Riga with his family in 1869. Prior to that, he led the Sausnēja church and the congregation in Ērgļi.

(The Orthodox Journal of Latvia)⁸ (Pommers 1940: 79; Gusachenko; Shennikova; Vitols 2019: 92).⁹ The period 1909–1911 was extremely hard for Eizhenia – in 1909, her father died, a year later – her mother and in 1911, she became a widow (LNA LVVA 2881-2-51). From 1911 until 1918, she lived with her brother Jānis (Ivans) Kangers (1871–25.01.1936). Jānis Kangers Jun. graduated from the Aleksander Gymnasium in Riga with a silver medal and continued his studies at the University of Moscow as a lawyer (Prediger 2018: 71, 133). Jānis Kangers lived in Soviet Russia, longed for Latvia and returned to Latvia in 1924, where he started to work in a Civil Division of the Riga Regional Court as a member of the Regional Court. He was an honorary member of the Latvian Association of Judges ([Anon.] 1936: 5).

The first Eizhenia's workplace was at the public kitchen in Petrograd in 1918 where she worked as a manager. She returned to Latvia in March 1918. From 1 September 1919, she started to work as a manager in Russian asylum on Sadoviņņikova Street 20. For nearly 20 years her life was connected with the asylum. She lived and worked in the asylum similarly to the Tiedeman and Goerke couples. It was a standard practice for the municipal social care workers. From 1925 her brother Jānis Kangers lived in the asylum service apartment with Eizhenia (LVVA 2881-1-333; LNA LVVA 2881-2-51). Jānis Kangers was buried in the Riga Pokrov cemetery, and it was told that he was "a true child of the Orthodox Church and was committed to evangelical truths in his life with great honour and modesty" ([Anon.] 1936: 5). Those words could also be said about Eizhenia. Both were raised in a caring Christian family; they were hardworking and cared for those in need. Archive materials show the attitude of Eizhenia toward her position of a manager. For example, from 1919 to 1924, she only had four co-workers to care for 150 disabled and/or old asylum residents (LVVA 2881-1-332).

In 1939 she was dismissed by the order of the head of the city of Riga "due to maximum age" when she was 67 years old. Some months later, on 15 August 1939, she died in Krimulda, and she was buried in the Riga Pokrov cemetery (LNA LVVA 2881-2-51).

8 Before 1906, called *Rīgas Garīgais Vēstnesis* (Spiritual Journal of Riga).

9 Eizhenia and Jānis raised four daughters – Olga, Marija, Ludmila (she graduated from the Riga State Gymnasium (ex-Riga Lomonosov's Female Gymnasium) in 1928) and Eizhenia (Jevgenija) (in the 1920s–1930s she was a teacher at the Sloka Primary School).

Conclusion

Industrialization and urbanization of European cities led to female participation in charity and social care work. Riga was not an exception. World War I shaped the understanding of female “abilities” in concrete professions, and social care was one of the most significant aspects in female agency. In the interwar period Latvian women already had experience and knowledge in social care work, and almost 90% of the employees at the Social Welfare Department of the Riga Municipality were female. However, the number of women in high positions in municipal social care work was minimal. Female managers of social work institutions (orphanages, asylums) were rare; the smallest number was among minority women. Managing a social care institution was tricky, since one had to have knowledge of economics, bureaucracy, good communications skills, and enthusiasm. Moreover, people in need could often be marginal, nervous, suffering from the post-war trauma, etc. Therefore, female managers needed to solve conflict situations as well. The uniqueness of Riga compared to other European cities and other bigger states in the interwar period was that the Municipal Law of Riga still kept the tradition to stratify the residents of the social care by their nationalities not only by the volunteer organizations but also in municipal social work. In addition, the common tendency was to reduce the number of female managers in the orphanages, which was connected with the understanding of the importance of the “strong hand” and was stereotypically associated with male managers.

The social portraits of three minority asylum female managers that worked for the longest time show that all were well-educated female gymnasium graduates from middle to upper-class families (the same tendency in Europe – Walton 1975: 91, 187). The tendency also reveals that the females were Lutheran Baltic Germans (case of Emilia Tiedeman and Emma Goerke) and Latvian Orthodox (case of Eizhenia Arent). There were no female managers from Slavic ethnic background like Russian, or Polish. Nor it is possible to identify any Jewish female asylum managers. This tendency was connected with the different understanding of the female role and the developing process of social care from Latvian and as well as German society. In the 19th century Baltic Germans were the first, who established social care institutions in the municipality; Latvians incorporated those ideas into their volunteer organizations and continued in municipal work. Also, in all three cases women started their work in social care after the death of their husbands; in two cases, Baltic German Emilia Tiedeman and Emma Goerke, took over the work of their husbands. At the same time, Eizhenia Arent had social work experience as a refugee in Petrograd. All of them had children; however, when they started to work as managers, almost all their lives were connected with the asylums; their adult children had their own families. All three female managers continued to work till they “reached maximum age” in a municipal institution.

In addition, there was a prejudice against women in senior positions in social care (Walton, 1975: 91, 259). Comparing Latvian female managers of the social care institutions in Riga and minority asylum managers, the most significant difference is that in many cases, Latvian social care institution managers were also active members of socio-political female organizations, and a lot of them were also active in politics. As examined in this paper, the managers of minority asylums were not a part of any organization. This paper, however, presents cases only of the municipal asylum, no cases of private asylums are analysed. At the same time, it is possible that minority females were more active in their social, political, or cultural organizations and worked in private asylums of those organisations, that could be a valuable case for further research. Also, the cases of female managers in Latvian and common asylums and female managers in orphanages could be further investigated. The strong traditions of municipal social care were interrupted after the Baltic German resettlement to Germany and the following wartime and German and Russian occupations. Therefore, this paper shows the minority women's involvement in social care and the history of minorities living in Latvia.

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Social Welfare Department of Riga, LNA LVVA 2881-1-337, asylum on Slokas Street 6;
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Social Welfare Department of Riga, LNA LVVA 2881-1-326, asylum on Kuldīgas Street 37;
Collection of passport cases of Riga prefecture, LNA LVVA 2996-1-15395,
passport of Eiženija Ārente;

Collection of passport cases of Riga prefecture, LNA LVVA 2996-7-13827, passport of Emma Gērke;

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