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The Chalk, the Pen and the Podium - Trajectories of Female Intellectuals committed to the Building of a secular School (France, 1880s-1914)

Mélanie Fabre

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THE CHALK, THE PEN AND THE PODIUM
TRAJECTORIES OF FEMALE INTELLECTUALS COMMITTED
TO THE BUILDING OF A SECULAR SCHOOL
(FRANCE, 1880s - 1914)

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Verneuil.**

*He who fights can lose, but
he who does not fight has already lost.*

Bertolt Brecht

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Abstract

This work is at the crossroads between intellectual history, history of education and women's and gender history. Its goal is to analyse the course of life of around ten female public intellectuals as well as their commitment on behalf of secular [*laïque*] instruction. This work studies the period between the enactment of the school laws in the 1880s and the First World War, when the debates around secular school reach their peak in France.

The goal is to analyse how several women become considered as public intellectuals. To do so, it is required to analyse how they get access to learned culture and to study the way they use their educational capital and their professional experience in the field of instruction to express a personal critical opinion in the public sphere. This study will analyse their contribution to the debates when secular instruction is a very controversial matter in a context of competition between secular school and Catholic school.

The Dreyfus Affair plays a role in the commitments of these female public intellectuals because it questions the purposes of secular instruction and popular education and contributes to the rebuilding of the republican political culture. In the same way, the feminist thrust which appears at the end of the XIXth and the beginning of the XXth century encourages these female intellectuals to question the scholastic institution.

This work follows in the footsteps of several women, who were left in the shadow by historians, but who committed themselves in their job as teachers, as well as by taking up a pen to express their viewpoints on controversial matters and, sometimes, by coming to the tribune.

Preliminary remarks

Inclusive writing - feminisation of terms

In affinity on this question with Bernard Cerquiglini, a linguist in charge of a report on the feminisation of trade names and author of a book on the subject¹ we have opted for a broad use of feminisation, but we have not resorted to inclusive writing. We have chosen to favour the "democratic readability of the written word"² We have chosen to give priority to the "democratic readability of the written word" with the aim of making this text accessible to a wide readership, in contrast to inclusive writing, which can be socially exclusive.

With regard to the feminisation of terms and in a gender-historical approach that requires taking into account the gender affiliation of the actors, it seemed essential to us to accept female professors³, female writers, female authors, and other feminised forms of nouns that existed only in the masculine form at the turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries⁴. Furthermore, it was a matter of being consistent with the logic of putting female intellectuals at the heart of the subject.

Secular - secular

In accordance with the usage⁵ the term 'lay' will be used in this thesis to refer to non-clerics ('lay people in the Catholic Church') while the adjective 'lay' will refer to the notion of secularism and will retain this form even when used in the masculine form ('a lay education').

Use of terms not listed in dictionaries

We have allowed ourselves the use of neologisms to make the text more precise and effective, such as - among others - *publiciser* (understood in the sense of "to make public", different, therefore, from "to publish"), *republicaniser*, *fontenaysienne* or *frondeuse* (which designates a collaborator of *La Fronde*), all of which are terms that are easily understandable in context.

Use of acronyms or simplified wording

For ease of reading, we have used simplifications in the text:

- CNFF: National Council of French Women
- CSIP: Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique (Higher Council for Public Education)

1 Bernard Cerquiglini, *Le ministre est enceinte ou la grande querelle de la féminisation des noms*, Paris, Seuil, 2018. See also the France Culture programme *Concordance des temps*, 1^{er} December 2018: 'La féminisation des mots: portée d'une querelle' (Jean-Noël Jeanneney invites Bernard Cerquiglini).

2 Bernard Cerquiglini, "L'écriture 'inclusive', empreinte d'une louable intention, est une fâcheuse", *Le Monde*, 19 April 2021.

3 "The idea of a female teaching body was so little in vogue at the time that the term 'professor' was used in the masculine sense (while there were 'primary mistresses' in the lower categories). [...] How, then, should female professors be called? Un professeur agrégée', which mixes the two principles, is grammatically incorrect. Yves Verneuil, *Les Agrégés, histoire d'une exception française*, Paris, Belin, 2017, [2005], p. 319.

4 Bernard Cerquiglini has verified through the history of language what historians have shown about the exclusion of women from the intellectual domain since the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, periods when language was much less rigid. The gradual exclusive use of the masculine form of address reflects the exclusion of women from prominent professions.

5 See Florence Rochefort, "Introduction. Genre, laïcités, religions 1905-2005 : vers une problématisation pluridisciplinaire", in Florence Rochefort (ed.), *Le pouvoir du genre : laïcités et religion 1905-2005*, Toulouse, Presses universitaires du Mirail, 2007.

- ENS: École normale supérieure
- UP: People's University

And in the footnotes :

- BHVP: Bibliothèque historique de la Ville de Paris / BMD: Bibliothèque Marguerite Durand
- BESJ: Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles (a monthly column by Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben in the *Revue universitaire*)
- *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes* : *Bulletin of the Association amicale des anciennes élèves de Fontenay-aux-Roses*
- *Bulletin des sévriennes* : *Bulletin of the Sèvres Students Association*
- *Bulletin de la Ligue* : *Bulletin de la Ligue française de l'enseignement*
- *Bulletin de la Société libre* : *Bulletin de la Société libre pour l'étude psychologique de l'enfant*

About footnotes

The symbol F/17/ systematically refers to the archives of the Education Department, National Archives.

If different information relating to the same file of type F/17/ follows one another, the file number is not repeated in each footnote. It is therefore necessary to refer to the initial footnote to find the file number.

Similarly, when a source citation is divided into several extracts on the same page, a footnote has not been generated for each occurrence. Therefore, a citation without a footnote is to be attached to the preceding reference.

Family names

Several of the women studied in this thesis change their names when they marry. For the sake of simplicity, the name by which they are best known has been chosen:

- Clarisse **Coignet**: for Clarisse Coignet née Gauthier.
- Pauline **Kergomard** : for Pauline Duplessis-Kergomard, née Reclus.
- Jeanne **Desparmet-Ruello**: for Jeanne Desparmet, née Ruello, who explicitly calls herself Desparmet-Ruello.
- Odette **Laguerre**: for Odette Laguerre, née Garin de la Morflan.
- Albertine **Eidenschenk**: for Albertine Eidenschenk, née Patin. Called Eidenschenk-Patin from the years before the war and in the 1920s and 1930s.
- Marie **Baertschi**: for Marie épouse Fuster (1900), born Baertschi. From her marriage onwards she signs Marie Fuster, but as she became famous before that date under the name Marie Baertschi, and to avoid confusion arising from the constant alternation between her two names, we have mainly used her birth name.
- Jeanne **Crouzet-Benaben**: Jeanne married Crouzet, née Benaben, who explicitly calls herself Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben.
- Anna **Lampérière**: born Anna Yon (after her father), she became Anna Delabrousse on her marriage and used her mother's name (Lampérière) after her divorce.

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General introduction

"A humble teacher

In a letter of April 1899 addressed to Eugène Manuel, Inspector General of Public Education, Marie Baertschi wrote: "Will you forgive a humble teacher the liberty she is taking of communicating to you the reflections suggested to her by your beautiful letter on tolerance¹ ? " In the midst of the Dreyfus affair, the teacher points to the responsibility of the secular school in the crisis that is raging. She explains that, due to a lack of combat, the institution is failing to awaken the critical spirit of future citizens, because of "a state of mind that is too widespread in primary education: we are afraid to make our pupils think". Contrary to what is implied by this letter, in which she adopts a posture of humility, Marie Baertschi is not just a simple teacher. A former student of the *École normale supérieure de Fontenay-aux-Roses*, she was a teacher at a normal school. In 1899, she even obtained the *agrégation* in history, which allowed her to teach in high schools. While preparing for the *agrégation*, Marie Baertschi took to the podium every week in the popular universities that were springing up all over the capital. In September 1900, the newspaper *Paris* described "the so devoted Marie Baertschi, the pulsating soul of our little U.P., whose large illuminated eyes radiate and propagate the philosophical faith that seems to consume her² ".

A passionate teacher, Marie Baertschi used her experience in the field to defend her conception of the secular school in the hot debates of the Belle Époque. A woman of letters, she engaged in numerous battles with the press, which had become a major player in political and intellectual life. A highly talented speaker, she impressed her audiences with her rhetorical mastery and the strength of her convictions. Trained in one of the elite institutions created at the time of the school laws, and holding diplomas previously inaccessible to her sex, she embodied a new generation of women who benefited from the professional opportunities offered in public education and who committed themselves by wielding both chalk and pen, sometimes without hesitating, despite the detractors of "learned women", to take to the podium.

In his 1986 book, Lucien Mercier described Marie Baertschi as "the muse of the popular universities³ ". This expression piqued our curiosity, although it had not yet aroused the curiosity of other historians. Hence, the question that presided over this thesis: by her public visibility, by her presence in numerous debates of the Belle Époque, by the place she occupied in avant-garde political networks, was Marie Baertschi merely a hapax at the turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries? Are there, in her image, other women who step out of their classrooms and

1 Letter to Eugène Manuel, 18 April 1899, fonds Eugène Manuel, MS 1936, Bibliothèque Victor Cousin, Bibliothèque interuniversitaire de la Sorbonne.

2 Royaumont, "Parlement de Femmes", *Paris, absolutely independent evening republican newspaper*, 7 September 1900. The author of the article may be the husband of the feminist Pauline Savari, Louis de Royaumont.

3 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914: éducation populaire et mouvement ouvrier au début du siècle*, Paris, éditions ouvrières, 1986, p. 64. Formula borrowed from Daniel Halévy.

In order to answer this question, it was necessary to look for traces that women might have left in the debates that shook French society at the time, particularly those relating to educational issues, in which women teachers could make their voices heard. To answer this question, we had to look for traces that women might have left in the debates that shook French society at the time, particularly those relating to educational issues, in which women teachers could assert their legitimacy. Where better than in the press to look for traces of a female public voice in touch with current events? It is through the complete analysis of numerous magazines that the central figures of this thesis have emerged⁴.

In search of committed women: the construction of an object that tests the sources

Initially, we analysed pedagogical journals, where the prospect of women teachers taking up the pen appeared most likely. The first of these publications, the *Revue pédagogique*, founded in 1878, was the quasi-official organ of the Ministry of Public Education. It was sent free of charge to administrative staff, directors of teacher training colleges and interested teachers. Less generalist, *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, a monthly magazine created in 1882 by Camille Sée, founder of the Lycées Féminines, was also semi-official. The magazine was widely read by the staff of the women's lycées. In addition to these monthly magazines, the *Revue universitaire* was founded in 1892 and focused on secondary and higher education. Its editorial board included Marie Dugard, a secondary school teacher. From 1909 onwards, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben wrote the column "Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles". Other names emerge from the analysis of these three journals, including Pauline Kergomard, Mathilde Salomon and Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello.

In order to pursue this research, we also studied corporatist magazines for public education staff, such as *L'École nouvelle*, which defended the interests of primary school staff and devoted a great deal of space to pedagogical debates. Many women, including Albertine Eidenschenk and Marie Baertschi, expressed themselves in this journal. To this corporatist and "In the past, we have been considering adding the *Revue de l'enseignement primaire et primaire supérieur*, which plays a central role in debates on secular schools, to the 'socialising' section. However, the very small space left for women in this journal forced us to use it only marginally, as the energy spent on stripping it down proved unprofitable from the point of view of analysing women's voices. Conversely, the *Bulletin de l'Association amicale des anciennes élèves de Fontenay-aux-Roses* (nicknamed here the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*), published from 1894 onwards, has been of great help. It is a link between the staff of the normal schools and the higher primary schools trained in Fontenay. It would have been very useful to compare this bulletin with that of the Sevriennes. Unfortunately, it was not possible to read the entire bulletin of the Sevriennes due to the accessibility of the archives⁵.

4 See the table summarising these sources at the end of this introduction.

This search for women's commitments would have been incomplete without a study of the feminist journals that flourished in the new century. Although it covers different sensibilities, the term

"Feminism" will be understood here as the will to denounce the injustices that weigh specifically on women and the desire to improve their situation⁶. Published daily from December 1897, then monthly from 1903 to 1905, *La Fronde* is a central source of this work. How could it not be, when its annual meeting is referred to as "the festival of intellectualism"⁷ ? *La Fronde* in fact offers itself the collaboration of all those who form the female intellectual elite at the dawn of the XX^e century, and, by its mere existence, "creates a new public identity for women"⁸ . "Militant journalists" and "committed experts", the frondeuses find in journalism a "euphemistic mode of expression of the political"⁹ . Although rather ephemeral on the scale of the 34 years studied here, *La Fronde* is one of the pivots of this work. Indeed, as Françoise Blum explains, "it is the matrix of the feminist press of the first XX^e century"¹⁰ . Other feminist publications, born in its wake, have been analysed. This is the case of *La Française*, founded in 1906 by the former frondeuse Jane Misme. This weekly, which was less radical than *La Fronde*, became the organ of the National Council of French Women, created in 1901. Although it has not been systematically researched, it has provided some valuable articles. The *Revue de Morale Sociale*, a quarterly with transnational ambitions published between 1899 and 1903, was the subject of a systematic study¹¹. In the same vein, *La Femme nouvelle*, initiated by an agrégée and published from 1904 to 1906, brought together educational issues and feminist thinking.

After educational journals, corporatist journals and feminist journals, the fourth category of publication mobilised in this work is that of periodicals whose line is directly political. This is the case of the *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, published from 1902 onwards, which is anti-nationalist, anti-clerical and free-thinking. The journal of the Fédération des jeunesses laïques was born out of the Dreyfus crisis. Adopting a similar line, the journal *Pages libres* was founded in 1901 by a group of Dreyfusards who declared: "We are founding this popular journal as one would found a Popular University"¹² . Closely linked to the *Cahiers de la*

5 The BnF, which has the most complete collection, allowed me to consult a few copies of this bulletin. It then refused all my requests for exceptional access because of the condition of the bulletins. As for the Marguerite Durand Library, which has copies published after 1901, it was closed for most of my thesis work.

6 Definition by Karen Offen, who looks for the common ground between the different sensibilities: 'what they share [...] is the impetus to critique and improve the disadvantaged status of women', in 'Defining Feminism: A Comparative Historical Approach', *Signs : Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, Autumn 1988, No. 14, pp. 119-157.

7 Geneviève Fraisse, "Pionnières", in Françoise Blum, Muriel Carduner-Loosfelt (eds.), "Figures d'intellectuelles", *Mil neuf cent, revue d'histoire intellectuelle*, n°16, 1998, p. 5-8.

8 Sandrine Lévêque, "Femmes, féministes et journalistes : les rédactrices de *La Fronde* à l'épreuve de la professionnalisation journalistique", *Le Temps des médias*, 2009/1, n° 12, p. 41-53.

9 *Ibid.*

10 Françoise Blum, "Itinéraires féministes à la lumière de l'Affaire", in Michel Leymarie (ed.), *La postérité de l'Affaire Dreyfus*, Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 1998, pp. 93-101.

11 On this journal, see Anne R. Epstein, 'Gender and the Creation of the French Intellectual, the Case of the *Revue de Morale sociale*, 1899-1903', in Sarah A. Curtis, Kevin J. Callahan (eds.), *Views from the Margins: Creating Identities in Modern France*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2008, pp. 218-250.

12 "Short statement", *Free Pages*, January 1901.

Quinzaine and *Mouvement socialiste* - which we did not include in this study because of the small number of women writers - *Pages libres* benefits from a better circulation¹³. It was conceived as an educational organ for teachers, trade unionists and workers, who formed the core of its clientele¹⁴. In the eyes of the Belle Époque readership, all these magazines were linked¹⁵. Odette Laguerre, who contributed to several of them, describes the birth of a "ethical movement"¹⁶ "She praised these newspapers as bastions of the republican avant-garde. She praised these publications as bastions of the republican avant-garde.

Finally, a few publications were analysed as the result of discussion groups. This time, the women do not really take up the pen: it is their oral interventions that are reproduced. This is particularly the case in the *Libres entretiens de l'Union pour la Vérité* (a discussion group bringing together intellectuals), in the *Bulletin de la Société libre pour l'étude psychologique de l'enfant* (an association for the reform of pedagogy), and in the *Bulletin de la Ligue de l'enseignement* (an association promoting secular schools). In addition to these discussion forums, there were two congresses initiated by women during the 1900 Universal Exhibition, where educational issues were central, and whose proceedings have been fully documented.

From the study of all these sources, a dozen female figures emerge, most of whom collaborated simultaneously on several sheets and appeared in several discussion groups. This is particularly true of Pauline Kergomard, inspector general of nursery schools, Mathilde Salomon, director of the Collège Sévigné, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, director of the Lycée de Jeunes Filles de Lyon, Albertine Eidenschenk, director of a teacher training college, Marie Baertschi, a teacher at a teacher training college, Marie Dugard, a teacher at a Lycée, and Odette Laguerre, who had little experience of education, but who nonetheless established herself as a specialist in educational issues. Although Jeanne Cruzet-Benaben wrote almost exclusively in the *Revue universitaire*, the central place she occupied there and the number of contributions to her credit encourage us to include her in this group of women whose voices counted at the turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries. The same is true of Clarisse Coignet, who expresses herself only marginally in these sources, but who regularly contributes to the *Revue politique et littéraire (Revue bleue)*, while evolving at the heart of the networks mobilised in the creation of the secular school.

13 7,000 subscribers at its peak according to Christophe Prochasson, *Les intellectuels, le socialisme et la guerre, 1900-1938*, Paris, Seuil, 1993, p. 58. 3,750 subscribers according to Sébastien Laurent, (preface by Serge Berstein), *Daniel Halévy, du libéralisme au traditionalisme*, Paris, Grasset, 2001, p. 61. Compared to less than 1,000 for the other two journals.

14 Madeleine Rebérioux considers that a third of her readership consists of teachers in *La République radicale? 1898-1914*, Paris, Seuil, 1975, pp. 37-38.

15 Dominique Kalifa reminds us that the concept of the Belle Époque, coined in the 1930s and popularised in the 1940s, was not used by its contemporaries, unlike that of the "fin-de-siècle". Historians differ on the beginning of this period (1889, 1894, 1896, 1900) but agree on the end: 1914 (see Dominique Kalifa, *La Véritable histoire de la "Belle Époque"*, Paris, Fayard, 2017, pp. 14, 21, 29-30). On the editorial world in this period, see Dominique Kalifa, Philippe Régner, Marie-Ève Thérenty, Alain Vaillant (dir.), *La Civilisation du journal. Histoire culturelle et littéraire de la presse française au XIX^e siècle*, Paris, Nouveau Monde éditions, 2011.

16 Odette Laguerre, "Le mouvement éthique", *La Fronde*, 2 April 1903.

In order to improve our knowledge of these personalities, the examination of their career file(s) in the archives of the Ministry of Education has proved invaluable. These files provide access to their correspondence with the administration - complaints, conflicts, sanctions - and to their inspection reports, which are very useful for analysing how the administration views its subordinates. The archives of the Education Department also provide access to the debates of the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique, the highest advisory body of the Ministry, into which Pauline Kergomard was the first woman to enter in 1886.

The career files of civil servants open the doors to the classroom, the blackboard and the chalk. The sources that record discussions, debates and congresses allow us to analyse the way in which these women took to the podium as speakers. Finally, the journals show how these personalities took up their pens. It is this triple form of commitment that is central to this work. Some personalities having left behind private archives, correspondence or memoirs, these sources have also been carefully studied in order to try to reconstitute trajectories hitherto unknown to historiography¹⁷.

Most recurrent female names in the fully researched sources

Key to reading: "Is she a contributor to this journal?" or "Does she participate in the discussions of this group? Y for Yes / N for No / (Y) for "Yes to some extent"¹⁸ .

<u>Personalities (ordered by age) → Sources</u> ↓	Mathilde Salomon	Pauline Kergomard	Jeanne D.-Ruello	Odette Laguerre	Marie Dugard	Albertine Eidenschenk	Marie Baertschi
<i>Educational magazine</i>	N	O	N	N	O	N	O
<i>Secondary education for girls</i>	O	N	O	N	(O)	N	N
<i>Academic journal</i>	O	N	N	N	O	N	N
<i>The New School</i>	N	O	N	N	N	O	O
<i>Fontenay's newsletter</i>	N	(O)	N	N	N	O	O
<i>La Fronde</i>	(O)	O	O	O	(O)	(O)	(O)
<i>Social Morality Review</i>	N	O	N	N	(O)	N	N
<i>Annals of Secular Youth</i>	N	(O)	N	O	N	N	N
<i>Free pages</i>	O	N	(O)	O	N	N	O
<i>Free talks (Union for Truth)</i>	N	O	N	N	N	O	N
<i>Free Society for the Psychological Study of the Child</i>	N	O	N	N	N	N	O
<i>Ligue de l'enseignement</i>	O	O	O	O	O	N	O
<i>2nd International Congress of Women's Works and Institutions</i>	N	O	N	N	O	N	O
<i>International Congress on the Status and Rights of Women</i>	N	O	O	N	(O)	N	N
<i>Superior Council of Public Instruction</i>	O	O	N	N	N	O	N
<u>Nob of sources where the name appears :</u>	6	12	5	4	8	5	8

17 The use of private archives has had a major impact on women's history and is common in the history of intellectuals. On the use of these archives and the problems raised, see Philippe Artières, Dominique Kalifa, "The historian and personal archives: step by step", *Sociétés et Représentations*, 2002/1, n°13, p. 7-15.

18 This (O) means that, if they do not write in the journal in question, depending on the case, the personalities are interviewed, or are members of the editorial board, or have their speeches reproduced or their works commented on in its pages. This (O) means that a link can be established between the person and the journal/group.

Intellectual women? The feminisation of the masculine neuter

How can we name the personalities that emerge from this initial work of tracing the sources? It is unsatisfactory to describe as pedagogues women who were selected on the basis of the traces they left in the public space, outside their classrooms. It would also be to relegate them to the tasks assigned to them by the society of the Belle Époque, which were limited to the education of children, and thus to underestimate the political character of their action. It is true that these women were pedagogues, since they made education their profession and thought about possible reforms of teaching methods. But they are not only pedagogues. Given that they belong to an intellectual elite, is it more appropriate to call them scholars? Again, the term seems inappropriate. These women were all trained to transmit instruction as teachers, not to participate in the construction of scientific knowledge as researchers. Nor are they, strictly speaking, women of letters, having no real literary work to their credit. Are they then publicists? If they regularly took up the pen, it was only as a complement to their primary activity. Moreover, the term 'publicist' is not sufficient to show the polymorphous nature of their commitment. In short, the only sufficiently broad concept that can characterise these women in their complexity is that of intellectual. It makes it possible to encompass in the same notion their membership of the scholarly culture, their critical posture and the public visibility they manage to acquire. Used in this way, the term derives from the masculine "intellectual", which, although it existed as a noun as early as the 1880s, added the notion of commitment to its initial meaning of man of knowledge during the Affaire¹⁹.

While the analysis of published sources has made it possible to identify recurrent female signatures, this work has also made it possible to identify the themes on which they express themselves. The diversity of their fields of intervention constitutes an additional argument for designating them as intellectuals: far from limiting themselves to their strict field of specialisation, they invest in all the subjects of society, as the table below shows.

Pauline Kergomard, active on all the subjects studied in this thesis, thus expressed herself both in pedagogical controversies (secular morality, coeducation, the birth of a science of education based on child psychology), on the subject of current political events (Dreyfusism, combisme, socialism, pacifism), in the debates on the status of women (access of girls to higher education, equal treatment, suffragism) and on the place of popular education in democracy (secular patronages, popular universities). Like Pauline Kergomard, a dozen or so women intellectuals simultaneously invested several fields, so much so that they ended up acquiring the legitimacy to express themselves on a wide range of subjects: they went from being experts in education to being critical intellectuals in touch with current political and social events²⁰.

19 Vincent Duclert, "Les intellectuels: un problème pour l'histoire culturelle", *Cahiers du Centre de recherches historiques*, n°31, April 2003, p. 25-39.

20 The notion of the critical intellectual is characterised by the interrelation between knowledge practices and civic awareness in the same individual (Vincent Duclert, "De l'engagement des savants à l'intellectuel critique: Une

Diversity of intellectuals' commitments

Key to reading: "Does she actively support this cause? :

- Y for Yes / N for No²¹ / (Y) for "Yes but with reservations" / (N) for "No but with reservations".

- ? to denote the absence of a position on this issue (to our knowledge).

<u>Personalities</u> → <u>Commitments</u> ↓	Clarisse Coignet	Mathilde Salomon	Pauline Kergomard	Jeanne Desparmet- Ruello	Odette Laguette	Marie Dugard	Albertine Eidensch nk	Marie Baertschi	Jeanne Crouzet- Benaben
Dreyfusism	N	O	O	O	O	?	O	O	?
Combism	N	O	O	O	O	N	O	N	?
Secular morality	(O ²²)	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	?
Lay Patronages	?	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	?
Universities Pop.	?	O	O	O	O	?	O	O	?
Socialism	N	(O)	(O)	O	O	(N)	(O)	(O)	(N)
Girls' access to higher education	O	O	O	O	O	(N)	O	O	O
Coeducation	O	O	O	O	O	?	?	?	O
Education Sciences	O	O	O	O	?	?	O	O	?
Pacifism	?	O	O	O	O	?	O	O	?
Suffragism	N	?	O	O	O	?	O	?	O
Equal treatment	O	?	O	O	O	?	O	?	O

Although the category of intellectual, thought of in the feminine, seems particularly heuristic, the history of intellectuals did not mobilise it until the 2000s, when a few avenues were timidly sketched out. This historiographical field would however benefit from being enriched by the introduction of a new object, that of women, and more particularly women teachers. The concept of the intellectual also offers prospects for renewing the history of education, a field that does not usually use this category. From this point of view, the originality of this work is twofold. First of all, it is a question of bringing together three historiographical fields that rarely intersect - the history of intellectuals, the history of women and gender, and the sciences of education - around the concept of the intellectual, as applied to female actors in education. To do this, it is necessary to mobilise sources that have rarely been studied together. The intellectual production of these women will be compared with the archives produced about them by the Education Ministry, which will make it possible to study their pedagogical practices and their place in the institution. The aim is to reconstitute the three sides of their commitment: chalk in hand on a classroom platform, pen dipped in the inkwell to express themselves in the editorial world and the high voice on the podium in places of debate. The second original feature of this work is that it focuses on personalities hitherto unknown to historiography by tracking them down wherever they have left their mark. The challenge is to highlight the singularity of the paths

Intellectual History of the Dreyfus Affair", *Historical Reflections*, vol 24, no 1, Spring 1998, pp. 25-62).

21 This means that she actively disapproves of this cause.

22 His thinking on this issue changed considerably between the 1860s and the 1900s.

individual while questioning the collective emergence of female intellectuals as a community at the turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries.

The use of the term 'intellectual' during the period under review

The term intellectual, used in the feminine, appears precisely at the threshold of the XX^e century. According to Geneviève Fraisse, the irruption of this word "is as much a real change in socio-historical conditions as it is a designation coming from the outside and a look at these changes"²³. In the Belle Époque, the emergence of a community of highly qualified professionals made it necessary to use the term in the feminine, but it was also the translation of a critical view of this evolution. Feminised, the term intellectual is often the depreciated, even satirical counterpart of the male intellectual. In an anti-feminist article, *La Revue* announced in 1903 the "krack de l'intellectuelle"²⁴. In 1903, in an anti-feminist article, *La Revue* announced the "krack of the intellectual", an American creature who, by dint of trying to compete with men, had demonstrated the "irreparable weakness of the female brain". It must be said that the disapproval that surrounds any manifestation of female freedom is great in intellectual circles. The term '*blue stockings*', used to describe women in British salons at the end of the 18th century, was popularised in France in the 19th century by misogynist intellectuals such as Honoré Daumier - with his series of caricatures *Les Bas-bleus* in 1844 - or Barbey d'Aurevilly - with his pamphlet of the same title in 1878. These authors attacked women who competed with men in the intellectual world. The same happened at the turn of the century, when Han Ryner published *Le Massacre des amazones: études critiques sur deux cents bas-bleus contemporains* in which he attacked several of the female intellectuals studied here²⁵. Annelise Maugue thus considers that "the intellectuals of the early XX^e century, in their overwhelming majority, reject the perspective of gender equality."²⁶, in the image of Émile Durkheim. Even though he had the continuous help of his wife-secretary who edited his manuscripts and corrected his proofs, Durkheim declared that women should be content with emotional functions, since human evolution had predisposed men to intellectual functions, which was reflected in the size of their brains²⁷.

The noun 'intellectual' is thus regularly replaced by a host of mocking synonyms. In 1907, Colette Yver published *Princesses de sciences*, which won the Prix Femina, and a year later, *Les Cervelines*²⁸. These neologisms were intended to condemn a

23 Geneviève Fraisse, "Pioneers", art. cit.

24 See Odette Laguerre, "Is it a crack?", *La Fronde*, 13 June 1903.

25 Han Ryner, *Le Massacre des amazones: études critiques sur deux cents bas-bleus contemporains*, Chamuel, Paris, s.d. [around 1900], 300 pp. See his developments on Pauline Kergomard, p. 137; Louise-Georges Renard, p. 152; Clémence Royer, p. 226; Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur, p. 251.

26 Annelise Maugue, "Littérature antiféministe et angoisse masculine au tournant du siècle", in Christine Bard (ed.), (preface by Michelle Perrot), *Un siècle d'antiféminisme*, Paris, Fayard, 1999, p. 69-83.

27 Joan Scott, *La citoyenne paradoxale, les féministes françaises et les droits de l'homme*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1998, p. 135. See also Christophe Charle, 'Le beau mariage d'Émile Durkheim', *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, vol. 55, November 1984, pp. 45-49.

28 Colette Yver's novels depict the misfortunes that await emancipated women. See Jean-François Condette, "Les

Cervelines" or undesirable women, *Carrefours de l'éducation*, 2003/1, n°15, p. 38-61.

social phenomenon that is becoming more and more apparent. With the same objective, the *Revue des deux mondes*

scorns the 'rhetoricians'²⁹ "soon transformed into "petrolheads and viragos" because of their "cerebral exaltation". The enraged communardes were not far away... In the very Catholic *Bulletin de la Société générale d'éducation et d'enseignement*, Louis Lescœur refers to the new "professeuses"³⁰ ". The feminisation of these terms was intended to ridicule the pioneering women in the intellectual professions. Moreover, as Juliette Rennes writes, although the use of the term "intellectual" is widely attested to between the 1880s and the Great War, "it generally refers to women who exercise professions with a diploma rather than, as in the case of men since the Dreyfus affair, to a political posture of people of letters"³¹ ".

As far as we know, only *La Fronde* speaks of intellectuals in a neutral, even positive, way, using the word to refer to committed personalities who evolve in the scholarly culture. Thus Jane Doria states in the context of the Affair: "By 'intellectuals' I mean not only those of the elite whom antidreyfusism honoured with its sneers, but all women who 'work with their brains' according to the popular expression"³² ". It is precisely because it covers this double meaning that the concept has been retained here: intellectuals are those who make a profession of knowledge and whose voices are heard in social debates.

The history of women intellectuals: a short historiographical review

It is precisely this double meaning that makes the concept of intellectual so unstable in historiography. Christophe Charle explains that "the definitions of intellectuals, now innumerable, oscillate permanently between substantialism and nominalism"³³ ". In the first case, intellectuals are assimilated to all those who exercise intellectual professions. In the second case, they are characterised by their engagement in an ideological struggle. For most historians, it is the combination of these two criteria that is used to speak of an intellectual. For example, Vincent Duclert defines an intellectual as someone who manifests a

This is a "civic and political commitment on intellectual and scientific grounds"³⁴ "Florence Rochefort insists on "the passage from 'pure' knowledge, for private or strictly scientific use, to the public expression of a critical point of view"³⁵ "a formula reminiscent of Kantian vocabulary"³⁶ . Following this logic, the term 'intellectuals' here refers to women who transform their

29 See F. Buisson, "Les femmes qui enseignent et la "Revue des Deux Mondes"", *Revue pédagogique*, July 1897.

30 L. Lescœur, "L'État mère de famille", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, December 1901.

31 Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature, Une controverse républicaine : l'accès des femmes aux professions de prestige, 1880-1940*, Paris, Fayard, 2007, p. 109.

32 Jane Doria, 'Le sport et les intellectuelles', *La Fronde*, 23 March 1899.

33 Christophe Charle, "L'histoire comparée des intellectuels en Europe. Quelques points de méthode et propositions de recherche", in Michel Trebistsch, Marie-Christine Granjon (eds.), *Pour une histoire comparée des intellectuels*, Brussels, Complexe, 1998, pp. 39-59.

34 Vincent Duclert, *L'affaire Dreyfus : Quand la justice éclaire la République*, Toulouse, Privat, 2010, p. 11 (publication of part of his thesis, defended in 2009 at the EHESS, under the direction of Dominique Kalifa).

35 Florence Rochefort, "À la découverte des intellectuelles, à Françoise Pasquier", in Mathilde Dubesset, Florence Rochefort (dir.), "Intellectuelles", *Clio, Histoire, Femmes et Sociétés*, n°13, 2001.

The aim of this study is to turn their educational capital and professional experience into resources for publicly expressing a critical point of view. The aim is to study the various aspects usually mobilised to qualify the critical intellectual, who is defined by his or her academic training in qualifying institutions, by the exercise of a learned profession and by his or her intellectual production³⁷.

Some definitions are thus pushed to the margins, such as that of Michel Winock, who defines an intellectual as "one who commits all his prestige to the service of a cause that is external to him"³⁸. Indeed, as women had few means of making their thoughts public at the turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries, none of them had a notoriety comparable to that of an Émile Zola or a Jean Jaurès: "The social and media dimension that makes an intellectual"³⁹ "Women have no access to the networks of power and influence that guarantee men public visibility. Furthermore, if we were to define the intellectual as someone who defends "a cause that is external to her", we would be depriving ourselves of the figure of the expert, who commits herself in the name of her skills. However, it is very often by virtue of an authority acquired in a field - particularly in education - that women claim legitimacy to speak out. Given the obstacles they face, most are almost unable to engage in areas that are completely outside their control.

The difficulty in clearly defining the concept of the intellectual is evident in the few works published on the subject at the turn of the millennium. In 1998, *Mil neuf cent* published an issue entitled

"Figure d'intellectuelles"⁴⁰ "The focus is on the pioneering women of the Belle Époque who entered the male professions - the first psychoanalysts, lawyers, historians. The personalities studied are less by virtue of their involvement in the public arena than by virtue of their entry into hitherto male domains. Three years later, *Clio, Histoire, Femmes et Société* also devoted an issue to female intellectuals: the focus was then more on committed women, but the Third Republic was not studied⁴¹. Similarly, in 2004, Nicole Racine and Michel Trebitsch directed a work that integrated the gender perspective into the history of intellectuals, but here again, the period between 1880 and 1914 was absent⁴².

It was also in the early 2000s that Anne R. Epstein wrote a thesis on intellectual sociability in the Belle Époque⁴³. This work, which has never been published, covers the period that we

36 "I understand by public use of our own reason that which we make of it as scholars before the whole reading public. I call private use that which one has the right to make of one's reason in this or that civil position." (Immanuel Kant, "What is Enlightenment?", *Critique of the Faculty of Judgment*, Paris, Gallimard, 1985, p. 500).

37 See Vincent Duclert, "De l'engagement des savants à l'intellectuel critique", art. cit.

38 Michel Winock, "L'écrivain en tant qu'intellectuel", *Mil neuf cent, revue d'histoire intellectuelle*, 2003/1, n°21, p. 113-125.

39 Christine Bard, *Les filles de Marianne: histoire des féminismes, 1914-1940*, Paris, Fayard, 1995, p. 427.

40 Françoise Blum, Muriel Carduner-Loosfelt (eds.), "Figures d'intellectuelles", *Mil neuf cent, revue d'histoire intellectuelle*, n°16, 1998.

41 Mathilde Dubesset, Florence Rochefort (eds.), "Intellectuelles", *Clio, Histoire, Femmes et Sociétés*, n°13, 2001.

42 Nicole Racine and Michel Trebitsch (eds.), *Intellectuelles. Du genre en histoire des intellectuels*, Brussels, Éditions Complexe, 2004.

43 Anne Rebecca Epstein, *Gender, Intellectual Sociability, and Political Culture in the French Third Republic, 1890-*

1914, PhD Dissertation, Indiana University, 2004.

is of interest, but does not study the upheaval that school laws represent in the emergence of female intellectuals. Anne R. Epstein is not interested in the figures that emerge from the stripping of our sources. The same is true of Jean E. Pedersen, who has studied the cohabitation of men and women in certain intellectual spaces of the Belle Époque⁴⁴. Anne R. Epstein and Jean E. Pedersen do not analyse in their work the connection between the evolution of the school world and the emergence of female intellectuals, a connection that is at the heart of our work. This correlation between access to diploma studies and the evolution of women's status is more evident in Juliette Rennes' thesis, defended in 2005, on the subject of women's access to prestigious professions⁴⁵. However, while Juliette Rennes focuses on medical and legal graduates, she does not study the intellectual elite of public education - the first agrégées, sévriennes and fontenaysiennes - who also participated in shaping the intellectual world. Moreover, her objective is to understand the controversies surrounding the pioneers rather than to analyse the emergence of women intellectuals, the term appearing only three times in her work⁴⁶.

The concept is not used much more in the history of feminism. In her thesis, Christine Bard uses the word sometimes with, sometimes without inverted commas⁴⁷. The same is true of Laurence Klejman and Florence Rochefort⁴⁸. This usage can be explained either by the desire to show that the word, borrowed from the vocabulary of an era, is full of connotations from which the authors distance themselves; or by a certain unease about the use of this concept in the feminine in scientific works. The term 'intellectual' appears to be an accepted category only to designate certain women who have asserted themselves in the wake of Simone de Beauvoir, who hides her predecessors in her shadow⁴⁹.

To sum up this short historiographical review, it must be said that intellectual women are still an object that historians have not worked on very much. The few works published around the year 2000 that are interested in women intellectuals define their subject in a rather imprecise manner, favouring pioneers over committed women. Moreover, while feminists, writers and the first women in prestigious professions have appeared as embodiments of the intellectual, female teachers have not been studied from this angle. In the field of educational sciences, Françoise Mayeur⁵⁰ Jo Burr Margadant⁵¹ and, for later periods, Loukia Efthymiou⁵² and Marlaine Cacouault-Bitaud⁵³ have worked on the professional identity of

44 Jean E. Pedersen, "'Speaking Together Openly, Honestly, and Profoundly': Men and Women as Public Intellectuals in France in the Twentieth Century," *Gender and History*, April 2014, 26, no. 1, pp. 36-51.

45 Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature*, *op. cit.*

46 We do not count the occurrences of the term in the quotations that Juliette Rennes borrows from the press.

47 Christine Bard, *Les filles de Marianne*, *op. cit.* see p. 427.

48 Laurence Klejman, Florence Rochefort (preface by Michelle Perrot), *L'Égalité en marche: le féminisme sous la Troisième République*, Paris, France, Presses de la Fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1989.

49 See Toril Moi, *Simone de Beauvoir: the Making of an Intellectual Woman*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008.

50 Françoise Mayeur, *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles sous la Troisième République*, Paris, Presses de la fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1977.

51 Jo Burr Margadant, *Madame Professor, Women Educators in the Third Republic*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1990.

There is no mention of women professors, but none of them use the category of intellectual analysis: few singular paths of committed women stand out in their rather prosopographical works.

In contrast to these studies, this thesis looks for profiles of female intellectuals among teachers, at a time when the male figure of the intellectual is emerging and "the identification of the new type of intellectual with the University is self-evident⁵⁴". Thus, according to Yves Verneuil, "the agrégés [...] will become, along with the normaliens, the symbol of these 'intellectuals' hated by the 'nationalists', but valued by the Republican party⁵⁵". While the university is thought of as an institution that is primarily male, the aim here is to show that women graduates from its ranks were also active as intellectuals.

From this historiographical assessment emerges a conclusion in the form of a paradox: while the history of intellectuals has made the Dreyfus Affair one of its essential subjects, this period, which saw the consecration of intellectuals as a socially recognised group, is almost absent from the works that focus on female intellectuals. The few articles that have been written on feminist and Dreyfus activists are almost insignificant compared to the mass of historical production on the men involved in the Affair. Florence Rochefort thus considers that the assessment of the Affaire in terms of women remains almost entirely to be carried out⁵⁶. Without having the ambition of being exhaustive, this work will show the major role that the Affaire played in the trajectory of women committed to secular schools.

The paradox of the Third Republic's educational work for women

If one of the objectives of this thesis is to question the concomitance, or even the causal link, between the school reforms of the Third Republic and the emergence of a new intellectual figure, there is nothing obvious about this connection. As conceived by the actors of the school reform - ministers, deputies, senior administrators, members of the Conseil Supérieur de l'Instruction Publique, etc. - the school system that was born of the Third Republic was not the same as the one that had been created by the French Revolution. -The school system that the regime created was not a school of emancipation: it was conformist in both the social and gender domains. However, with the school laws of the 1880s, the Republic gave women access to more prestigious positions than in the past: after very demanding competitive examinations, they could become teachers in the teacher training colleges that were springing up all over the country, or in

52 Loukia Efthymiou, *Identités d'enseignantes - identités de femmes : les femmes professeurs dans l'enseignement secondaire public en France, 1914-1939*, thesis defended at the University of Paris Diderot in 2002 under the supervision of Françoise Thébaud and Michelle Perrot.

53 Marlaine Cacouault, *Professeurs... mais femmes: carrières et vies privées des enseignantes du secondaire au XX^e siècle*, Paris, La Découverte, 2012.

54 Christophe Charle, *Naissance des 'intellectuels', 1880-1900*, Paris, Éditions de Minuit, 1990, p. 170.

55 Yves Verneuil, *Les Agrégés*, op. cit. p. 128.

56 Florence Rochefort, "Dreyfusisme et femmes nouvelles", in Vincent Duclert, Perrine Simon-Nahum (dir.), *L'Affaire Dreyfus, les événements fondateurs*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2009, p.174-184. See also Françoise Blum, "Itinéraires féministes à la lumière de l'Affaire", in Michel Leymarie (ed.), *La postérité de l'Affaire Dreyfus*, Presses

Universitaires du Septentrion, 1998, pp. 93-101.

the lycées created by the Camille Sée law. These first women to officially acquire the status of teachers in public education were able to train at Fontenay-aux-Roses (staff of the écoles normales and higher primary schools) and at Sèvres (staff of the lycées de jeunes filles). Although this new educational provision for women opened a door to the world of learning, the reformers' objective was not to organise their emancipation. Thus, during a speech at the Lyons girls' high school, Gabriel Compayré, a former teacher at Fontenay, declared: "We are not thinking of making you, ladies, into scholars, pedants or 'intellectuals'.⁵⁷". In the same vein, Henri Marion, a specialist in the education of girls, stated that newly trained female teachers should not write in newspapers, the press being "a form of prostitution"⁵⁸. It must be said, as Anne Martin-Fugier reminds us, that at that time, "the honest woman belongs to the private sphere. [...] An intellectual who gives lectures [is] suspected of being [a] woman of ill-repute, of the sort that one does not marry"⁵⁹. The founder of female secondary education did not seek to challenge this doxa: Camille Sée's objective was to train wives and mothers in secondary schools. Ernest Legouvé, another promoter of women's education who became an inspector of studies at Sèvres, followed the same line: he considered that "women were not made to be statesmen"⁶⁰. He considered that "women were not made to be statesmen" and closed the doors of the political world to them. The same was true of most of the men whose names are associated with the educational work of the Third Republic, including Louis Liard⁶¹, Octave Gréard⁶² and Michel Bréal⁶³.

Among these republican reformers, the only exceptions are Félix Pécaut, Ferdinand Buisson⁶⁴ and Paul Bert⁶⁵ who saw the new educational institutions as a step towards greater social recognition for women. Conversely, their colleagues were unable to think of the category of intellectual in the feminine: the objective of school laws, in their feminine aspect, was not to enable women, through access to learned culture, to participate with men in the life of the nation or to cast a critical eye on the functioning of society. On the contrary, it is to ensure that the distribution of elite knowledge does not lead to a challenge to the established order. As Sharif Gemie writes, "Secular women's education was never intended to be

57 Gabriel Compayré, "Speech at the Lycée de Lyon", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, November 1897.

58 Quoted in Pierre Guiral and Guy Thuillier, *La vie quotidienne des professeurs de 1870 à 1940*, Paris, Hachette, 1992, p. See Nicole Mosconi, 'Henri Marion et "l'égalité dans la différence"', *Le Télémaque*, 2012/1, p. 133-150.

59 Anne Martin-Fugier, *La Bourgeoise: femme au temps de Paul Bourget*, Paris, Pluriel, 2014 [1983], p. 27.

60 Quoted in Joan W. Scott, *The Paradoxical Citizen*, *op. cit.*, p. 115. See also Karen Offen, 'Ernest Legouvé and the Doctrine of "Equality in Difference" for Women: A Case Study of Male Feminism in Nineteenth-Century French Thought', *The Journal of Modern History*, no. 58 (2), 1986, pp. 452-484.

61 See her 1913 speech reported by Marguerite Aron, in "Inauguration and Commemoration", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, December 1913.

62 See Jo Burr Margadant, *Madame le Professeur*, *op. cit.* p. 66 and Stéphanie Dauphin (preface by Jean-François Condette), *Octave Gréard, 1828-1904*, Rennes, PUR, 2016.

63 He refused to call the women's diploma an "agrégation". Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature*, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

64 See Patrick Cabanel, *Ferdinand Buisson: père de l'école laïque*, Geneva, Labor et Fides, 2016.

65 See Florence Rochefort, 'Ambivalences laïques et critiques féministes', in Florence Rochefort (ed.), *Le pouvoir du genre*, *op. cit.*, p. 111-125.

with the aim of emancipating women. The objective of the republican state was more limited: to wrest women's education from the Church, not to build a new female identity⁶⁶ ".

But reality overrode the wishes of the Republicans. According to H  l  ne Charron, "the progressive access of women to secondary and then higher education played an important role in legitimising the presence of women in the intellectual professions and in weakening the widespread belief in their intellectual inferiority⁶⁷ ". Thus, despite their conservatism regarding gender roles, the creators of the republican school offered a minority of women the means to assert themselves as intellectuals and to play a role in the city. The analysis of the trajectories of these 'good pupils of the Republic' who became critical intellectuals is based on this paradox: while the creators of a secular female education were wary of any emancipation through knowledge, a minority of women infiltrated the breach opened up to the world of knowledge to subvert the role assigned to them. By putting the question of education at the forefront of the political agenda, the Third Republic provided a fertile ground for the emergence of a number of female intellectuals. What means did these women use to gain public visibility and express themselves in a resolutely political manner on school issues?

It was from the ranks of the community of high-level female teachers who had been awarded a diploma by the Republic that intellectuals emerged, whose trajectories, although exceptional, can be seen as a symptom of profound social changes, illustrated in particular by the emergence of the new woman during the Belle   poque. Juliette Rennes shows, for example, that the expansion of schooling for girls led to a "progressive disidentification from the bourgeois model of inactivity⁶⁸ ". Female work was no longer just a sign of economic inferiority: it became a means of independence, even of social recognition.

Women teachers were valued as educational professionals by a political discourse that saw them as instruments for republicanising the country. Convinced that they held the future of the country in their hands, Pauline Kergomard declared that "the *profession* of the educator (there is a profession wherever the practice is inseparable from the idea) devours the one who devotes herself to it⁶⁹ ". The daily work of teachers in secular schools is done in the name of a transcendent mission: the Republic. Indeed, more than any other institution, the school is a projection into the future. It is through their long-term teaching that teachers make the Republic exist and ensure its continuity. Seen in this light, the teaching profession

66 Sharif Gemie, *Women and Schooling in France, 1815-1914, Gender, Authority and Identity in the Female Schooling Sector*, Keele, Keele University Press, 1995, p. 146 - "The development of a secular form of female schooling was never intended to emancipate the female sex. The republican state's goal was more limited: to wrest control of female schooling out of the hands of the church, not to construct a new female identity."

67 H  l  ne Charron, (preface by Marie-Rose Lagrave), *Les formes de l'ill  gitimit   intellectuelle : les femmes dans les sciences sociales fran  aises, 1890-1940*, Paris, CNRS   ditions, 2013, p. 18.

68 Juliette Rennes, *Le m  rite et la nature*, *op. cit.* p. 27.

69 Pauline Kergomard, "L'  uvre mutuelle des maisons de repos", *La Fronde*, 14 March 1900.

can be seen as a form of *empowerment* for those who exercise them⁷⁰ since "to teach is to speak with authority, to exercise power over those whom one teaches, in the name of knowledge that one possesses and that they do not possess"⁷¹ .

The "school war": mental universe of the actresses of the Belle Époque and object of research for the history of education

Aware of the central role of the school in the political future of the country, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, headmistress of the Lycée de Jeunes Filles de Lyon, wrote: "the work of education appears to be so important for the future of society that it is enough to make some changes to it and the general attention of the country is provoked"⁷² . It is true that between the 1880s and the Great War, the school crystallised what Émile Poulat called the "War of the two France's"⁷³ "between a Catholic France that was rather hostile to the regime and an anticlerical France that supported the left wing of the Republican party"⁷⁴ . In this great discord, the education of girls and the secularity of instruction constitute the polemical ground in which the commitments of the intellectuals studied here are rooted. For, as Pascal Ory and Jean-François Sirinelli point out, whatever the place and period in which it is studied, the notion of the intellectual "is born armed", its "native environment [being] that of a polemic"⁷⁵ . Historians of the Belle Époque have clearly noted the opposition between these "two France's" which structures political debates and places the school at the heart of controversies⁷⁶ . Andrey Lanfrey states: "While the struggle over inventories is only anecdotal, the fight over schools can be continuous and can take place in all parts of the country"⁷⁷ . This warlike dimension of the history of the school is not an *a posteriori* reconstruction:

it permeates the discourse of the actors and actresses of the time. On the side of the defenders of the secular school, Pauline Kergomard considers that in the "heroic times"⁷⁸ In the words of Pauline Kergomard, in the "heroic days" of the 1880s, "we were galvanised [...] by the war with the poisoned knife that was declared to us, from the

70 Mineke van Essen and Rebecca Rogers, "Writing the History of Women Teachers", *History of Education* [Online], 98 | 2003, online 12/03/2009, accessed 6/05/2011, <http://journals.openedition.org/histoire-education/990> : "empowerment is [...] the acquisition of power, but also a process of learning to access it".

71 Nicole Mosconi, *Femmes et savoir*, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

72 Paule Branzac [Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello], "Laïcisons les Femmes", *La Fronde*, 4 November 1902.

73 Émile Poulat, *Liberté, laïcité, La Guerre des Deux France et le principe de la modernité*, Paris, Cerf, 1988.

74 Patrick Cabanel and André Encrevé summarise the two 'excesses' in this war: clericalism on the one hand, secularism on the other ('De Luther à la loi Debré : Protestantisme, école et laïcité', *Histoire de l'éducation*, 2006/2, n°110, p. 5-21).

75 Pascal Ory, Jean-François Sirinelli, *Les intellectuels en France de l'Affaire Dreyfus à nos jours*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2002, [1986], p. 8.

76 Some speak of a "war of the two France's" (Émile Poulat, Christian Sorrel, Jean Baubérot, Marie Aynié). Others evoke a 'school war' (Yves Déloye, Jean-Paul Martin, Philippe Savoie, Jean-François Condette, Caroline Muller). Rémi Fabre mentions a "cold civil war".

77 André Lanfrey, (preface by Françoise Mayeur), *Les catholiques français et l'école (1902-1914)*, Paris, Cerf, 1990, p. 377.

78 Pauline Kergomard, "À travers l'éducation, l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles", *La Fronde*, 23 September 1898.

the supporters of the Throne and the Altar⁷⁹ ". Since that time, "the warring armies have chosen...the field of education as their battleground⁸⁰ ". Albertine Eidenschenk states that women teachers fulfil "one of the most delicate functions of the state [...] the one that is fiercely contested by the parties; for those who educate the youth are the masters of the future⁸¹ ". Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello finally states that "the child is, more than ever, the object of dispute between these two rival forces⁸² ". The secular school crystallises the political battles of the Third Republic⁸³.

While historiography has highlighted the involvement of men in this school war by popularising the Peguist expression 'black hussars of the Republic', female teachers have not been entitled to this epithet, whose martial character seems incompatible with their femininity. And yet, according to François Jacquet-Francillon, by forgetting that the secularisation of the school fell to female teachers even more than to male teachers, historians committed "a sort of historiographical scandal⁸⁴ ". For, as Michelle Perrot reminds us, "women have been a constant power issue between the Church and secularism⁸⁵ Because, as Michelle Perrot reminds us, "women have been a constant power issue between the Church and secularism", with more girls than boys being raised in the lap of the Church. From this observation, historiography has concluded that the secularisation of education was the result of a primarily male struggle and that women were the natural supporters of Catholicism: relegated to the private domain, women were impregnated with religiosity, while men, in constant contact with an increasingly secularised public space, were converted to the secular idea⁸⁶. Certain facts support this thesis: the strongest female mobilisations, for example in the Ligue patriotique des Françaises, are clearly on the side of support for the Church and the Catholic school. According to Caroline Muller, the reality of the existence of sexual dimorphism in religious practice helped to present women as a group that was committed to the cause of the Church, and prevented historians from approaching them as "possible actors in the contestation of the Church's place⁸⁷ ".

79 Pauline Kergomard, "L'éducation intégrale des jeunes filles", *Revue de morale sociale*, 1900, n°8.

80 Pauline Kergomard, "Quelques réflexions suggérées par la lettre du syndicat de l'enseignement laïque libre", *La Fronde*, 21 December 1897.

81 Albertine Eidenschenk, "Le devoir présent", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1899.

82 Paule Branzac [Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello], "Laïcisons les femmes", *La Fronde*, 4 November 1902.

83 Jean Baubérot declared: "The (French) Republic is secular, (French) secularism is republican. Yves Déloye reminds us that "the enemies of the 'Wench' will not be mistaken: by attacking the school, it is of course the Republic that they want to destroy." ("Laïcité" and "L'École", *Dictionnaire critique de la République*, Paris, Flammarion, 2007, [2002], p. 202-208 and p. 699-704.)

84 *La féminisation de l'enseignement, une histoire de femmes* (exhibition presented by François Jacquet-Francillon), Mélanges de la Maison Saint-Exupéry, Lille, special issue, 2000, p. 150.

85 Michelle Perrot, *Les femmes ou les silences de l'Histoire*, Paris, Flammarion, 1998, p. 276. See also Jean-François Condette, "De la foi catholique à la 'foi laïque'. La religion dans la formation des instituteurs et des institutrices du département du Nord (1834-1914)", in Jean-François Condette (ed.), *Éducation, religion, laïcité (XVI^e-XX^e siècle). Continuités, tensions et ruptures dans la formation des élèves et des enseignants*, Villeneuve d'Ascq, Institut de recherches historiques du Septentrion, 2010, p. 181-222.

86 See Michelle Zancarini-Fournel, "Genre et laïcisation, jeux d'échelles du national au local", in Florence Rochefort (ed.), *Le pouvoir du genre, op. cit.*, p. 33-46.

87 Caroline Muller, *La direction de conscience au XIX^e siècle (France, 1850-1914), contribution à une histoire du genre et du fait religieux*, thesis at the University of Lyon 2 under the direction of Bruno Dumons, defended in 2017, p. 371.

It is on the side of those who contest the place of the Church and who evolve in the free-thinking movement that this thesis looks⁸⁸. Women were then only a tiny minority in the freethought networks: Jacqueline Lalouette considers that they represented only 8% of the membership of freethought societies during the Third Republic⁸⁹. Invisible because of their numerical weakness, women freethinkers are a blind spot in the history of education, intellectual history and the history of women and gender. If, as Joan W. Scott reminds us, in the nineteenth century, "masculinity [was equated] with secularism, scientific reasoning, and independent thought .⁹⁰ ", with freethought becoming a marker of masculinity, the aim is to show that controversies around schools were a way for some female intellectuals to rally the male ranks of secular supporters.

The intellectuals of free-thinking tendencies who expressed themselves in these debates had a very political conception of the secular school. While in 1887, in the first edition of the *Dictionnaire de pédagogie*, Ferdinand Buisson defined secularism as the result of a historical movement of secularisation that had to be concluded by the necessary confessional neutrality of the school⁹¹ For the intellectuals studied here, the secular school becomes the quintessence of the republican programme. It is understood in a much broader sense than its first definition as a school "without God". In the eyes of the women studied here, the secular school must thus embody the republican motto: it is a place for learning freedom through the acquisition of critical thinking in all areas; it is the ferment of equality through the equitable treatment of all children, regardless of their social class, origin, sex and religion, with a view to a more democratic and fraternal society.⁹² and more fraternal society. Although the secular school was not created with this in mind at the beginning of the 1880s, the intellectuals who advocated it defended an emancipatory conception of this institution. They were thus part of the republican avant-garde. Their conception of secularism was also tinged with feminism. It corresponds to an interpretation that Florence Rochefort comes across in certain sources, and which insists on "the emancipatory scope of secularism, [...] considered as an evidence that makes it a guarantor of gender equality⁹³ ". For intellectuals, secularism is inseparable from a promise of freedom for women.

88 Our work is in line with that of Florence Rochefort who seeks to analyse the way in which "the gender variable

operates in relation to secularisation". See: "Introduction. Genre, laïcités, religions 1905-2005 : vers une problématisation pluridisciplinaire", in Florence Rochefort (ed.), *Le pouvoir du genre, op. cit.* , p. 9-29.

89 Jacqueline Lalouette, (preface M. Agulhon), *La Libre-Pensée en France (1848-1940)*, Paris, A. Michel, 1997, p. 93.

90 Joan W. Scott, *The Paradoxical Citizen, op. cit.*, p. 143.

91 Quoted by Anne-Claire Husser, "Le Sébastien Castellion de Ferdinand Buisson : un individualisme théologique aux sources de la morale laïque", in Anne-Claire Husser, Bruno Barthelmé and Nicolas Piqué (eds.), *Les sources de la morale laïque, héritages croisés*, Lyon, ENS éditions, 2009, pp. 84-100.

92 The concept of democracy will be understood here in the definition given by Patrice Guéniffey as "an expectation never fully satisfied": democracy is a dynamic towards ever more equality and justice. According to Tocqueville, it is both a social state and a political regime characterised by equality. In the political order, it encompasses the provisions that ensure the effectiveness of the share of influence held by each person ("La Démocratie", in Vincent Duclert, Christophe Prochasson (eds.), *Dictionnaire critique de la République, op. cit.* p. 155-158).

93 Florence Rochefort, "Laïcité et féminisme, quels liens historiques ?", Jean-Michel Ducomte and Pierre Tournemire (eds.), *Laïcité, Des combats fondateurs aux enjeux d'aujourd'hui*, Toulouse, Privat, 2016, p. 189-197.

The public school was not the only one to embody this secularism in the school world: several free and secular institutions appeared to be pioneers. This was particularly true of the Collège Sévigné run by Mathilde Salomon, where Marie Baertschi taught for a time, and of the orphanage L'Avenir social founded by Madeleine Vernet with a socialist and libertarian outlook. Whether they were active within the ranks of public education or outside it, the intellectuals who defended secularism recognized themselves in the Republic. For them, the term 'secularism' even ends up being confused with republican culture, almost becoming a synonym for it. The sentence of the former Minister of Public Instruction Louis Barthou, pronounced nearly 40 years after the school laws, sums up the position of these intellectuals: "the laws that established the secular school, abolished congregational teaching and separated the Church from the State are the criterion with which republicans recognise themselves": secularism is no longer an attribute of the Republic, but its essence.⁹⁴ Freethinking intellectuals were not the only ones to see the national destiny being written in the school. For example, Madeleine Daniélou, an associate professor who broke with the University to defend the Catholic school, declared: "It is in the field of school that the religious crisis we are experiencing is most acute"⁹⁵. This study on the supporters of the secular school would be incomplete without looking at the intellectuals from Catholic ranks who, like Madeleine Daniélou, opposed the secular school. Through their criticism of this model, but also through the innovations they instituted in free education, some Catholic women contributed to the debate on the school. The analysis of the press at the turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries demonstrates, moreover, that proponents of the secular school and Catholic intellectuals read and criticize each other: the networks of intertextuality in their intellectual production make it necessary to carry out a study that integrates the two poles of the controversy. Thus, although this thesis focuses on women supporters of the secular school, it also includes their Catholic opponents. It will thus focus on Madeleine Daniélou, who established a baccalaureate preparation for girls in Catholic schools during the Belle Époque. It will also study the career of the Viscountess of Adhemar and her friend Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart in order to show their role in the controversy that shook the Catholic ranks at the end of the XIX^e century concerning the education of girls. This step aside in the Catholic world thus makes it possible to nuance "a long historiographical tradition [...] which presents the private teacher as a nun, most often poorly trained and the bearer of retrograde values"⁹⁶ "as Rebecca Rogers reminds us. The intellectuals who are foreign to the republican political culture will be analysed in the way they push the defenders of the secular school to engage in an internal debate. Taking these protesters into account allows for a better understanding of the controversies of the period and a grasp of what was at stake. which makes the intellectuals who campaign for the secular school special.

94 Dominique Gros, "La séparation de l'Église et de l'école (1878-1886)", in Jean Baudouin, Philippe Portier (dir.), *Laïcité, une valeur d'aujourd'hui*, Rennes, PUR, 2015, p. 51-63.

95 Madeleine Daniélou, "La réorganisation de l'enseignement libre, une école normale catholique", *Bulletin de l'enseignement libre*, August 1907.

96 Mineke Van Essen, Rebecca Rogers, "Writing the history of women teachers", art. cit.

1880 - 1914: school, a priority of the new republican regime

The period analysed here, from 1880 to 1914, has a political and institutional unity: the republicans are at the head of the country after the Moral Order and set up a school policy which is at the heart of their concerns. As Mona Ozouf reminds us, "from 1880 to 1914, there is no political success or failure that is not related to this new institution, the secular school⁹⁷". The school laws are presented as the *magnum opus* of the new regime.

The 1880s were marked by the Paul Bert law, which required the maintenance of a girls' normal school in each department (1879), the Camille Sée law, which created the lycées for women in 1880, the foundation of the two higher normal schools of Fontenay (1880) and Sèvres (1881) and the Goblet law of 1886, which provided for the secularisation of public school staff. New opportunities were opened up for women. Some, such as Pauline Kergomard and Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, saw their careers directly accelerated by the new positions that were open to women; others, younger ones, such as Albertine Eidenschenk, Marie Baertschi and Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, benefited from the new study possibilities for girls. It was also in the 1880s that the secular school was placed at the heart of the political debate. Although the first war over school textbooks began in 1882-1883, followed by a second from 1908 onwards, the chronological scans adopted here are less concerned with reproducing the usual chronology of the history of education under the Third Republic than with identifying the landmark moments in these intellectual trajectories.

In this respect, the Dreyfus affair appears as a fundamental upheaval. Some twenty years after the school laws, it demonstrated the failure of the secular school, which was incapable of inculcating republican values. It also revealed the fragility of this institution in the face of the nationalist push. The affair triggered new reflections among many intellectuals on the principle of secularism and neutrality in education, and on the popular education movement that was emerging. Many of them left their classrooms for new educational work, this time aimed at teenagers or adults, in extracurricular initiatives or popular universities. The Affair appeared to be a test of their convictions and an injunction to action. When Albert Thibaudet looked back on this period in 1927, he said of the teachers: "while they were between twenty and thirty years old, there had been the Dreyfus Affair, which was for them, for the class of 1894, what the Great War must have been for their cadets of the class of 1914⁹⁸". However, while the work on the Affair has been largely done by academics, this crisis has never been treated from the perspective of teachers, by looking at the high schools or teacher training colleges. The mobilisation of Dreyfus supporters took place in the context of the rise of feminism, with both movements developing simultaneously. *La Fronde*, created in 1897, marked an entire era.

⁹⁷ Mona Ozouf, *L'école, l'Église et la République, 1871-1914*, Paris, Éditions Cana, 1982 [1963], p. 18.

⁹⁸ Albert Thibaudet (presentation by François Bourricaud), *La République des professeurs*, Paris, Geneva, Slatkine, 1979 [1927], p. 80.

The Universal Exhibition of 1900 and its two feminist congresses also contributed to this feminist push. Educational issues were central, unlike the International Congress on Women's Rights held in 1889, which had not focused as much attention on schools.⁹⁹ Conversely, in 1900, Louise Debor, a specialist in educational issues at *La Fronde*, was obliged to call the congressmen to order: "We are in a feminist congress, not a pedagogical congress¹⁰⁰". At the dawn of the XX^e century, many feminist journals were founded in the wake of *La Fronde* and the mainstream press introduced feminist columns into its pages. As Florence Rochefort writes, "never have feminist analyses [...] been so widely read, heard, debated and supported; never have women found such an effective mode of collective expression as in this period when the word feminism is imposed¹⁰¹". As Christine Bard says, looking back at the Belle Époque from the 1920s, it was the time of the lamented conversions to feminism thanks to *La Fronde* and the great congresses¹⁰².

The double imprint of feminism and Dreyfusism marked the commitments of many intellectuals in the decade before the war. In this respect, the First World War marked the end of a decade of hope. It reshuffled the cards of the intellectual world and left most of the battles initiated in the Belle Époque in abeyance. School issues never regained the centrality they had had in social debates between 1880 and 1914.

A biographical perspective: shifting the focus from institutions to women actors

The ambition of this work is not to rewrite the history of the secular school under the Third Republic. The aim is to include the history of education in a history of political ideas by analysing the positions adopted by intellectuals. This goal can only be fully achieved by reconstructing the life trajectories of the actresses, whether they were teachers, principals or inspectors. The aim of this work is to study the connections between their empirical knowledge, their life course and their public discourse. Such an approach requires us to question the margins of manoeuvre that these women have in their daily lives, since most of them are civil servants and are therefore subject to a hierarchy that is most often hostile to seeing them step out of line.

This approach goes against the historiography devoted to the analysis of the 'school war', presented until now as a conflict between two disembodied entities, the republican state and the Catholic Church, mobilising their school structures for political purposes. In such a reading, teachers are presented as the teaching arm of an entity that

99 See Karen Offen, *Debating the Woman Question in the French Third Republic, 1870-1920*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2018, p. 137. Richer and Deraismes considered in 1889 that the Third Republic had met the expectations of feminists in the field of education.

100 *Congrès international de la condition et des droits des femmes, held on 5, 6, 7 and 8 September 1900 at the Universal Exhibition, Palais de l'Économie sociale et des congrès*, Paris, imprimerie des arts et manufactures, 1901, p. 144.

101 Florence Rochefort, 'L'antiféminisme à la Belle Époque, une rhétorique réactionnaire', in Christine Bard (ed.), (preface by Michelle Perrot), *Un siècle d'antiféminisme, op. cit.*

102 Christine Bard, *Les filles de Marianne, op. cit.*, p. 436.

dominates and instrumentalizes them¹⁰³. Conversely, tracing the trajectories of women teachers and focusing on their struggles, their margin of initiative and their autonomy within the institution sheds new light on the construction of the secular school, which is not only the product of a top-down policy, but a project invested by women actors in the field.

As Xavier Riondet, Rita Hofstetter and Henri-Louis Go write in a book devoted to the pioneers of the new education, the challenge of the biographical approach is "to reconcile structures and the power to act (*agency*), and to situate the actor in his rightful place without too quickly making him a 'social atom' or an exception¹⁰⁴". With this aim in mind, Rebecca Rogers encouraged historians of education to look at the lives of women teachers, pointing out that France is lagging behind in biographical studies of women teachers¹⁰⁵.

Any historian interested in committed female teachers runs the risk of finding fewer sources than if he were studying men, since women evolve in a culture that enjoins them to discretion. The most exceptional female trajectories do not reach the scale of their male counterparts. Through these women, who have hardly been researched, the aim is to discover certain texts that are considered minor in a history of ideas that is rather closed to the fringes and margins. Like the choice adopted by Frédéric Mole in his thesis, the aim is to start from the principle of "the equal dignity of all speakers involved in the debates"¹⁰⁶ "The aim is to project a new vision of the world of education, and to avoid the hierarchies inherited from the history of education through figures. The aim is to shed new light on major controversies by analysing discourses that are usually ignored, and even to discover new debates by favouring an entry through little-known personalities.

The aim of this work is not so much to understand the common conceptions of women teachers at the turn of the century as to focus on the actresses "who stand out, express themselves and act in a critical perspective, who put the school institution to the test"¹⁰⁷". This perspective explains the small number of trajectories analysed. This work will study in detail only ten or so paths, to which will be added throughout the development a few female voices encountered more

103 See Philippe Savoie, "The Original Character of the History of the French Teaching State XIX^e-XX^e Century," *History of Education* [Online], 140-141 | 2014, accessed 31 August 2014, accessed 29 June 2020. <http://journals.openedition.org/histoire-education/2762>.

104 Xavier Riondet, Rita Hofstetter, Henri-Louis Go, 'L'éducation nouvelle: itinéraires et regards croisés', in Xavier Riondet, Rita Hofstetter, Henri-Louis Go (eds.), *Les acteurs de l'Éducation nouvelle au XX^e siècle: itinéraires et connexions*, Fontaine, Presses universitaires de Grenoble, 2018, pp. 7-28.

105 See Rebecca Rogers, "Girls' education: a century and a half of historiography", *History of Education* [Online], n°115-116, 2007, online 1/01/2012, accessed 30/09/2016, <https://journals.openedition.org/histoire-education/1422>: "Another aspect of the republican work that is curiously underdeveloped in the historical production [...]: the biographical approach." See also Mineke Van Essen, Rebecca Rogers, "Writing the history of women teachers", art. cit. Let us therefore advocate that historians of education embrace [...] the biographical revival and that they arm themselves in their approach with the tools provided by gender to create the subjective dimension of the exercise of the profession. See finally Rebecca Rogers, *A Frenchwoman's Imperial Story, Madame Luce in Nineteenth Century Algeria*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2013, p. 12.

106 Frédéric Mole, *L'École laïque pour une République sociale, controverses pédagogiques et politiques (1900-1914)*, Rennes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, Lyon, INRP, 2010, p. 21.

107 *Ibid*, p. 15.

In this context, the aim is both to study the intellectual production of women actors from a history of ideas approach and to integrate elements of their private lives into the analysis from a biographical perspective. From this point of view, the aim is both to study the intellectual production of the actresses according to a history of ideas approach and to integrate elements of their private lives into the analysis from a biographical perspective¹⁰⁸.

The biographical approach also offers the advantage of a different understanding of the geographical framework that is most often used in the history of education and the history of intellectuals. The biographical dimension of this thesis allows us to understand the national context - state school policy, political crises, etc. - and to understand the role of the state in the history of education. - The biographical dimension of this work makes it possible to grasp the issues at stake on a local scale. Many of the women intellectuals evolved in the Paris region, but some of their careers offer a view of the situation in the provinces. For example, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello spent most of her career in Lyon, where the educational issues and the networks in which she evolved were different from those in Paris. Similarly, Albertine Eidenschenk had professional experience in Algeria, Savoy, Brittany and the North of France, all areas where national issues were dealt with in different ways. The geographical mobility of these women intellectuals also led them to go beyond the borders of France. Some, like Marie Dugard, brought back their travel impressions from the United States. Clarisse Coignet undertook several missions to Algeria and the French-influenced eastern zones. Most of the women intellectuals also took part in international congresses: their geographical mobility was exceptional for women of the Belle Époque.

This work focuses particularly on women. Indeed, given the period under study, a comparative work between male and female intellectuals would be fraught with difficulties. Even more than in any other field, in the intellectual world, being female almost eliminates the chances of a woman acquiring the same status as her male counterpart. The asymmetry of words and images when it comes to studying men and women who enter the public sphere demonstrates the specificity of women's trajectories. As Michelle Perrot reminds us, while "the public man, a prominent subject of the city, [...] embodies its honour and virtue, the public woman constitutes its shame¹⁰⁹". In the eyes of the doxa, while the man who exposes himself is the successful one, the woman who shows herself is the one who compromises herself. Here we can see what makes women who enter the public sphere so special in a society that is steeped in such a system of representation.

But the women intellectuals at the centre of this thesis are not the only ones who have transgressed social codes in order to express their convictions and expose their expertise in the public domain. This study could have included many more women involved in education issues. Those who were not active for the entire period under study - those who were not active for the entire period under study - were excluded,

108 On the much renewed debate around the biographical approach, see among others Pierre Bourdieu, "L'illusion biographique", *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences sociales*, n°62-63, June 1986, p. 69-72; Giovanni Levi, "Les usages de la biographie", *Annales. Economies, sociétés, civilisations*, n°6, 1989, p. 1325- 1336 ; François Dosse, *Le pari biographique : écrire une vie*, Paris, La Découverte, 2011.

109 Michelle Perrot, (with Jean Lebrun), *Femmes publiques*, Paris, Textuels, 1997, p. 7.

For example, we have not included women who died before the Dreyfus Affair, a central period in our work, such as the orator Maria Deraismes, the communard Victoire Tinayre, the first headmistress of the Collège Sévigné Joséphine Marchef-Girard, or the inspector general of the asylum wards Marie Loizillon. Also not included are women writers who only dealt with educational issues through fiction or the publication of teaching manuals, such as Augustine Fouillée, better known under the pseudonym of Giordano Bruno, Mme Henry Gréville, Thérèse Bentzon, Colette Yver and Gabrielle Réval. The feminists of the Belle Époque who most attracted the attention of historians were also left out, notably Madeleine Pelletier, Caroline Kauffmann, Lydie Martial, Hubertine Auclert and Jeanne Chauvin. Female trade unionists, often active at the end of our period, have also been left out, such as Gabrielle Bouët, Marie Mayoux, Hélène Brion, Julia Bertrand, Marie Guillot and Marthe Pichorel¹¹⁰. Finally, anarchist circles, which also provided their share of committed women, were not analysed in this study, which focused instead on the opposition between the supporters of the secular school and the partisans of the Catholic school¹¹¹.

Plan of the thesis

Firstly, this thesis will analyse the genesis of the school laws by tracing them back to their roots at the end of the Second Empire, in particular through the trajectory of Clarisse Coignet, who was the link between the two regimes. The consequences of the school reform on the professional and intellectual perspectives open to women will be studied. In particular, the two new women's colleges of education will be examined through the careers of female students who became intellectuals during the Belle Époque, such as Albertine Eidenschenk, Marie Baertschi, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben and Marguerite Aron. This development will allow us to analyse the birth of a common culture among the new graduates as well as the relationship to knowledge that they developed¹¹². It will also be necessary to analyse the debates in which the first female intellectuals belonging to this professional community made their appearance, particularly concerning the form that women's secular education should take in this new regime.

In the second period, which extends from the Affair to the separation of the Churches and the State, the aim will be to study the way in which the Dreyfus crisis penetrated the school, but also the way in which it propelled a number of women teachers into the public sphere. It will look at the involvement of women intellectuals in various popular education initiatives that arose in the wake of the Affair, from lay patronages to popular universities.

110 See Loïc le Bars, *Première Guerre mondiale : le pacifisme des instituteurs syndicalistes*, Vulaines-sur-Seine, Éditions du Croquant, 2015.

111 See in particular Sarah al-Matary, *La haine des clercs, l'Anti-intellectualisme en France*, Paris, Seuil, 2019, on Anna and Amandine Mahé writing in *L'Anarchie* and *Le Libertaire*, pp. 132-133.

112 It will thus be a question of avoiding the pitfall that Vincent Duclert points out among historians of intellectuals: "If the external solicitations [that provoke commitment] have been studied by historians concerned with knowing the involvement of intellectuals in politics [...], the work of thought specific to intellectuals and the forms of their relationship with intellectual knowledge do not yet constitute a central object of their history." ("Les intellectuels, un problème pour l'histoire culturelle", art. cit.)

The third part of this thesis will look at the way in which girls' education crystallises the "war of the two France's" between Catholics and secularists. Starting with the controversy initiated by Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart in the Church's ranks on the subject of women's education, the aim is to study Catholic intellectuals and to analyse the dialogue - or the conflict - that they maintained with intellectuals from the secular camp. The anti-congregational policy played a major role in the emergence of new female figures in Catholic circles. The latter compensated for the disappearance of nuns from the field of female secondary education by creating new institutions that competed with the girls' high schools. Freethinking intellectuals saw this as an opportunity to call for a reform of this institution, which was now in competition with the Catholic establishments. On both sides of the divide between France, women entered the field of female education.

The last part of this thesis will focus on the way in which intellectuals mobilised their expertise to demand a profound transformation of the secular school in the Belle Époque. In a context marked by the birth of a science of the child and by the emergence of debates around coeducation and pacifist teaching, many wished to reform the school in the name of new values, carried notably by the feminist movement. The Belle Époque also marked the blossoming of a "gender consciousness"¹¹³ in the teaching community. In parallel to their struggle on pedagogical issues, several female intellectuals took part in the corporatist and feminist controversies that arose before the First World War around the structural discrimination faced by female civil servants. Several women intellectuals became spokespersons for the entire female teaching profession.

Although this thesis studies the period from the 1880s to the Great War, the trajectories of the women intellectuals studied here go beyond these boundaries both upstream and downstream. This is why this work is framed by a prologue and an epilogue that allow us to follow the four most central personalities in this thesis from their birth to their death. This study also encourages reference to some biographical points accessible in the appendix, which summarise the trajectory of certain women, useful for understanding their intellectual production. The aim is thus to introduce "human flesh"¹¹⁴ into the history of ideas.

In this study, the voices of these women intellectuals will be given pride of place. Teachers, women of letters, orators, these personalities know the importance of words and master them brilliantly: their rhetoric is their identity. This is why we have often left their words bare, in order to savour this language shaped for the struggle.

113 On this concept, see Éléni Varikas, *La Révolte des Dames: genèse d'une conscience féminine dans la Grèce au XIX^e siècle (1830-1907)*, thesis defended at the University of Paris VII in 1986, directed by Michelle Perrot.

114 Marc Bloch (annotated edition by Etienne Bloch, preface by Jacques le Goff), *Apologie pour l'histoire*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1997, [1949], p. 4.

Summary table of publications searched *in full*

<u>Type of journal</u>	<u>Title - Founder</u>	<u>Periodicity</u>	<u>Period surveyed + no. of no.</u>	<u>Features of the magazine</u>
Educational magazines	<i>Review educational - influence of Ferdinand Buisson</i>	Monthly	1878-1914 => 430 n°	Focused on primary education. Editorial: "The Review, as we want it to be, it is in a way a congress (No. 15 July 1882). "Hub of education discussions French primary ¹¹⁵ ".
	<i>Teaching secondary of girls - Camille Sée¹¹⁶</i>	Monthly	1882-1914 => 390 n°	Focused on female public secondary schools.
	<i>Review academic</i>	Monthly	1892-1914 => 242 n°	Focus on secondary and higher education.
	<i>Newsletter of the Société générale education and teaching (SGEE)</i>	Bimonthly / Monthly	1880-1914 => 408 n°	Founded in 1868. Run by clergymen, women and Catholic personalities, dismissed magistrates and staff members of the Moral Order ¹¹⁷ . Purpose: "to work for the propagation and improvement of instruction based on religious education ¹¹⁸ " Focused on the three levels of education. Establishes himself "nationally as the moral director of the resistance to the policy of secularisation ¹¹⁹ "
Reviews corporatists	<i>The New School</i>	Weekly area	1897-1914 => 814 n°	Defends the interests of primary staff. "Advanced wing of republican pedagogues ¹²⁰ "
	<i>Fontenay's newsletter</i>	Quarterly	1894-1914=> 63 n°	Distributed to members of the Fontenaysian Association (teacher training colleges, upper primary schools).
Reviews feminists	<i>La Fronde - Marguerite Durand</i>	Quotidian n121	1897-1905 => 2107 n°	Rather radical feminism - dreyfusard - freethinker Editorial board made of pioneers: "the editorial staff [de <i>La Fronde</i>] represents an Olympiad of 'firsts women', a virtual incubator for new women ¹²² " Appears as a monthly supplement to <i>L'Action</i> , the organ of the National Association of Freethinkers of France from October 1903 to March 1905 ¹²³ .
	<i>The Review of social morality</i>	Quarterly	1899-1903 => 16 n°	Various currents of feminism. Importance of abolitionism (debate on prostitution). Ambitious transnational (Europe).
	<i>The Woman news - Léa Bérard</i>	Bi-monthly	1904-1906 => 18 n°	Feminist reflection + pedagogical issues. Born in the female secondary school (founded by an associate).
	<i>Annals of the secular youth</i>	Monthly	1902-1914 =>	Anti-nationalist - anti-clerical - free-thinking line. Born from the dreyfusism. "Militant secularism ¹²⁴ ". Review of the Fédération des jeunesses laïques: "the most

115 Damiano Matasci, *L'école républicaine et l'étranger*, Lyon, ENS éditions, 2015 (dematerialized resource, Chap. 2).

116 Financed directly by Sée, it survives after his death thanks to his son who ensures its material existence until 1927.

117 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, thesis for the doctorate of the Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris under the direction of Jean-Marie Mayeur, 1992 (digital version produced in 2014 and uploaded online), p. 139.

118 Statutes of the SGEE, 1885.

119 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

Political magazines			170 n°	of left-wing or extreme left-wing youth organisations before 1914 ¹²⁵ ".
	<i>Free pages</i>	Weekly air	1901-1909 => 470 n°	Goal: an independent, non-demagogic periodical + "To fight against Clericalism, Militarism, Capitalism, establishing Freedom of Thought, Peace of Nations, Joy and Dignity of Work ¹²⁶ ". "We are founding this Popular Review as we would a Popular University. ¹²⁷ " Born of Dreyfusism. "Without any aesthetic concern, <i>Pages Libres</i> is presented as a twenty-page octavo format booklet. This austere simplicity [is] in keeping with the intellectual project and allows it to be sold at the lowest price ¹²⁸ ".
Discussion circles	<i>Free talks by the Union for Truth</i>	Series without fixed periodicity	1904-1914	The Union for Moral Action became the Union for Truth: A "micro-collective of high moral and intellectual value ¹²⁹ "Distrustful of any intervention in the political field, it invests the field of school in its debates.
	<i>Bulletin of the Free Society for the Psychological Study of the Child</i>	4 à 6 newsletters per year	1900-1914 => approx 100 no.	Objective: to reform pedagogical practices in nursery and primary education by adapting them to child psychology.
	<i>Bulletin of the Ligue de l'enseignement</i>	Quarterly	1901-1907 => 14 n°	Ligue de l'enseignement created in 1866: the largest republican association. Major role in the establishment of secular schools. Has the support of the republican political world. 1901: creation of a Ladies' Committee.
	<i>Weekly correspondence</i>	Weekly air	1904-1914	
	<i>2nd International Congress of Women's Works and Institutions</i>		A place in 1900.	Group of women who came to feminism through social action. Jewish and Protestant philanthropy strongly represented. Congress brings together 1,200 participants. Gives birth to the National Council of French Women.
	<i>International Congress on the Status and Rights of Women</i>		A place in 1900.	More radical feminism. Gathered 800 people ¹³⁰ . Organised with the support of <i>La Fronde</i> .

120 Mona Ozouf, *L'école, l'Église et la République*, op. cit., p. 245.

121 Daily from 9 December 1897 to 1^{er} September 1903, monthly from 1^{er} September 1903 to 1^{er} March 1905.

122 Mary Louise Roberts, *Disruptive Acts: the new woman in fin-de-siècle France*, Chicago, London, University of Chicago Press, 2002, p. 5: "In short, the editorial staff represented an Olympiad of 'firsts', a virtual hotbed of new women".

123 Marguerite Durand participated in the foundation of this daily newspaper, which appeared from October 1903. *L'Action* called itself anticlerical and socialist. The first issue announced: "Something was still missing from our work, or at least it was not its rightful place. And this something was quite simply the emancipation of women by the Libre Pensée and the Republic. See Jean Rabaut, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Marguerite Durand, 1864-1936, "La Fronde" féministe ou "Le Temps" en jupons*, Paris, Montréal, L'Harmattan, 1996, pp. 86-87.

124 Madeleine Rebérioux, *La République radicale*, op. cit., p. 46.

125 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, op. cit., p. 167.

126 "Short statement", *Free Pages*, January 1901.

127 *Ibid.*

128 Sébastien Laurent, (preface by Serge Berstein), *Daniel Halévy, du libéralisme au traditionalisme*, op. cit., p. 148.

129 François Chaubet, "L'Union pour l'action morale et le spiritualisme républicain (1892-1905)", *Mil neuf cent. Revue d'histoire intellectuelle*, n°17, 1999, p. 67-89.

130 The two figures quoted for these congresses come from Anne-Sarah Bouglé-Moalic, *Le vote des Françaises: cent ans de débats, 1848-1944*, Rennes, PUR, 2012, p. 138.

Prologue: four lives in mirror

In this survey, Pauline Kergomard, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Albertine Eidenschenk and Marie Baertschi stand out from their colleagues by the diversity of the fields in which they are involved. Their careers, which have been little studied until now, deserve to be studied in depth.

Pauline Kergomard is a well-known figure in the educational sciences, but the work on her has systematically focused on her role in the creation of the nursery school, without a global approach to her commitments¹. Her struggles in favour of Dreyfusism, feminism, free thought, popular universities, women's access to higher education, equal pay, secular patronage and pacifist education are almost totally ignored. The pedagogue has been studied, the intellectual has yet to be discovered.

Unknown to historiography until a conference on our part followed by an article published in the *Cahiers Jaurès*² Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, for a long time headmistress of the Lycée de Jeunes Filles de Lyon, was the subject of a "biographical novel" published in the autumn of 2020 by Claire Paul, a teacher of literature at the Lycée.³ As she admits, in this work, the author does not adopt the method of historical research: "My reconstruction of Jeanne, in the many cells of her life that have remained unremembered, is as much a work of creation as of memory and research⁴." Claire Paul has used only a few sources - a biographical note written by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's granddaughter, photographs, a few newspaper articles and the memories of her descendants. She did not use Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's career files in the archives of the Ministry of Education, nor did she exploit her activities at various congresses during the Belle Époque (in Paris in 1900, in Liège in 1905, in London in 1908, in Brussels in 1910, in The Hague in 1912). Nor did she use her articles published in *La Femme nouvelle* and *La Fronde*⁵ The use of a pseudonym seems to have continued to conceal Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello from the eyes of the curious more than a century after the publication of her texts. Claire Paul has only used the first issue of the *Annales de l'Université populaire lyonnaise*, a source that is nevertheless rich in transcriptions of her speeches. The small number of sources used explains why many aspects of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's thought are ignored in Claire Paul's work, such as her fight for equal pay, her interventions on the subject of the baccalaureate for girls, and her relationship to socialism. The work of

1 Five theses have been devoted to him, two of them in French, as well as several articles. Almost all of these works concern the nursery school. See our bibliography, sub-section "Pauline Kergomard".

2 Mélanie Fabre, "Educating for the Republic: Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, an intellectual at the time of Jaurès", *Cahiers Jaurès*, 2020/1-2, n°235-236, p. 115-139.

3 Claire Paul, *Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Le combat d'une femme pour les femmes. Pionnière de l'éducation féminine*, La Ciotat, Des auteurs des livres, 2020.

4 *Ibid*, p. 85.

5 Claire Paul cites three articles that mention Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello in *La Fronde*, but none of the 20 articles she published under the pseudonym of Paule Branzac. For my part, I warmly thank Florence Rochefort for having put me on the track of the pseudonym.

Claire Paul also demonstrates a fragile grasp of the period: for example, the author states that the universités populaires were born in the 1880s⁶ that the school of the Third Republic was founded to "demolish social prejudices"⁷ The author states, for example, that the Third Republic school was founded to "demolish social prejudices", or that the inauguration of the new Lycée de Lyon in 1902 "coincided with Léon Bérard's law [which] abolished the segregation of the sexes in secondary school and imposed the same baccalaureate for girls and boys"⁸ ". There are many errors and the portrait of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello as a heroine is contradicted by several sources. Her trajectory deserves to be re-examined by adopting historical methodology and by paying close attention to her intellectual production.

As for Albertine Eidenschenk, with the exception of very rare mentions in a thesis on the post-war period⁹ and in a book on the education of girls¹⁰ She has not been the subject of more research than Marie Baertschi. Both are unknowns in historiography.

The aim of this prologue is to present these four trajectories in two stages, firstly by bringing together the scattered information on their childhood, schooling and youth up to the 1880s, and then by studying their careers from this pivotal period onwards. In looking at their youth, it is not intended to imply that their fate is predetermined from childhood. It is, however, necessary to study the contexts - family, social, religious, school... - in which these lives are anchored, and the environment in which their intellectual production is constructed. Moreover, the lives of Pauline Kergomard, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Albertine Eidenschenk and Marie Baertschi are closely linked to the implementation of school laws. It was during this period that they joined the Public Education Service and began their careers as civil servants. All of them owed their social position to the positions they were able to obtain from the 1880s onwards.

Given the paucity of private archives concerning them, other sources have been mobilised. In various texts, these women intellectuals evoke their own career: these autobiographical passages make it possible to study the way in which they remember their past. This prologue also integrates sources produced by their colleagues, their hierarchy or their students, in an attempt to de-anonymise their thinking, which will be studied in the rest of this thesis.

Childhood and youth: personal trajectories up to the 1880s

Pauline Kergomard: a Protestant childhood, a Republican maturity

Pauline Kergomard was born Pauline Reclus on 24 April 1838 in Bordeaux, into a Protestant family. Her mother, who gave birth to seven children (only Pauline and her two sisters reached the age

6 *Ibid*, p. 186.

7 *Ibid*, p. 90.

8 *Ibid*, p. 199.

9 Marie-Michèle Doucet, *Prise de parole au féminin : la paix et les relations internationales dans les revendications du mouvement de femmes pour la paix en France (1919-1934)*, thesis directed by C. Bouchard, Montreal, 2015.

10 Linda L. Clark, *Schooling the Daughters of Marianne, Textbooks and the Socialization of Girls in Modern French*

Primary Schools, Albany, State University of New York Press, 1984.

She had a bookshop when she was an adult. She died in 1848, when Pauline was 10 years old. As for her father, he first ran a model school before becoming a primary inspector¹¹. He was subjected to the daily malice of the clergy because of his confession. His administrative file shows this. Thus, on 10 June 1844, Jean Reclus wrote to his superiors: "the parish priest of Podensac forbade the pupils to present me their writing book, telling them: answer that you are Catholics and that you do not want to be subjected to the inspection of a Protestant¹²." Disputes with members of the clergy increased, particularly with Cardinal Donnet, so much so that Jean Reclus was forced to leave his post: "Mrs Reclus and I are going back to Bordeaux, it must be shown to everyone that we are giving in to the hatred of the clergy¹³". Pauline Kergomard, who was to suffer attacks like her father, paid tribute to him in 1898 and claimed his heritage in an article in *La Fronde*: "The compulsory schooling law, for which my father campaigned half a century ago and towards which all my entourage tended at the time when I began to distinguish words in conversations, this compulsory schooling law is a conquest of the Republic, and had the Republic only done that, we would still be proud to be republicans¹⁴."



Pauline Kergomard, date inconnue

As a teenager, Pauline Kergomard was sent to the boarding school her aunt ran in Orthez. There she rubbed shoulders with her cousins - Zéline Reclus had 14 children, including Élie and Élisée Reclus - and was educated among the 40 pupils in the school. Her uncle, Jacques Reclus, was a pastor, which explains why Pauline Kergomard knew the Bible so well¹⁵. This period does not leave her with good memories. In 1906, she recalls her "three years in prison in Orthez¹⁶". After that, she studied for two years at a teacher training college from which she graduated at the age of 18. From then on, she gave private lessons because she refused to enter the public education system, for

not having to swear an oath to the emperor¹⁷. It was at this time that she met Charles Pellissier, a Catholic converted to Protestantism who founded the first liberal church in Bordeaux. Through her contact with him, she evolved towards a less dogmatic faith, before detaching herself from it in adulthood, without ceasing to present herself as "an old Huguenot¹⁸".

11 See letter from P. Kergomard to the Minister of Public Education, 13/03/1877, career file, F/17/23588/B.

12 Report of 10 June 1844, Jean Reclus file, liasse 65, AD de la Gironde, quoted by Micheline Vincent-Nkoulou, *Pauline Kergomard (1838-1925) ou la grandeur civique: figure absente, figure présente*, thesis at the University of Rouen directed by Jean Houssaye, 2005, p. 24.

13 Quoted in *Ibid.*

14 Pauline Kergomard, "Through education: elementary primary education. L'obligation scolaire", *La Fronde*, 16 April 1898.

15 She quotes it regularly, as in 'A meeting of trainees at the teacher training college in Limoges', *Revue pédagogique*, December 1894.

16 Letter to one of his sons, 3 December 1906. See Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard*, Rodez, Fil d'Ariane éditeur, 2000, p. 146.

17 See Hélène Sarrazin, *Élisée Reclus ou la passion du monde*, Paris, la Découverte, 1985, p. 59.

18 Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.* p. 12-13.

It was through her sister Noémie, who was married to their cousin Élie Reclus, that Pauline Kergomard met the man who was to become her husband a few years later in Paris. Jules Duplessis Kergomard, 16 years older than her, took part, like the Reclus brothers, in the resistance to Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte's coup d'état, and had to go into exile in Belgium. He even took part in the Expedition of the Thousand, led by Garibaldi to take the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies from the Bourbons. Fascinated by this free-thinking republican, Pauline Kergomard married him in 1863, to the great displeasure of her father, who declared: "I will not go to Paris, my heart is too full of bitterness to make this trip and witness the moral and religious death of a child who has taken advantage of the freedom we granted her to turn it against herself and run headlong into a dead end.¹⁹ " From this union, a first child was born in 1865, Joseph Abraham, whose first names paid tribute to Garibaldi and Lincoln. He lived only one month. A year later, Pauline Kergomard gave birth to a second boy, whose godmother was André Léo. The newborn bore the same first names as his elder son, with the addition of a third, Georges, in honour of Washington.

Pauline Kergomard did not stop at this manifestation of republicanism in the middle of the Second Empire. In 1869, she sent a contribution of one franc to the *Rappel* for a subscription supported by Michelet and Quinet to allow the release of two soldiers who had been punished for attending a public meeting²⁰. In such a political context, Pauline Kergomard still refused to work in the ranks of Public Instruction. *The Figaro* of 7 October 1868 announced that she had just founded a school for young ladies for the girls of the bourgeoisie. Her aim was to provide them with an education "strong enough to enable them to understand all the major issues, to discuss them if necessary and above all [...] to make them suitable for the professions²¹ ". Aware of the public's reluctance to accept such a project, Pauline Kergomard made it clear that she was committed to "only masculinising education", promising not to divert young girls from their female destiny. Her school was only a short-lived success: most of her pupils, of foreign origin, did not return after the war against Prussia and the siege of Paris²².

In 1870, Pauline Kergomard gave birth to her third and last child, simply named Jean. His godfather was Aristide Rey, a future communard, and his godmother Julie Toussaint, an activist in the Ligue de l'enseignement and general secretary of the Œuvre des écoles d'Élisa Lemonnier. In a lecture given in 1881, Pauline Kergomard recalled Jean's birth: "At that time, I was living on a lost cape at the tip of Brittany... It was impossible to return to Paris, where the civil war was raging²³... " Although 1870 marked the return of the Republic, this did not open up new opportunities for Pauline Kergomard. Indeed, after

19 Letter from Jean Reclus to his son-in-law Laurand, 28 September 1863, quoted in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.*

20 See Pauline Kergomard's contribution to the list published on 6 December 1869 in *Le Rappel*. To read the texts by Michelet and Quinet, see the editions of 26 November and 4 December.

21 Jules Richard, "Chronique de Paris", *Le Figaro*, 7 October 1868.

22 Letter from an inspector to the Minister about Pauline Kergomard, 8 April 1878, F/17/23588/B.

23 Pauline Kergomard, *Quelques mots d'hygiène scolaire*, brochure of a conference held on 25 May 1881, Montauban, n.d., 16 p., p. 12.

Having been an opponent of the Second Empire, she became an opponent of the Moral Order. In 1877 she approached the radical-socialist deputy Édouard Lockroy for help:

I have just written a small volume of talks on natural history, for the use of very small children. [...] Mr. Fischbacher, to whom I entrusted my manuscript, is very willing to publish it; only, as I do not have the ministerial stamp which would have opened the doors of the schools to my book, and as I would never have it under any moral order (I am a Miss Reclus, and my husband is a former proscriber), he asks me to ensure the placement of a few hundred copies at one franc. I am very anxious that this volume should be published; for some years now I have been struggling desperately to prevent my family from going under. [...] I have come to ask you to use your influence on my behalf. [...] I know that it is horrible to ask this of you, for a work that you do not know; that I should have arrived with "referees" but I preferred to give you, as a guarantee, my name which assures you that my work was conscientious²⁴.

Pauline Kergomard struggles to keep her family from going under because she works alone. According to one of her sons, she sorts her papers in the dining room while her husband daydreams in an empty office²⁵. It was the end of the Moral Order - electoral victories for the Republicans from 1877 onwards and the resignation of Mac-Mahon in 1879 - that opened the doors of the Public Education system to Pauline Kergomard and gave her financial security.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello: a pioneer in girls' education before the Ferry laws

Pauline Kergomard was born into a Protestant and republican environment, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was brought up in a Catholicism mixed with the Ancien Régime. Her mother, Edma Lostie de Kerhor, was the daughter of a monarchist who had supported Cadoudal during the Chouans revolt, and who was arrested in 1804 for having participated in a conspiracy to assassinate Napoleon²⁶. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's mother, a descendant of this destitute noble family, married a commoner, Alphonse Ruello, a mathematics teacher. However, it was in Issoire that Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was born, the third of the couple's four daughters, on 25 October 1847. The principal of the Issoire college where Alphonse Ruello worked and the parish vicar are listed as witnesses on her birth certificate. It must be said that Alphonse Ruello was a fervent Catholic. His inspector declared during the year 1848-1849 that he was "too ardent in his piety²⁷" so much so that it was feared that he "would go too far in geometry in his ideas

²⁴ Letter from Pauline Kergomard to Édouard Lockroy, 26 November 1877, NAF 25162.

²⁵ Anecdote reported by Hélène Sarrazin, *Élisée Reclus ou la passion du monde*, *op. cit.*

²⁶ Claire Paul, *Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Le combat d'une femme pour les femmes*, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

²⁷ Report for the year 1848-1849, Alphonse Ruello's career file, F/17/21675.

metaphysics that would alter the mathematical purity of his teaching²⁸ ". In 1851, when Jeanne was four years old, her mother died a few days after her fourth birth. Alphonse could not manage his four daughters alone, who were educated by their maternal family in the West. In 1852, he wrote to the administration:

Widowed two years ago, with no other fortune than a salary of 1300 francs [...], I have [seen] my four daughters leave their father's home to go and ask their mother's parents for the bread of hospitality; but the most generous souls grow weary, and if the University which I have served for 16 years [...] does not grant me, out of humanity, a better position, I am very much afraid to see my four daughters die of misery near me²⁹.

Little Jeanne was brought up away from her father, who, in addition to his financial difficulties, lost his mind in 1860, when she was 13 years old³⁰. It seems that she spent her childhood in Bordeaux. In any case, it was in this city that she began teaching in 1866, when she was 19 years old, after having obtained the brevet de capacité³¹. She worked at the Cours Ruello, founded by her elder sister, Julie, who was already working with Marie, the second Ruello daughter. That same year, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello also enrolled at the Cours Saugeon, an establishment founded by an opponent of the 1851 coup d'état with the aim of providing secondary education for young girls³². She took courses in literature, history, geography and geometry. Four years later, she was recruited to the Saugeon course as a teacher³³. In 1872, the Saugeon course was taken over by her sister Marie. Jeanne only stayed for one more year: she was entrusted by the town with the foundation of a higher and professional school for young girls, the forerunner of the higher primary schools set up by the Republic to offer further education to working class girls. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was then 26 years old. In the eyes of the municipality, "no one [was] better qualified [than her] to fulfil the important functions to which she [was] called³⁴ "as a "daughter of a university professor [and] former student of the Saujon course [*sic*].

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello herself organised the programme of this new type of school, which rapidly prospered. In December 1873, 56 young girls applied. Three years later, the school had more than 200 pupils who studied accounting, English, German, silk and porcelain painting, trimmings, embroidery, lingerie, artificial flower making, etc. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello began with three assistants and the voluntary help of one of her sisters, who taught music. She herself taught history and literature.

28 Report of the General Inspection of 1851.

29 Letter of 9 September 1852 to the Ministry of Public Education.

30 Letter to the administration from Alphonse Ruello's second wife, 3 February 1863.

31 See her career file where she is presented as a free teacher in Bordeaux from 1866 to 1870, F/17/22067.

32 See *Statistique générale du département de Gironde*, Bordeaux, Féret et fils, libraires-éditeurs, 1878, pp. 363-364. Founded in 1846, this course obtained official authorisation in February 1865, see F/17/6655.

33 In her file, she is listed as a secondary school teacher from 1870 to 1873, F/17/22067.

34 A. Donis (former headmaster of a boys' school in Bordeaux), *Historique de l'enseignement primaire public à Bordeaux*, Bordeaux, G. Delmas, 1913, p. 433.

The school gradually lost its professional character, as most of the girls were destined for teaching: in Bordeaux, the institution acted as a normal school while at the same time asserting itself as a pioneer of female secondary education.



Jeanne Ruello - Bordeaux professional school - 1879

It seems that at this time, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello had to suffer the rigours of the Moral Order. Her friend Odette Laguerre, who portrayed her in *La Fronde* in 1902, said that the young woman from Bordeaux was attacked by reactionaries and that she "had to sustain a fierce struggle against unscrupulous opponents. The clerical municipality went so far as to refuse her the necessary staff³⁵". It is true that at the end of 1877, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, disappointed by the lack of support, tendered her resignation. She then withdrew it in

In exchange for an increase in salary and reimbursement of the costs she hired in 1873 for his study trips to Paris and Brussels to analyse the functioning of girls' vocational schools.

In 1878, the first official prize-giving ceremony was held at the Bordeaux professional school. Having returned from the Universal Exhibition in Paris, where her school had been awarded two medals, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello stated in her speech that the school in Bordeaux competed with boys' schools, but also with the women's *colleges* that existed in the United States. It is true that in these *colleges*, girls are taught Latin, "but letters are not taught as seriously as they are in this school³⁶". After showing the interest in her school at the World's Fair, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello closed her prize-giving speech by defending the education of girls:

This school is becoming more and more necessary every day. It is therefore necessary that all those who have at heart the raising of the intellectual level in France should take an interest in its prosperity. What, moreover, is the dominant preoccupation of minds interested in the future today? [...] Is it not in particular the education of women? [...] People are beginning to understand that women have been left out of the progress of humanity for too long; all sensible people finally see that they must not be neglected in the effort to reach this goal more rapidly: the spread of enlightenment. [...] Take advantage [...] of this education which is given to you, not to lead you to obtain a diploma, but to make you educated women [...]!

If Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello dissuades the girls from preparing diplomas, it is undoubtedly so as not to alienate the good graces of the officials present at the prize-giving. For in

35 Odette Laguerre, "Portrait de femmes. Mme Desparmet-Ruello, doyenne des directrices de lycée", *La Fronde*, 26 December 1902.

36 *La Gironde*, 5 November 1878, speech by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello reproduced in the 'Chronique locale'.

As far as she was concerned, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello prepared for and obtained, in parallel with her task as director, the first part of the baccalaureate in 1878, then the full baccalaureate in sciences in 1879. She was the first woman to obtain this diploma at the Bordeaux faculty³⁷ Although, as Pierre Molinier reminds us, only four to five women obtained the baccalauréat each year in France³⁸. In 1880, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello even became a licentiate in science. A pioneer among women graduates, her career took off with the creation of public female secondary education at the same time.

Albertine Eidenschenk: from the sisters' school to Fontenay



Albertine Eidenschenk in Douai (between 1905 and 1914)

Pauline Kergomard and Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, born respectively in 1838 and 1847, belong to a different generation than Albertine Eidenschenk and Marie Baertschi, who were born in 1864 and 1868. Although Albertine Eidenschenk hardly knew the Second Empire, the memory of this regime is present in her family heritage, since it is remembered, from generation to generation, that her father Victor Patin was one of the only people in the village to have openly voted no to the plebiscite of 1851³⁹. The seventh of eight children, Albertine Eidenschenk was born on 7 October 1864 in

Lieusaint (Seine-et-Marne). On his birth certificate, his father is shown as a shepherd, accompanied by another shepherd and a mason. He worked on a large farm, owning only his house, a garden and a small field⁴⁰.

In 1932, when she was 68 years old, Albertine Eidenschenk confided to the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes* her earliest memories of school, in a mixed school, under the rule of the headmaster: "I say 'under the rule', intentionally, because the blows of the ruler on the fingers and the blows of the belt on the back were the disciplinary means of this dreaded master⁴¹. " Albertine Eidenschenk attended this school from the age of six as a free pupil, having already a paying sister and brother older than her. The teacher who ran the small classes was a nun who, unlike many of her sisters, had a certificate of qualification. Albertine Eidenschenk has the best memories of her teaching: "Sister Josephine is an excellent woman, to whose kindness everyone pays tribute. However, in Albertine Eidenschenk's eyes, she embodied a world that had long since passed: "Sister Josephine had no concern, and probably no idea, of neutrality. In the political struggles that shook the country

37 "Faits divers - Encore une bachelière", *La Petite République*, 16 August 1878.

38 Pierre Molinier, *La naissance de l'étudiant moderne: XIX^e siècle*, Paris, Belin, 2002, p. 70.

39 According to Jeanne Mauchaussat, daughter of Albertine Eidenschenk, quoted in *Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, director of the Ecole normale d'institutrices de Douai, 1905-1926*, brochure published by the amicale des anciennes élèves de l'Ecole normale d'institutrices du Nord, Douai, 1973, 110 p., p. 19.

40 From Odette Laguerre, "Portrait de femme: Mme Eidenschenk", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} July 1904.

41 A. Eidenschenk, "Une école de filles de la région parisienne il y a soixante ans", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, June 1932.

between 1875 and 1880, she passionately took sides and gave us to read *Le Pèlerin* [...] in all ingenuity of heart and in all security of conscience. Every morning the nun even sent little girls to hear mass in her place. Albertine is part of this delegation, which the priest immediately sends back to school, to the nun's despair. Although brought up in a "radically incredulous" family⁴² "Little Albertine became very devout. Every morning the nun reminds her of her duties to God, the Church, her family, her neighbour and herself. Although she became a freethinker, Albertine Eidenschenk still declares at almost 70 years of age: "I feel that I owe a lot to Sister Josephine's talks.⁴³ " The teaching itself is less attractive. Albertine Eidenschenk remembers her schoolbooks: "In grammar, Noël and Chapsal! they had joined forces to commit the crime against childhood that was this dry list of rules. The same applies to dictations: "No explanation: we learned by heart, we recited [...]. No drier teaching [...] can be imagined. This did not prevent Albertine Eidenschenk from obtaining her primary school certificate in 1878, at the age of 14, as well as the first prize in the cantonal competition: a 15-franc savings book.

After graduating from school, Albertine Eidenschenk continued to work on her own while taking care of the household with her mother. She then obtained her elementary school certificate. The Paul Bert law required the creation of a girls' normal school in each department, and in August 1880 Albertine Eidenschenk took part in the competition for the new establishment that had just been inaugurated in Melun⁴⁴. She passed the tests, although there was a geometry exercise, of which she had never learned a word⁴⁵. Albertine Eidenschenk then joined the very first class of 20 female teachers from Seine-et-Marne. She graduated from the Ecole Normale in 1883, at the age of 19, after having obtained the brevet supérieur with the congratulations of the jury⁴⁶. She then worked as a substitute teacher in primary schools in Seine-et-Marne, while preparing for the entrance exam to the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Fontenay-aux-Roses, which she passed in 1884. The years that awaited Albertine Eidenschenk at Fontenay were a real revolution for this shepherd's daughter.

Marie Baertschi: a childhood without notes, a youth in Fontenay

Marie Baertschi was four years younger than Albertine Eidenschenk. She was born on 3 July 1868 in Serapium, near Suez, Egypt, to a Swiss father and a French mother. In the absence of her birth certificate, it remains a mystery why her parents were in Egypt at the time⁴⁷. In 1865 the Baertschi couple had already given birth to a daughter, Henriette, in Paris.

42 From Odette Laguerre, "Portrait de femme: Mme Eidenschenk", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} July 1904.

43 A. Eidenschenk, "Une école de filles de la région parisienne", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, June 1932.

44 See *L'Éclaireur de l'arrondissement de Coulommiers*, 27 October 1880, which lists the pupil-mistresses admitted to the normal school for its first year of operation.

45 According to Christiane Persyn (primary school inspector), *Une grande éducatrice, Madame Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942*, Avesnes, L'observateur, 1950, 27 p., p. 15.

46 Odette Laguerre, "Portrait de femme : Mme Eidenschenk", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} July 1904.

47 The following information comes from Mémoires d'Ici, Fonds Schwob - Büttiker - Tavannes Watch (Family Archives) - DOC050321 - Marie Baertschi's birth certificate is missing. Thanks to Anne

The birth certificate indicates a father who was a grocer, which does not resolve the question of his presence in Serapium three years later. Marie Baertschi also has a half-brother older than her, born in Paris in 1858 from her mother's first marriage. While the Baertschi family lived in France after Marie's birth - both her parents lived in the Paris region when they died in 1883 and 1891 - her sister Henriette spent her life in Switzerland. Marie Baertschi, now living in Paris, regularly refers to her family on the other side of the Alps⁴⁸.

Marie Baertschi provides little information about her childhood. In an article published in 1903, she states: "As a child, I attended a school where grades and places and prizes were ignored, and I have not found a school where life was more intense, the effort more general and more regular.⁴⁹ " Without grades, Marie Baertschi's childhood was also without religion:



Marie Baertschi in 1901

Raised without any religious notions, I grew up in materialism. But when I began to think, at the age of twenty, [questions] arose [...] that materialism could not answer. And at twenty you want an answer. I hoped that religion would provide me with one, and, while remaining a stranger to all faiths [...], I made a personal religion that satisfied me for a time. Life raised other problems before which religion in its turn was mute. I was thirsty for certain truths, I had found none in either the materialist or the religious creed, and I had to admit to myself that there are problems which are insoluble for the human mind. It seemed to me then that the only rational attitude [was] that of doubt and expectation. This is the one I have kept [...]. But from my experience of materialism and religion, I have retained a very great respect for both⁵⁰.

The metaphysical turmoil that Marie Baertschi felt on the threshold of her twenties was perhaps linked to the death of her father when she was 15, and then to that of her mother when she was 21. Perhaps her entry into the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Fontenay, under the supervision of the former pastor Félix Pécaut, also played a role in her questioning of the faith. Marie Baertschi entered the ENS in 1887, at the age of 19, after having studied at a teacher training college. These years were a spiritual and moral shock for her. She reluctantly left Fontenay in 1889 and began her career

Beuchat for its valuable assistance.

48 See, among others, M. Fuster, 'Sentiments d'enfants', *Bulletin de la Société libre pour l'étude psychologique de l'enfant*, January 1909: 'Mon petit garçon est parti pour la Suisse' or Marie Baertschi's letter to the Minister, 31 May 1898, 'je prends devant vous l'engagement [...] d'aller dans ma famille, en Suisse', F/17/23692.

49 Mrs E. Fuster, "La justice à l'école", *L'École nouvelle*, 1903.

50 Marie Édouard-Fuster, "Observation", *Pages libres*, 28 September 1901.

as a teacher in a teacher training college. It was at this time that she obtained French nationality⁵¹ her destiny was now written in the land of the Enlightenment.

New professional opportunities: four careers from school laws



Pauline Kergomard et
deux de ses petits-enfants,
date inconnue

Pauline Kergomard, l'inspectrice générale des écoles maternelles

Dès les mois qui suivent la crise du 16 mai 1877 et les victoires républicaines qui lui succèdent, Pauline Kergomard s'adresse au ministère de l'Instruction publique pour trouver un poste. Dans une lettre du 13 mars 1878, elle se présente comme la fille de Jean Reclus, ex-inspecteur des écoles primaires de Gironde, et comme titulaire du certificat d'aptitude à la direction des salles d'asile, obtenu en 1877. Elle réclame à ce titre la direction d'une école normale⁵². Dix jours plus tard, Juliette Adam, publiciste féministe et épouse d'un député républicain, rédige une lettre de recommandation en sa faveur for a post of head teacher or primary inspector⁵³. She recalled that Pauline Kergomard did not want to move away from Paris, "because of her children who were attending the Alsatian School with great success".

That same year, Pauline Kergomard finally succeeded in publishing the book she had been talking about earlier to Édouard Lockroy. Her *Biens de la terre* received excellent press. *The French Republic* declared: "Mme Kergomard, assisted by half a dozen pupils, her collaborators, through their answers as well as their questions, unfolds a thousand pieces of information, very curious for her young readers, on the wheat that she follows from the furrow to the baker's oven, on the potato, on the vine⁵⁴. " This work, which renews the model of the lessons of things, is the result of a method that Pauline Kergomard had explained to Édouard Lockroy:

I studied my subject with botany professors at the Medical School, then when I had understood it well, I tried to put it within the reach of my little readers; each finished chapter, I read it to an audience composed of children from 7 to 10 years old, including my two sons. If this little world was "grabbed" I said to myself that I had succeeded; if not, I modified my work according to the impressions of these children⁵⁵.

51 See the Official Bulletin of the Ministry of Justice, "Nationality. Déclaration. Acquisition and repudiation of French nationality", October-December 1899. Declaration made on 19 November 1899, before the Justice of the Peace of Sceaux.

52 Letter to the Ministry of 13 March 1878, F/17/23588/B.

53 The letter is undated, but the postmark of the Instruction publique indicates 23 March 1878.

54 Article without title or author, *La République française*, 5 October 1878.

55 Letter to Édouard Lockroy, 26 November 1877, NAF 25162.

Waiting for a position in the Public Education system, Pauline Kergomard did not stop at this publication: "Mme Kergomard and her friend Mme Pressac will open, next Monday, a course and children's classes [...]. The *French Republic* said, two or three months ago, what an excellent spirit will reign in the classes of these ladies; the talks on the *Goods of the Earth* prove that we have not exaggerated anything⁵⁶ ".

The publication of this manual appears as a guarantee of competence in the letters that Pauline Kergomard continues to send to the Ministry of Public Education after having founded her own school⁵⁷. Her first volume was accompanied by a second, the *Galerie enfantine des hommes illustres*, and both works were adopted by the asylum wards of the city of Paris. Pauline Kergomard also contributed to several educational periodicals. In addition, she enjoyed the support of many politicians, including Émile Deschanel, Paul Bert, Jules Duvaux, Arthur Chalamet and Ferdinand Buisson. This testifies to her network in the republican ranks. Gabriel Monod participated in these recommendations in April 1879:

Her children [are] a living praise of their mother's moral and educational qualities. It is impossible to see better and more developed children. Mme Kergomard's misfortune is to be married to a man who [...] has never been able to support his family. He thought he had a literary talent that he does not have. [She is obliged [...] to support a man who is like an extra child⁵⁸.

Pauline Kergomard was finally appointed delegate general for the inspection of asylum rooms on 9 May 1879, before becoming inspector general for nursery schools in 1881.⁵⁹ This did not put an end to the difficulties of her marriage. In 1894, at the age of 56, she separated from her husband, whom she continued to support, concerned to safeguard "the bread of the old man", as she wrote in a letter in 1898⁶⁰. Her two sons married the two daughters of Jules Steeg, a Protestant inspector general of primary education, who was himself married to a childhood friend of Pauline Kergomard's, with whom she was at boarding school in Orthez. Joseph Kergomard became a geographer, like his mother's cousin Élisée Reclus. Jean was director of the Ecole Normale de Boys in Lyon. In the Kergomard family, public education was a family affair! Pauline Kergomard was exceptionally long-lived and retired in 1917 at the age of 79.

As an inspector for four decades, she leaves a vivid memory in the minds of those who knew her.

As early as 1890, Anna Lampérière, one of her colleagues, wrote a laudatory portrait of her:

56 Article without title or author, *La République française*, 5 October 1878.

57 See his letter of 13 February 1879, F/17/23588/B.

58 Letter from Gabriel Monod in support of Pauline Kergomard's candidacy, 6 April 1879.

59 To complete the picture, Linda L. Clark, "Feminist Maternalists and the French State: Two Inspectresses General in the Pre-World War I Third Republic", *Journal of Women's History*, Spring 2000, n°12, p. 32-59. On the Inspectorate General, see Jean-Pierre Rioux (ed.), *Deux cents ans d'Inspection générale 1802-2002*, Paris, Fayard, 2002.

60 Letter to Ferdinand Buisson, 7 August 1898, quoted by Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc),

Pauline Kergomard, op. cit. , p. 101.

Mme Kergomard is from the family of Élisée Reclus, and from this family she has a very quick intelligence, a very determined character, a very marked personality. Physically, she is a lean, lively, nervous woman, with a beautiful head with long grey curls, [...] mocking eyes, with a smile that corrects, if necessary, what is sharp about her. One senses that this woman is easily sarcastic, but that she likes to be good. Above all she is alive, and she brings life wherever she goes. She has done immense good in women's education, and no one else could have done it: she does not doubt herself or what she does⁶¹.

In 1931, six years after his death, another of his colleagues, Joséphine Petit-Dutaillis, contrasted the "persuasive gentleness" of Inspector Suzanne Brès with the "sometimes rather harsh ardour" of her friend Pauline Kergomard, "who shed a few tears".⁶² "of the inspector Suzanne Brès, to the "sometimes somewhat harsh ardour" of her friend Pauline Kergomard, "who shed a few tears". As for Miss Billotey, a headmistress of a teacher training college who was very close to the Inspector General, she wrote :

This great educator did not elaborate a theory of education in the silence of her office; her function obliged her to take immediate action, which moreover corresponded [...] to her temperament. Her lively and spontaneous intelligence went beyond bookish culture. Her experience was drawn from life, lived and observed; it was the family experience of an admirable mother, the social experience of a woman who knew how to see and understand, who knew the moral and material difficulties. She was not only a remarkable civil servant, an eminent inspector general; she was also passionately interested in the social movement of her time⁶³.

From these portraits some elements of Pauline Kergomard's character emerge. Unlike Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Albertine Eidenschenk and Marie Baertschi, she was not, strictly speaking, a scholar. In the numerous texts she published and in the speeches she gave, personal anecdotes took the place of the intellectual references of her colleagues. Moreover, Pauline Kergomard was a woman who did not hesitate to use sarcasm and irony: her texts were full of humour that was sometimes grating. She was a strong woman who knew how to make herself respected, including by the local authorities, who often found it difficult to receive advice from a woman. But, like Marie Baertschi, what characterises Pauline Kergomard is above all an infinite tenderness for children and for the unfortunate.

In this respect, the inspector was involved on several fronts: in 1886 she founded the *Sauvetage de l'enfance* (Childhood Rescue) for young beggars with her friend Caroline de Barrau, collaborated in the *Œuvre des libérées de Saint-Lazare* (Saint-Lazare's freedwomen's charity) which helped prostitutes, and directed the "Education" section of the Conseil

- 61 Miton-Mitaine [Anna Lampérière], "Inspections de l'enseignement féminin", *Le Figaro*, 3 October 1890.
- 62 Quoted in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.*
- 63 "Le centenaire de Mme Kergomard", *La Française*, 21 May 1938.

national des femmes françaises from 1905. Together with Marie Baertschi she participated in the foundation of the Free Society for the Psychological Study of the Child in 1899 and became friends with her. In 1911, she wrote to her sons that she was ill and that "Mme Bartschi Fuster [*sic*] had spent most of the afternoon⁶⁴ "with her. Pauline Kergomard also came into contact with Albertine Eidenschenk during the Belle Époque⁶⁵.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, founder of the Montpellier and Lyon high schools

Although Pauline Kergomard knew Marie Baertschi and Albertine Eidenschenk well, she does not seem to have had close links with Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello. It is true that the Inspector General and the Director were both part of the French delegation to the International Congresses of Moral Education held in 1908 and 1912 in London and The Hague, but there is no evidence that they had any contact outside these occasions. It must be said that Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello made her career in the provinces, far from Paris, although she sought to be closer to the capital. In December 1880, when the law on secondary education for women had been under discussion for a year, she wrote to the minister:

I have [...] the honour of applying for the direction of a secondary school in Paris. Allow me, Mr. Minister, to remind you of the qualifications which authorise me to aspire to such a position. I have a degree in natural sciences, and few women in France have this academic qualification. I have been working for many years to develop the education of young girls. I was first a teacher in public classes, and for the last seven years I have been in charge of a school in Bordeaux which, in spite of its modest title of École primaire supérieure, is one of the few establishments in France where girls are given a complete secondary education. I hope, Mr. Minister, that you will consider these exceptional titles⁶⁶.

However, it was not in the capital that the first lycée for girls was opened, but in Montpellier. The ENS de Sèvres had not yet begun to train the staff of the future lycées. In these circumstances, it was Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello who was appointed to head the Montpellier lycée because of her academic qualifications and experience in education. The former rector of Bordeaux, Charles Zévort, who became director of secondary education, undoubtedly played a role in this appointment. Born from the conversion of a former municipal college, the Lycée de Montpellier opened in October 1881 under the direction of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, who

64 Letter of 20 December 1911, Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.*

65 See the letter dated a Monday morning in 1912, Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.* p. 183.

66 Letter dated 23 December 1880, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's career file, F/17/22067.

asked Marguerite Poy, a former pupil whom she had already appointed as general supervisor at the Bordeaux school, to accompany her. But in December, the headmistress expressed her dissatisfaction to one of her superiors:

The person who will give you this letter or send it to you is Mr Henry Desparmet-Fitz-Gérald, whom you already know. What you probably don't know is that we have been engaged for four years and that it was when we were hoping to get married that M. Zévort appointed me Director of the Lycée de Montpellier. I did object, for various reasons, that I would only have wanted to leave Bordeaux and my family to be called to Paris or the surrounding area, attached to the École de Sèvres, for example. M. Zévort replied that at Sèvres he could only offer me a position which was too secondary, and that, moreover, one day women who had distinguished themselves in the provinces would be called to Paris⁶⁷.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello hoped that, thanks to the sacrifice made by accepting the direction of the Montpellier high school, the doors to Paris would open. In the meantime, she returned briefly to Bordeaux to celebrate her marriage on 11 January 1882⁶⁸ Before returning to Montpellier, her situation deteriorated. She entered into conflict with the town hall, which managed the boarding school in which the pupils were housed:

"All year long, the Town Hall considered itself to be the absolute master of the premises occupied by the Lycée, arrogating to itself the right to take the rooms it deemed necessary for its boarding school without worrying about the needs of the Lycée itself. After a year of struggle, I finally obtained, with the help of my board of directors, the complete separation of the two establishments⁶⁹. " Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello recorded in the minutes of the school's board of directors the "rather harsh" words that various members had spoken against the town hall, which was indignant at a municipal council meeting. In retaliation, the mayor dismissed Henry Desparmet from his position at the Public Works Department because of his training as an engineer, after having followed his wife to Bordeaux. In addition, the mayor refused to vote the necessary credits for the acquisition of physics instruments, which had been requested by the high school's board of directors and approved by the ministry. Added to these tensions was the report that Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello wrote against M. Castets, dean of the faculty of literature and deputy mayor, who taught a few hours of literature at the girls' school. She wrote to the inspector: "It is important to know that the competition for male teachers in the girls' high schools must be a serious and effective competition and not a means of increasing a position by 1500 Fr without any obligation to carry out a specific task⁷⁰. " This reveals the inflexible character of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, who refused to allow the education of girls to be considered a secondary concern. The rector notes in pencil on his report: "the

67 Letter dated 18 December 1881.

68 There is probably an error in Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's career file, which indicates 11 January 1881.

69 Letter to the Director of Primary Education, 20 September 1882.

70 Report to the Inspector of Education about M. Castets, probably in the summer of 1882.

The judgement made on Mr Castets by the director is only too well founded". Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was then warned by friends that M. Castets was seeking revenge on her: "He swore as a municipal councillor that he would make you leave Montpellier because you are in the way of the Municipality, you defend the rights of the State, [...] you want order, you want each one to have his or her own clear-cut attributions; they would prefer to have confusion⁷¹".

In this context, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello applied for the direction of the Lycée in Rouen - she had a sister in Le Havre - or the one in Nantes, which would take her back to her "dear Brittany", the cradle of her family. However, in November 1882, she was sent to the reputedly clerical city of Lyon to found a lycée. She therefore left the one in Montpellier, which had welcomed 41 pupils on her arrival, and which had 220 a year later. Her departure gave rise to a demonstration of support for her by the schoolgirls, a demonstration used by the right against the republican government and the secular secondary education of young girls:

A displaced day school director harangued the day students who tore down fences, broke windows and spewed obscenities in the face of the boarding school director. They bellowed the Marseillaise. These infants, raised on the knees of the Republic in the cult [of] the formula 'Neither God nor Master', promise proud wives to the unfortunate idiots who would like to honour them with their trust⁷².

In her portrait of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello in *La Fronde*, Odette Laguerre returns to this event, which provoked laughter among parliamentarians⁷³. The Right considered that the lack of discipline at the Montpellier high school was due to the absence of a catechism. Clemenceau replied: "Would you rather have them read the story of Lot? The Minister of Public Education closed the debate by clearing Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello.

When she inaugurated the Lyons school in January 1883, it had only 17 pupils and only temporary premises. The school would occupy them for 20 years, however, due to the lack of municipal will to construct a new building. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello describes the installation as follows:

The corridors and staircases were dark, narrow and winding, the courtyard too small, enclosed between the high walls of the neighbouring houses, the trees pruned in such a way that one wondered whether they would ever be able to put on branches and leaves. Mr. Director of Secondary Education, you have probably known very few secondary schools in France that are so badly installed [...]. M. Léon Bourgeois [...] once said that everything was frankly "*good to burn*"⁷⁴.

71 Letter from Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello to Ferdinand Buisson, Director of Primary Education, 20 September 1882.

72 *L'Abbevillois*, 1^{er} December 1882.

73 Odette Laguerre, "Portraits de femmes. Mme Desparmet-Ruello, doyenne des directrices de lycées", *La Fronde*,

26 December 1902.



Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello
and her children -
1891

Although not well settled in Lyon, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello founded her family there. In 1884, she gave birth to Edouard. Three years later, she gave birth to Edma. In 1890, at the age of 43, she gave birth to Jean. Eugène Manuel, Inspector General, noted in 1888 that her late marriage had "created some embarrassment for her, and that, for the third time in a few years, motherhood was preparing her for others⁷⁵". As usual, he did not spare himself personal comments:

Mme Desparmet has an intelligence far above the ordinary; she knows it, and there is no one who is not willing [...] to acknowledge it with her. The complete bachelor's degree in science and the bachelor's degree in natural science attest to an aptitude and knowledge of the subject.

She also possesses a very suitable literary education; and her easy, lively, pleasant speech, full of flexibility and resources, added to a great personal distinction, to a physiognomy which, even at 42 years of age, has remained advantageous, gives Mme Desparmet a marked influence on families, on teachers, on pupils.

Three years earlier, the rector noted his "very remarkable merits"⁷⁶ "However, the rector was concerned about "the continual presence in the house of an idle husband, consequently little considered, of whom she was the only one. However, the rector was concerned about 'the continual presence in the house of an idle husband, who was consequently not very well regarded, and whose influence she suffered'. From then on, the notes written about Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello by her superiors only got worse. It would seem that she "subordinated her university situation to that of her husband, an engineer without a position, and, it seems, without talent, for whom she had solicited a position in the City"⁷⁷". Moreover, "Mme Desparmet is above all a mother and wife. It would be too delicate to write for what particular reasons it is more difficult for her than for another to reconcile domestic duties with those of her office"⁷⁸". In addition to this, she is a strong-willed woman, which displeases her superiors:

She obviously has qualities of authority, but it is not the kind, maternal authority of a headmistress of a girls' school. She would do much better at the head of a boys' school!
It is not the way to attract mothers to receive them with

74 Speech by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello at the inauguration of the new Lycée in Lyon in 1902, reported by Odette Laguerre, 'Inauguration of a new Lycée for young girls in Lyon', *La Fronde*, 18 November 1902.

75 Note from Eugène Manuel on 22 June 1888, F/17/22067. However, the family's last child was not born until ten months later... Is this an indication that the pregnancy was not carried to term?

76 Note from the rector in June 1886.

77 Document dated April 1887.

78 Document dated 1^{er} May 1892.

It's a great deal of self-confidence to never come and talk to the rector about the situation in his house. It is very self-confident not to come and talk to the rector about the situation in his house⁷⁹.

In 1896, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello claimed the vacant position at the head of Sèvres following the death of Mme Jules Favre, as "the dean of lycée principals⁸⁰". However, she finished her career in Lyon and was retired early in 1908, after 35 years of service, when the school had just under 500 pupils. She was very critical of Camille Sée's reluctance to change the curriculum for secondary schools for girls, was close to radical-socialist circles in Lyon and to Parisian feminists, and was president of the Université populaire lyonnaise (Lyon's popular university), which had a decidedly free-thinking tone, and received at her home - i.e. at the girls' school! - the registration forms for the conference of the ex-colonel Picquart in 1903⁸¹. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was described by her superiors as "arrogant and imperious⁸²". She did not fit the model of the discreet, docile and devoted schoolmistress that the administration expected.

"A discreet contribution to my husband's work": Albertine Eidenschenk and the brief temptation to withdraw

After attending the nuns' primary school in Melun, Albertine Eidenschenk entered Fontenay in 1884. In contact with scientific truths, her religious fervour was extinguished: from then on she ruled "the inner being over reason and conscience⁸³". In 1886, Albertine Eidenschenk graduated from Fontenay at the top of her class with a certificate of aptitude for teaching literature in teacher training colleges. She became a teacher in Versailles for a year, before being called back to Fontenay to become a répétitrice, i.e. to assist the Fontenay girls in their daily work. She left Fontenay for good in 1891 after preparing, in parallel with her work, for the certificate of aptitude for the inspection and management of teacher training colleges, where she was again awarded first place.

In 1892, she was appointed head of the teacher training college in Oran. It must be said that, in order to relieve an older sister, Albertine Eidenschenk took charge of the upkeep of two of her nieces, and saw in the

The "colonial quarter" is an opportunity to increase its resources⁸⁴. It was in Algeria that she met Laurent Eidenschenk, a school inspector and German teacher 18 years her senior. An Alsatian, he had left his village near Colmar with his entire family in 1871, and had opted for French nationality. Albertine and Laurent Eidenschenk got married in 1894. Engaged for three months, the former Fontenay native wrote to the Fontenay school inspector Félix Pécaut:

79 Note from the Rector, 20 May 1906.

80 Letter to Élie Rabier, Director of Secondary Education, 1896.

81 See what *Le Salut public* wrote on 8 February 1903.

82 Report of 7 May 1903, F/17/22067.

83 Odette Laguerre, "Portrait de femme : Mme Eidenschenk", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} July 1904.

84 *Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, director of the Ecole normale d'institutrices de Douai, op. cit. , p. 20.*

It is a long time since I wrote to you; I wanted to thank you, however, for the good letter you wrote in reply to the announcement of my marriage; it was a joy for me; it would have been very painful for me not to have had your approval. [...] It has been decided for a very long time that I will take a leave of absence; I have gradually become accustomed to this idea. I will not cease to be involved [...] in primary education. Mr. Eidenschenk, who takes his task very much to heart [...] is counting on my experience and knowledge to help him. I am sure that a discreet collaboration in my husband's work will be one of the greatest joys of my life to come. [I feel strongly that my greatest power over my fiancé's mind and heart lies in what is there of personal moral life, of firm and severe principles, of goodness and sincerity. Now, if there is anything of this in me, it is to Fontenay and to you that I owe it, it is you who have made me aware of its price⁸⁵.

Albertine Eidenschenk's leave after her marriage began in September 1894. She gave birth to Albert in May 1895 and to Jeanne in March 1898. In accordance with her convictions, Albertine Eidenschenk brought up her children outside the church. They were not baptised. Moreover, she breastfed them⁸⁶ a practice that was rare in the wealthy classes at the turn of the century. Her husband held her in high regard. One of her former pupils remembers this:

Divided between the duties of her office and her obligations as a wife and mother, [Mrs. Eidenschenk] accomplished all that she had to do without haste, with admirable regularity; when one saw her passing by with her husband and her two children, one felt that at home as at school, she was the centre of a harmonious and fruitful life. [...] Committed, firm in the path she wanted to live, an educator whom her pupils looked up to as a living model, a beloved woman, honoured by her husband as rarely was a woman, the mother of two children whom she could already feel to be truly hers, by the heart and the tendencies of their spirit, she radiated happiness⁸⁷.

Albertine Eidenschenk was not satisfied for long with a "discreet collaboration" with her husband's work. She returned to the Ministry of Education in 1899 and became head of the Ecole Normale de Chambéry. She was then reproached for simultaneously leading the life of a mother and that of a headmistress, which recalls the observations made to Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello:

85 Letter sent from Oran on 30 May 1894, Albertine Eidenschenk's career file, F/17/23836/B.

86 Albertine Eidenschenk made a point of mentioning this detail in the interview she gave to Odette Laguerre, "Portrait de femme : Mme Eidenschenk", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} July 1904.

87 Mlle Larivière (class of 1908-1911 from Douai), "Madame Eidenschenk à Douai", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, January 1947.



Laurent and Albertine
Eidenschenk with Albert and
Jeanne (ca. 1900)

The only difficulty inherent in [her] professional situation [...] will be that of reconciling her family duties with her professional duties: not that in Chambéry, the former made her neglect the latter; but I found, this year, that her husband and her children penetrated the school a little too much. Her children will grow up. She won't have to follow them so closely. We can therefore hope that the duties between which Mrs Eidenschenk is obliged to divide herself will be reconciled⁸⁸.

A dynamic woman who wanted to "renovate everything" and was nicknamed for this "the architect"⁸⁹ Albertine Eidenschenk, far from remaining in the shadow of her husband, entered the limelight during the Belle Époque, playing a major role in the Fontenaysian association, writing in numerous periodicals, taking over the direction of the largest teacher training college in Douai and being elected in 1905 to the Higher Council of Public Instruction.

Marie Baertschi, secular activist from Fontenay to Sévigné

Marie Baertschi entered Fontenay in 1887 and her teacher was Albertine Eidenschenk. She left the school two years later with a certificate of aptitude for teaching literature in teacher training colleges, which she completed the following year with the same diploma in German. She then began a career as a teacher in a teacher training college and was judged by her inspectors to be an outstanding teacher. However, in 1897, Marie Baertschi came into conflict with her superiors, who reproached her for being too militant on secularism. Against the backdrop of the Dreyfus affair, disappointed by the reluctance of the institution, Marie Baertschi asked for a leave of absence which she extended until 1904. Like Albertine Eidenschenk, she was an ambassador for the Pécardian heritage and in 1898 she asked to be appointed as a teacher-repeater at Fontenay, which was refused. She then prepared for the agrégation in history by enrolling in evening classes at the Collège Sévigné⁹⁰. She won the competitive examination in 1899 and was hired by Mathilde Salomon in 1900 to teach at Sévigné, where she remained until 1910. Mathilde Salomon and Marie Baertschi shared deep-seated Dreyfusian convictions. At Sévigné, Marie Baertschi was in charge of teaching French literature, German language and literature for the higher classes⁹¹. Her colleagues included a former pupil of the school who had become a

88 Note from the Inspector General in June 1902, F/17/23836/B.

89 According to her daughter Jeanne Mauchaussat, quoted in *Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, director of the Ecole normale d'institutrices de Douai*, op. cit. , p. 25.

90 See Mrs. Édouard Fuster's speech at the 25th anniversary of the Collège Sévigné, on 1^{er} July 1905, where she says "the privilege [...] of having been a student at the College and of teaching there now".

91 See the letter in his career file dated 29 January 1903, F/17/23692.

Madeleine Daniélou, who was then called Miss Clamorgan. Unlike Mathilde Salomon, an atheist, and Marie Baertschi, an agnostic, Madeleine Daniélou was a devout Catholic, which created tensions. Ironically, Marie Baertschi converted to Catholicism ten years later, and found Madeleine Daniélou in the Catholic networks after the war.

But in the early XX^e century, the Fontenaysian opposed the Catholic imprint in instruction, without attacking faith as such. She declared in 1901 that belief was a "perfectly legitimate and respectable opinion"⁹² "In 1901, she declared that belief was a 'perfectly legitimate and respectable opinion', with which she 'still very willingly sympathises in the person of [her] friends, some of whom are very rabid materialists, others convinced religious people'. Among these believers, Marie Baertschi no doubt thinks of her husband, Édouard Fuster, of Protestant faith"⁹³. It was at the turn of the century that these two republicans met, thanks to the popular education movement born of the Affair. In March 1899, Édouard Fuster wrote an enthusiastic description of a popular evening organised by the socialist poet and Dreyfus supporter Maurice Bouchor in Montrouge for the Protestant magazine *Foi et vie* :

1,500 people, this evening, crammed [...] into the long low hall, [...] some teachers, professors [...]; apprentices and workers who [...] have come without dressing up, [...] many women, [...] and children [who] wake up at the right moment, when "the pretty lady" sings, when the good poet shakes his heavy tawny beard while explaining beautiful things to them simply⁹⁴.

It is a safe bet that this "pretty lady", who sings alongside Bouchor, is Marie Baertschi. Involved from an early age in the UP movement, particularly in Montrouge, an assiduous partner of Bouchor for two-voice readings of *La Muse et l'Ouvrier*, an organiser of choirs and a regular singer at popular evenings, this "pretty lady" had everything it took to be Marie Baertschi, at a time when women were rare on the stages. Like this popular evening, at the turn of the century the paths of Marie Baertschi and Édouard Fuster kept crossing. In the spring of 1900, when Marie Baertschi presented a project for the reform of teacher training colleges to the International Congress of Women's Works and Institutions at the Universal Exhibition, Édouard Fuster also attended the sessions, this time in the name of the Cercle du Travail féminin, a lay group seeking to help women workers⁹⁵.

Marie Baertschi and Édouard Fuster married on 23 August 1900. At the creation in January 1901 of the journal *Pages libres*, which was born in the wake of Dreyfusism, they were both among the twelve founding members. Marie Baertschi was pregnant at the time: she gave birth to Jean in May

92 "Observation", *Free Pages*, 28 September 1901.

93 On Édouard Fuster, see Raymond Darteville (ed.), 'Édouard Fuster dans la construction de l'État social', *Les Études sociales*, n°166-167, 2019.

94 Édouard Fuster, 'Profiles of works - the popular readings of the poet Bouchor', *Foi et vie*, 1^{er} March 1899.

95 Session of 19 June 1900, *Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Women's Works and Institutions*, *op. cit.* pp. 59-60.



Édouard and Marie Fuster with Jean (1901)

of the same year, then Germaine in March 1904, without ceasing her work at Sévigné. She even returned to Sévigné as a teacher in a normal school at the beginning of the 1904 academic year, in a political context quite different from the one that had led her to distance herself from the institution at the end of the XIX^e century. Like Pauline Kergomard, she was also active in the *Société libre pour l'étude psychologique de l'enfant* and in the *Comité des dames de la Ligue de l'enseignement*.

Review and outlook

Through these four portraits, commonalities emerge between Pauline Kergomard, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Albertine Eidenschenk and Marie Baertschi. While many high-level female civil servants - high school teachers, teacher training colleges, inspectors - were single, all four were mothers. Moreover, all of them married relatively late: at the time of her marriage, Pauline Kergomard was 25, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello 35, Albertine Eidenschenk 29 and Marie Baertschi almost 32, at a time when the average age of women at marriage was 24.⁹⁶ Several hypotheses can be put forward to explain this late age. The four personalities studied here had an absorbing educational and professional career. Marriage is probably not their priority, since it is not necessary for them from a financial point of view: they are independent. Secondly, coming from the working or middle classes, they do not have a dowry, and therefore escape the model of bourgeois marriage, where girls are married young. As a result of these late marriages or the desire to control births, all four are mothers of two or three children, even though they were born into larger families.

In the four cases studied here, the unions are love marriages, which respect a certain homogeneity: Jules Duplessis-Kergomard wanted to be a writer and was a republican activist; Henry Desparmet was a free-thinking, socialist public works engineer; Laurent Eidenschenk was a German teacher and also a socialist; Édouard Fuster was a publicist specialising in social issues who became a professor at the Collège de France. These four unions thus constitute pairs of intellectuals where intimate discussions feed public commitment⁹⁷. In the first three couples, the wives eclipsed their husbands by their public visibility. In the case of the Kergomards and Desparmets, the imbalance goes even further: it is the women who support the family. Their career records also show the administration's disapproval of this inversion of gender norms. The archives of the Education Department also show the difficulty, for the administration, of admitting

96 Pierre Longone, "Le mariage en question?", *Population et sociétés, monthly bulletin of demographic, economic and social information*, September 1976, n°94.

97 See Raymond Dartevelle and Mélanie Fabre (eds.), "Couples d'intellectuels, de l'intime au politique (1880-1940)", *Social Studies*, n°168, 2019/2.

the dual function of mother and wife that these women occupy. In the case of the headmistresses - Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Albertine Eidenschenk - the problem was all the more thorny as they lived with their families on the school premises. While wanting to train young girls to become mothers and wives, the Ministry criticised married women at the head of the establishments, who were less available than their single colleagues.

"Starting from the hypothesis that the private sphere is a terrain of the democratic adventure"⁹⁸
"This prologue sought to give an intimate depth to these four intellectuals, who will now be analysed through the positions they adopted publicly between the 1880s and 1914, a period during which they built up their stature as intellectuals. But the aim of this development was not limited to giving an intimate 'depth' to these four personalities. It also aimed, by studying these destinies in parallel, to open the way to grasp more global phenomena in the continuation of this thesis.

It is indeed through trajectories such as these that networks - both professional and militant - as well as institutions - the ENS de Fontenay, the teacher training colleges, the lycées de jeunes filles, and even the écoles maternelles - can be studied in a different way. Indeed, these four personalities, whose trajectory accelerated at the time of the school laws, were the product of the new institutions - which offered them opportunities for study and employment - as much as they participated in the production of these institutions, of which they became actors. Thanks to this close-up approach, these institutions can be approached in a different way, through the paths of their actors. Focusing on personalities also makes it possible to study the reactions of these institutions in circumstances of crisis, in particular when civil servants step out of their duty of reserve.

Moreover, by analysing the formative period of individuals, the biographical approach makes it possible to study the soil in which their future intellectual productions are rooted. For, as Jacques Julliard reminds us, "ideas do not walk naked in the street"⁹⁹ "The history of ideas is inseparable from the history of the people who bear them, who are themselves the products of a family, social and educational environment, of a professional community and, more broadly, of a society.

The individual paths of Pauline Kergomard, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Albertine Eidenschenk, Marie Baertschi and many of their colleagues allow us to study the emergence of "new layers" of women - a concept that had previously been thought of only as masculine - on which the Republic relied.¹⁰⁰ -on which the Republic relies. These women from the working and middle classes experienced a social ascent thanks to the positions opened to them in

98 Anne Muxel, 'La politisation dans ou par l'intime', in Anne Muxel (ed.), *La vie privée des convictions, Politique, affectivité, intimité*, Paris, Presses de la fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 2013, pp. 13-21.

99 Jacques Julliard, "Le fascisme en France", *Annales. Economies. Sociétés. Civilisations*, vol 39, n°4, July-August 1984, p. 849-861.

100 Chloé Gaboriaux, 'Fonder la République sur les "nouvelles couches sociales" (Gambetta) : description du monde social et préférences institutionnelles dans la France des années 1870', *Histoire@Politique* 2015/1, n° 25, p. 12-23.

Public education: a detailed analysis of their trajectory allows a better understanding of this social mutation which took hold with the XX^e century.

The challenge of this analysis, which is as close as possible to the actors, is to start from life paths in order to take a new look at networks, institutions, movements of ideas and social developments considered as the products of these intertwined individual paths. "While emphasizing the subjectivity of the actors and the singularity of the paths"¹⁰¹ While emphasizing the subjectivity of the actors and the singularity of their paths", it is therefore possible to produce something other than a fragmented history and to grasp, on the contrary, global phenomena, because, as Philippe Artières and Dominique Kalifa assert, "the texture [of society] resides precisely in this tangle of experiences"¹⁰² .

Sources of the photographs in the prologue

- Photographs of Pauline Kergomard: Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard*, Rodez, Fil d'Ariane éditeur, 2000.
- Photographs of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello: Claire Paul, *Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Le combat d'une femme pour les femmes. Pionnière de l'éducation féminine*, La Ciotat, Des auteurs des livres, 2020.
- Photographs of Albertine Eidenschenk: documents reproduced in *Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, director of the École normale d'institutrices de Douai, 1905-1926*, Douai, 1978.
- Photographs of Marie Baertschi obtained by Raymond Dartevelle from her descendants.

101 Philippe Artières, Dominique Kalifa, "L'historien et les archives personnelles : pas à pas", art. cit.

PART ONE:

**RE-FOUNDING EDUCATION TO FOUND A NEW
REGIME**

**THE MAKING OF A FEMALE INTELLECTUAL ELITE
(1860S - 1900S)**

Chapter 1

**The beginnings of public education for girls :
the Republic's grandes écoles, a factory of intellectuals?**

Introduction to Chapter 1

One cannot study the emergence of women intellectuals without looking at the upheaval of the 1880s in terms of the new educational and career opportunities available to women. In doing so, we run the risk of falling into the pitfall pointed out by Rebecca Rogers:

"In France, the state has traditionally been seen as the main agent of change, despite clear evidence to the contrary¹. " But in studying the innovations of the 1880s, the point is not to deny the educational provision that already existed for girls before the advent of the Republic. Clarisse Coignet's study also makes the link between the initiatives of the Second Empire and the new regime. By looking at the school laws, the aim is rather to emphasise the process by which women gain access to intellectual professions recognised by the State. The creation in 1880 of the *École normale supérieure d'institutrices de Fontenay-aux-Roses*, which aimed to train the staff of the girls' teacher training colleges, was part of the reorganisation of primary education. The aim was to create a new professional body that would support the regime, as Ferry declared in the Senate: "The normal schools train honourable teaching individuals; the normal schools alone can form a teaching body² ". The title of professor, henceforth granted to teachers in the *écoles normales*, was borrowed "from another order of education [*the secondary*], [and] corresponds to [an] increase in intellectual dignity³ "for the elite of the primary staff. But the title of teacher was also officially granted to women for the first time, which was a small revolution.

Sevrier women are also led to become teachers - high school teachers - after difficult competitive exams. As Jo Burr Margadant writes, they "pursue careers that require a high level of education and adopt a male model of performance and achievement⁴ ". Fontenaysiennes and sévriennes were given a mission: they had to convert working-class and bourgeois girls to republicanism, without violating the social and gender order. The two ENS thus participated in the emancipation of a generation of women while contributing to the work of "inculcating limits⁵ ".

Up to now, historiography has given little attention to these two schools. While Sèvres has been studied in a few works⁶ the two sources mainly used here to describe it have not been used. As for Fontenay, it is a blind spot in historiography⁷.

- 1 Rebecca Rogers, (preface by Michelle Perrot), *Les bourgeoises au pensionnat : l'éducation féminine au XIX^e siècle*, translated by Céline Grasser, Rennes, PUR, 2015 (dematerialized version), chapter 4.
- 2 Jean-Noël Luc, "L'École Normale Supérieure de Saint-Cloud : clé de voûte de l'enseignement primaire, 1882-1914", *Historical Reflections*, Waterloo, Historical Reflections Press, 1980, p. 417-427.
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 Jo Burr Margadant, *Madame Professor*, *op. cit.* p. 6: "having pursued careers that require a high level of training, adopt a masculine model of performance and success".
- 5 Formula of F. Muel-Dreyfus, quoted by Jean-Noël Luc, "L'École Normale Supérieure de Saint-Cloud", *art. cit.*
- 6 Françoise Mayeur, *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles sous la Troisième République*, *op. cit.* and Jo Burr Margadant, *Madame le Professeur*, *op. cit.*
- 7 With the exception of a 'memorial' work by Yvonne Oulhiou, *L'École normale supérieure de Fontenay-aux-Roses à travers le temps*, Fontenay, ENS de Fontenay-aux-Roses, 1981.

This chapter further studies the way in which the new profession of teacher is constituted by analysing the youthful memories of four intellectuals: Marguerite Aron, who published in 1901 the diary she kept at Sèvres; Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, who wrote on the verge of death the memories of her Sevres youth; Albertine Eidenschenk and Marie Baertschi, who wrote their memories of Fontenay at the threshold of the XX^e century. Admittedly, these memories, written for the most part *in retrospect*, "are no more 'neutral' or more marked by innocence than other accounts"⁸": as Jean-François Condette and Véronique Castagnet-Lars write, they are "a complex alchemy between real memories, memory recompositions [...] with sometimes a support on preserved documents"⁹ ". Crossed with other sources, these accounts are nevertheless relevant in a historical approach. Thus, as Philippe Artières and Dominique Kalifa point out, after several decades of recourse to these documents, "the idea that authentication, verification and grouping procedures do not work with the writing of the self [...] hardly seems defensible"¹⁰ ". In this case, by comparing several sources and analysing the accounts of students¹¹ In this case, by comparing several sources and by analysing the accounts of students who later became teachers, the aim is to discover how the values governing this profession are internalised and to look back at a pivotal moment in the lives of these intellectuals: that of the transition to adulthood.

First, we will go back to the roots of the school laws through the life of Clarisse Coignet, an early Republican who was active in educational debates from the Second Empire onwards. We will then study the ENS de Fontenay and Sèvres, new institutions for female and secular education created in the 1880s, through the experiences of female students.

I- Clarisse Coignet, an early Republican in the founding debates of the public school

It is in the last decade of the Second Empire that one must delve to study the roots of the pedagogical work of the Third Republic. The career of Clarisse Coignet, who is relatively unknown in historiography¹² is particularly enlightening for those interested in this The "republican moment" studied by Philip G. Nord and defined by Vincent Duclert as "the

8 Jean-François Condette and Véronique Castagnet-Lars, "Écrire l'histoire des élèves: problèmes de sources et de méthodes," *Histoire de l'éducation* [Online], 151 | 2019, online 15/01/2019, accessed 10/01/2020, <https://www.cairn.info/revue-histoire-de-l-education-2019-1-page-9.htm>.

9 *Ibid.*

10 Philippe Artières, Dominique Kalifa, "L'historien et les archives personnelles : pas à pas", art. cit.

11 See Pierre Molinier, *La naissance de l'étudiant moderne : XIX^e siècle*, Paris, Belin, 2002 and Carole Lécuyer, 'Une nouvelle figure de la jeune fille sous la III^e République : l'étudiante', *Clio. Histoire femmes et sociétés* [Online], 4 | 1996, online 01 January 2005, accessed 21 March 2020, <http://journals.openedition.org/cli0/437>.

12 Several historians quote her briefly in connection with the development of a secular morality, including Patrick Cabanel and Pierre Ognier. Bernard Demars devoted a short note to her in the *Dictionnaire biographique du fouriérisme* ("Coignet, Clarisse Joséphine, née Gauthier", published online in August 2012). Jeannine Joliot devoted three articles to her in the *Procès-verbaux et mémoires de l'Académie de Besançon* between 1982 and 1987, but these articles are only a summary of C. Coignet's *Mémoires* and are not based on a historical approach.

Republic before the Republic, [...] this process of political acculturation, civic awareness and intellectual commitment¹³"which characterises the democratic transition from the Second Empire to the Republic. Clarisse Coignet is one of the rare women who evolve in this counter-elite "nourished by an alternative political culture [while] the dictatorship is still in place¹⁴".

Clarisse Coignet contributed from the 1860s onwards to laying the foundations of republican thinking on education. The aim here is to show the role she played as a "go-between" between the republican opposition to the Second Empire and the builders of the Third Republic's educational work. A supporter of ambitious education for young girls and herself a recognised philosopher, Clarisse Coignet also defended the principle of secularism from the Second Empire. The proclamation of the Republic in 1870 marked a break in her intellectual career: it was then that she was thrown into the circles of power. She then campaigned in favour of education

secondary education for girls, the institution of a secular morality in all public schools, coeducation, the adoption of the

Froebel's method of teaching children, equal pay for male and female teachers, the creation of a teaching corps

women's high level. Although the school reforms of the 1880s gave reality to some of his projects, many of his demands were at the heart of the debates of the Belle Époque.

Clarisse Coignet is undoubtedly a pioneer, whose thinking is astonishing in the diversity of the fields it covers. Aware of the exceptional nature of her career, Clarisse Coignet does not hesitate to present herself as an intellectual in her memoirs, as well as in other texts where she uses the "I" to express herself with authority on political subjects.

A) A Republican's journey through the century

Born in 1823, the daughter of a major industrialist and married to a wealthy entrepreneur, Clarisse Coignet's bourgeois status and generational background make her rather marginal compared to the other intellectuals analysed in this thesis. Active before and throughout the period we are interested in, she was at the heart of the power networks that initiated the major educational reforms from 1879 onwards. Clarisse Coignet's destiny stretches from the French Revolution to the Great War. From childhood she was steeped in the principles of 1789, inherited from a republican father. Her extraordinary longevity led her to live until 1918. Her trajectory is thus a crossing of the XIX^e century that we approach here in the light of educational debates.



Clarisse Coignet, bust of white marble, 1888, by Syamour (Marguerite Gagneur).

13 Vincent Duclert, 'Preface', in Philip G. Nord (trans. Christophe Jaquet), *Le moment républicain: combats pour la démocratie dans la France du XIX^e siècle*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2013, p.12.

14 Philip G. Nord, *Ibid*, p. 30.

In her seventies, Clarisse Coignet thought about her posterity and published her memoirs in four volumes between 1899 and 1904, in which she recalls her contribution to the establishment of the Third Republic. She is the only person I met in this thesis who took on such an autobiographical project¹⁵. In a letter to her friend Arvède Barine¹⁶ she states her intentions:

I also wanted to bring you the three volumes of my memoirs myself [...]. My intention [...] is to revise them for publication after me [...]. I have two chapters left to do: one to indicate the religious point of view to which I have arrived, the other a general glance at my life. [...] It is understood that you will keep these books absolutely secret from me¹⁷.

In a 1903 pamphlet that she later included in her memoirs, Clarisse Coignet did not hesitate to take stock of the new regime and the role she had played in it with her overhanging eye:

For more than 20 years, during the struggle against the militant elements of the old regime, I never stopped exposing and defending republican principles in the *Revue Bleue*, in particular the secularity of education, and at the same time I published a course on secular morality for use in primary schools with Alcan. [I] thus, in my modest sphere and my small measure, participated in the transformation of my country from a more or less absolute monarchy to a free republic¹⁸.

Clarisse Coignet clearly claims to be an intellectual in the service of the Republic. Her republican convictions were forged in several stages. At the age of twelve, her father introduced her to politics by commenting with her on the *National*. When Clarisse Coignet was a teenager, her cousin married Victor Considerant, a disciple of Fourier. Clarisse Coignet became enthusiastic about this republican and social religion¹⁹. At the age of 20, after her father's ruin, she went to a Puritan boarding school in England, where she discovered the virtues of Protestantism as a "method of religious autonomy"²⁰. This period transformed her educational convictions: she shared with the headmistress of the institution the conviction that "the purpose of education is not to govern children, but to teach them to govern themselves"²¹.

15 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben's autobiography was published after her death by her grandson, without her having asked for it. Her account concerns only her formative intellectual years, not her adult commitments. The same is true of Marguerite Aron, whose *Diary* was published at the request of Camille Sée, and initially anonymously.

16 On Arvède Barine, see Isabelle Ernot, "Une historienne au tournant du siècle : Arvède Barine", *Mil neuf cent, revue d'histoire intellectuelle*, Paris, Société d'études soréliennes, 1998, n°1, p. 93-131.

17 Letter to Arvède Barine, 2 May 1906, NAF 18341.

18 Clarisse Coignet, *Where are we going*, Paris, H. Paulin, 1903, 68 p., p. 7.

19 In 1895, she published a book entitled *Victor Considérant, sa vie, son œuvre (Victor Considérant, his life and work)*, published by Félix Alcan.

20 Formula borrowed from Patrick Cabanel, *Le Dieu de la République. Aux sources protestantes de laïcité (1860-1900)*, Rennes, PUR, 2003, p. 87.

21 Clarisse Coignet, *Mémoires, tome 2*, Lausanne, C. Pache-Varidel, 1900, p. 82.

Although, much to her mother's dismay, she never adhered to Catholicism, her stay in England led Clarisse Coignet to convert to a very liberal Protestantism. In her memoirs, she says "his] interest in this religion without priests, without rites, without external authority, and yet so powerful and active on souls²²". Returning to France after 1848, she became close to the circles of liberal Protestantism. Her spiritual and political trajectory resembles that of several great names of the Third Republic. Like Ferdinand Buisson, Félix Pécaut and Jules Steeg, she evolved towards a Protestantism that was completely detached from the institution, while retaining a religiosity and a deep admiration for the Bible. Like these great figures, Clarisse Coignet reinvested her ideals of free examination and moral autonomy in educational reform.

Clarisse Coignet's interest in educational issues did not begin at the end of the XIX^e century. As soon as she returned to France after her English experience, she contributed to the *Journal des mères et des enfants*, directed by Jules Delbrück, a Fourierist who sought to transform asylum wards into places of societal experimentation for working-class children. In 1849-1850, she published studies carried out in England in this journal²³. In 1850, she married François Coignet, a Fourierist from Lyon. The couple opposed the coup d'état of Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, offering refuge to Jules Favre and Christophe Bertholon, two influential members of the Republican party²⁴. From this date onwards, Clarisse Coignet considered that the failure of the Republic could only be averted through the school. Thus, in her first book published in 1856 and entitled *De l'enseignement public au point de vue de l'Université, de la Commune et de l'État*, she wrote "Universal education must precede universal suffrage, so that the latter may be understood in the duty it imposes, as well as in the dignity it gives. [...] Instead of building clubs, let us raise schools.²⁵". This book reveals the link between political commitment and educational reflection for Clarisse Coignet. It also inaugurates her public recognition: "This inexperienced book [...] is well received by the thinking public, at a time when power is crushing thought. All the republican papers talk about it, and, quite unexpectedly for me, two very sympathetic feuilletons are devoted to me in the *Gazette de France*²⁶".

B) Meeting with Elisa Lemonnier: popular education, girls' education and secularism

Evolving in hostile circles to the Second Empire, Clarisse Coignet met Élisabeth Lemonnier, a Saint-Simonian activist active in the professional training of women workers. Clarisse Coignet joined the board of directors of her Society for the Professional Education of Women when it was founded in 1862. Like Élisabeth Lemonnier, she was convinced of the need

22 *Ibid*, p. 107.

23 *Ibid*, p. 170.

24 Clarisse Coignet, *Mémoires*, tome 3, Lausanne, C. Pache-Varidel, 1901, p. 44.

25 Clarisse Coignet quoted by Patrick Cabanel, *Le Dieu de la République*, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

26 Clarisse Coignet, *Mémoires*, volume 3, *op. cit.*

to provide common women with the means for financial independence. She was also attracted by the pioneering nature of the initiative concerning the relationship between religion and school:

[Elisa Lemonnier] founded in our country the first professional and secular school [...] secular in the true and superior sense of the word. Not the secularism that is systematically hostile to religion, but the secularism that respects it, standing only outside the particular professions of faith, because the profession of faith excludes neutrality and the school presents itself as a neutral ground for all cults²⁷.

On the board of directors, Catholics, Protestants, Jews and freethinkers rub shoulders. Admiring Élisabeth Lemonnier and her work, Clarisse Coignet wrote a biography of her in 1866, one year after her death²⁸. She also became, with Mme Jules Simon, a spokeswoman for the Société pour l'enseignement professionnel des femmes. On 23 August 1874, she gave the prize-giving speech at the Cirque d'hiver for the professional schools for young girls. She spoke of the opposition the schools had faced, particularly from the Catholic right, and praised the vocational education of girls:

With the profession, you are no longer idle and dependent beings [...]: you are active and productive members and you acquire the dignity and the rights. [You belong to yourself. In a democratic society like ours, the profession [...] gives you a more direct participation in all the interests of your country²⁹.

Exempted from the need to earn a living, Clarisse Coignet defended the right of women to work in 1880: "[Women] are perfectly capable of being self-sufficient, and a democratic society will open up to them all careers compatible with public order. Good morals are interested in this³⁰. " Here she contradicts the doxa which consists of presenting female work as a risk of dissolution of morals.

C) A mother turned philosopher

Not only did Clarisse Coignet demand the right of working-class and middle-class women to engage in gainful employment, but she also defended their right to participate in intellectual life, having had access to it herself.

27 Clarisse Coignet, *Memoirs*, volume 3, *op. cit.*

28 Clarisse Coignet, *Biographie de Madame Lemonnier*, Paris, 1866, 23 p.

29 Clarisse Coignet, 'Speech at the distribution of prizes for girls' vocational schools', *Revue bleue*, 5 September 1874.

30 Clarisse Coignet, "Secondary education for girls. De l'enseignement de la morale. Plan, méthode et esprit de cet enseignement", *Revue bleue*, 24 July 1880.

In 1859, when she was 36 years old, Clarisse Coignet met Alexandre Massol. Heir to utopian socialism, who had become a Saint-Simonian after the 1830 revolution, from 1862 he ran the Émules d'Hiram Freemason Lodge.³¹ Massol fell under the spell of Clarisse Coignet, who had only been educated by her mother and private teachers as a child, and introduced her to Latin, Greek and philosophy. Passionate about this discipline, Clarisse Coignet began to publish her philosophical thoughts. Many of her readers took her for a man. She said: "Nothing amused me like these misunderstandings, a legitimate revenge for the philosophical disdain so often shown to my sex³². "

Michèle le Dœuff has indeed shown how philosophy remained closed to women before the XX^e century. Analysing the few female figures in the history of this discipline, she finds that "It was only through the mediation of a man that they were able to access theoretical discourse³³ "This is true of Clarisse Coignet. Although she rejoiced in her "revenge" on the male monopoly, she refused to appear as a learned woman:

There is usually a reluctance to admit that a woman can combine [...] serious intellectual work with the duties [...] of the home. This prejudice stems from the proud tendency of men to monopolise the faculty of generalisation in favour of their sex, and which some women also contribute to spreading. [...] Women's own work, the creation of the home, is undoubtedly imposed on her above all others; but this work does not hinder her own development. [...] The serious joys of the spirit, moreover, making one insensitive to worldly vanities, singularly facilitate the task within, as I experience daily³⁴.

Devoting a chapter of her memoirs to the glorification of her experience of motherhood, Clarisse Coignet emphasises the compatibility between intellectual activity and female 'destiny'. She rejoices in a sentence pronounced by Massol at the end of one of their philosophical discussions: "There is not a thread of low-blue in you³⁵ ! " Instead of criticising this concept used to ridicule the women writers of her time, Clarisse Coignet takes it on board to distance herself from it. This perfectly illustrates a remark by the historian Isabelle Ernot: "Part of male domination is there: in the ability to force the other sex to conform to a representation that it has forged of itself³⁶. " A mother and wife above all, Clarisse Coignet hoped, "in exchange for the expression of her social conformity, to obtain recognition from the city for her intellectual talents³⁷ ".

31 Philip G. Nord (preface by Vincent Duclert), *Le moment républicain*, op. cit. p. 45.

32 Clarisse Coignet, *Memoirs*, volume 3, op. cit.

33 Michèle le Dœuff, 'Cheveux longs, idées courtes', in Michèle le Dœuff, *Recherches sur l'imaginaire philosophique*, Payot, 1980, p.133-166.

34 Clarisse Coignet, *Memoirs*, volume 3, op. cit.

35 *Ibid*, p. 376.

36 Isabelle Ernot, *Historiennes et enjeux de l'écriture de l'histoire des femmes*, op. cit. , p. 423. She uses this formula to evoke Clarisse Bader, a contemporary of Clarisse Coignet.

37 *Ibid* . , p. 218.

D) Clarisse Coignet, philosopher of independent morality: the beginnings of the concept of secularism

When he founded the weekly review *La Morale indépendante* in 1865, Massol asked Clarisse Coignet to participate. The latter was at first doubtful, fearing that the review would become a war machine against religion. As Pierre Ognier points out, the weekly magazine was an initiative of the Grand Orient de France, whose aim was to establish a moral code outside religion³⁸. However, Massol reassures Clarisse Coignet that the composition of the editorial board guarantees that all opinions will be represented. Frédéric Morin, a disciple of the Catholic thinker Frédéric Ozanam, was on the editorial board.

"Anticipating the noise of controversy surrounding the new organ, which it is always good to avoid for a woman³⁹ "Clarisse Coignet proposed to remain anonymous, but when Massol refused, she decided to sign "C. Coignet", which explains the ensuing confusion about her sex.

La Morale indépendante appeared from 6 August 1865 to 31 July 1870. Clarisse Coignet contributed to 118 of the 258 issues published, devoting in particular a series of articles to Saint-Simonism, to eclecticism, the school of Victor Cousin, and to the criticism of numerous philosophical systems that marked the XIX^e century. She also wrote a number of critical reviews of philosophical works. She was a key part of the journal, as confirmed by the publication of her 1869 work entitled *La Morale indépendante dans son principe et dans son objet*, which Françoise Mayeur considers to be the philosophical charter of the movement⁴⁰. In this text, Clarisse Coignet presents independent morality not as "a school following the wanderings of a master [but as] a republic of workers who agree on the foundation of the edifice, and who [...] learn and enlighten themselves by the very work they accomplish⁴¹ ". She sees this movement as an example of the age-old struggle between those who seek to emancipate the human spirit and those who seek to enslave it. For her, independent morality is a philosophical extension of the French Revolution. Adopting a teleological vision of history, she considers that humanity has reached a point where the construction of a morality independent of religious systems has become necessary: "Today criticism [...] shows us [...] revelations as unproven beliefs which are a matter of individual feeling [...]. Will morality therefore be swept away in this great flood of arbitrary beliefs⁴² ? " For Clarisse Coignet, if morality remained attached to religious systems, it would risk sinking with the religions themselves, hence the need to found an autonomous morality.

38 Pierre Ognier, "La "Morale indépendante" sous le Second Empire (1865-1870)", in Alain Dierkens (ed.), *L'intelligentsia européenne en mutation. 1850-1875*, Brussels, University of Brussels, 1998, pp. 155-174. For a brief presentation of Clarisse Coignet's participation in the movement, see Jeffner Allen, 'Clarisse Coignet', in Mary Ellen Waithe (ed.), *The History of Women Philosophers*, volume 3, Dordrecht, Kluwer, 1991, pp. 171-183.

39 Clarisse Coignet, *Mémoires, tome 3, op.cit.*, p. 293.

40 Françoise Mayeur, "Le positivisme et l'École républicaine", *Romantisme*, n° 21-22, 1978, p. 137-147.

41 Clarisse Coignet, *La Morale indépendante*, Paris, G. Baillière, 1869, 194 p., p. 8.

42 *Ibid*, p. 26.

Clarisse Coignet particularly attacks two philosophical schools: on the one hand, metaphysics, and particularly the spiritualism and eclecticism of Victor Cousin, which dominated the period; on the other hand, positivism, embodied by Comte and Littré. It makes independent morality a third way. To begin with, Clarisse Coignet attacks metaphysics, which considers that the human world is governed by elements external to it. For the philosopher, if the human mind is free to believe in external causes - for example, in the action of a God - the error of metaphysics is to give these speculations a *substantiality*, that is, a reality beyond the mind that conceives them. Thus, according to Clarisse Coignet, God is only a hypothesis, and therefore cannot be the basis of a moral code. Moreover, religious morality would have the consequence of stripping man of his freedom:

It is not only God who gives us forgiveness, but he is the one who inclines our hearts to humility and disposes them to repentance... It is impossible to grasp the point where divine freedom ends and human freedom begins. And yet, by a strange twist, man, who has been represented as so weak and powerless to do good, suddenly becomes, when it comes to evil, an abyss of defilement. [Yet Satan is the principle of evil as God is the principle of good. [...] In vain does the Church endeavour [...] to re-establish human responsibility, which its premises have destroyed⁴³.

Clarisse Coignet criticises metaphysical morality, and in particular Christian morality, for denying human freedom by making men's actions either the product of the divine will or the will of the devil. She underlines the duplicity of the Church's moral system: if man is not held responsible for his good deeds, being only the instrument of God's will, he is condemned for his bad deeds, even though Satan has inspired them. In short, for Clarisse Coignet, no morality is viable if it does not take human freedom as its starting point.

It is in the name of this conclusion that she also attacks positivism, which considers that the human being is determined by nature. On the contrary, she asserts that man is free,

because, enclosed in a system of forces and laws called nature, he foresees a goal that nature does not give him. [...] While the plant and the animal work on a plan which they have not drawn up and by virtue of an involuntary force, he, the cause, the end, and the agent of his own end, draws his plan [...] from himself, and fulfils it by his own effort⁴⁴.

The possibility of an independent morality thus follows, for Clarisse Coignet, from the exclusively human fact of freedom, which makes man responsible and accountable for his actions. Whereas metaphysical morality attaches human actions and their sanction to a

43 *Ibid*, pp. 41-44.

44 *Ibid*, pp. 58-59.

In contrast to the transcendence of positivist morality, which conditions human facts on natural phenomena, independent morality recognises human exceptionalism: only man is free, only he is aware of this, and it is this very freedom that makes him a moral being.

The philosophical movement of independent morality has political consequences. By detaching morality from religious dogma, it attracted the wrath of the Church. Thus Hyacinthe Loyson denounced the movement from the pulpit of Notre-Dame de Paris. Clarisse Coignet replied that it was never a question of attacking religious faith "in its psychological foundation, but only in its metaphysical and social character."⁴⁵ " But independent morality does not only frighten Catholics. It also promotes a new way of thinking about the state, bold because it is expressed under an authoritarian regime:

If morality regards man as the means to an end higher than himself, politics [...] will sacrifice the individual to society, the citizen to the fatherland; it will strive to make, not free men worthy of respect, but a powerful and domineering state. [...] If morality [...] has as its aim the greatness and elevation of the individual, the State becomes under its inspiration a mere guarantee of freedom [...] of citizens⁴⁶.

As she wrote some thirty years later in her memoirs, for Clarisse Coignet, "politics derives from morality"⁴⁷ ". The elaboration of an independent morality is therefore a means of preparing a new political regime, based on autonomous citizens, freed from dogma and having learned to use their freedom to the full: the Republic. The journal of *independent morality* had obtained authorisation to appear as a philosophical and moral publication, but it was forbidden to deal with political subjects on pain of punishment. In 1868, it tried to become a political paper, but failed⁴⁸. From then on, instead of developing overtly political themes, the journal focused on the school. Pierre Ognier noted that articles related to the school question multiplied and reached a peak in 1869 and 1870, on the eve of the proclamation of the Republic. *La Morale indépendante* gave enthusiastic publicity to the creation of the Ligue de l'enseignement in February 1867 and in 1870 reported on Jules Ferry's famous conference on the equality of education for both sexes. Clarisse Coignet joined the ranks of the newly formed Ligue de l'enseignement, which had a great future⁴⁹. She regularly spoke out on school issues, particularly on the subject of the Lemonnier schools. It is therefore not surprising that it was as an expert on educational issues that she was called upon by the new republican government in 1870, when the Empire fell.

45 *Ibid*, p. 177.

46 *Ibid*, pp. 167-8.

47 Clarisse Coignet, *Mémoires, tome 3, op.cit.*, p. 273.

48 On this point, see Pierre Ognier, 'La "Morale indépendante" sous le Second Empire (1865-1870)', art. cit.

49 See Arlette Boulogne, 'Les femmes au début de la Ligue de l'Enseignement', *Pénélope*, n°11, Autumn 1984, p. 95-98 and Philip G. Nord (preface by Vincent Duclert), *Le moment républicain, op. cit.*, p. 135.

E) Women in public education reform, a priority of the democratic transition

Following the proclamation of the Republic, Clarisse Coignet took part in the meetings organised at the Hôtel de Ville in Paris by the new Minister of Public Education, Jules Simon. She was then summoned by the mayor to sit on a twelve-member women's commission, which met from 27 October 1870 in parallel with the 40-member men's commission. The aim of both commissions was to draw up a new law on primary education. In the women's commission, she found Julie Toussaint, who had been the head of the Société pour l'enseignement professionnel des femmes since the death of Élisabeth Lemonnier. Related to this society were Mme Jules Simon and Mlle Marchef-Girard.

Joséphine Marchef-Girard, headmistress of the first vocational school founded by Élisabeth Lemonnier, wrote two books on the education of girls in the 1860s. In 1880, she became the first headmistress of the Collège Sévigné, a free secondary school which served as a model for the State when it created women's lycées the following year. In 1884, a year after leaving the direction of the college in favour of Mathilde Salomon and after having founded the École Monceau, she asked for a position as inspector general, insisting on her 30 years of experience⁵⁰. In her book *Les femmes: leur passé, leur présent, leur avenir*, she demands the intellectual equality of women and men and denounces the performativity of misogynistic prejudices:

The man, believing himself to be logical, says to himself: the woman, being destined only for a very secondary role, is endowed, consequently, only with a somewhat inferior intelligence; of what use would be to her a sustained study, an elite intelligence? And from there, he neglects to cultivate this intelligence, lets it become numb, and then applauds himself for having guessed so correctly. Vicious reasoning based on a more than dubious proposition, in which the effect becomes the cause⁵¹.

Jeanne de Friedberg, whose profile is quite similar, also sat on the women's commission of 1870. Inspector of asylum rooms since her widowhood in 1860, director of the Ecole Supérieure de filles de la Ville de Paris, she was appointed in 1880 to head the ENS de Fontenay⁵².

In this commission, Clarisse Coignet also met Mme Bachellery, a boarding school teacher and author of numerous texts on the education of girls, a disciple of Jacotot, and a committed republican in 1848 who had always promoted the equality of intelligence between men and women⁵³. Clarisse Coignet also collaborated with Julie Daubié, the first French woman to obtain a bachelor's degree in 1861.

The composition of this commission provides an overview of the personalities considered to be experts on educational issues at the advent of the Third Republic. Many of them

50 Career file of Joséphine Marchef-Girard, F/17/23420.

51 Quoted by Isabelle Ernot, *Historiennes et enjeux de l'écriture de l'histoire des femmes*, op. cit. p. 516.

52 Career file of Jeanne de Friedberg, F/17/22872.

53 On Mrs Bachellery, see Rebecca Rogers, (preface by Michelle Perrot), *Les bourgeoises au pensionnat*, *op. cit.*

continued to play a major role in the decades that followed, and died or retired in the 1890s, such as Joséphine Marchef-Girard and Jeanne de Friedberg. Of all these women, Clarisse Coignet was the longest-lived. Most of her colleagues have both feet in the XIX^e century. Pauline Kergomard, the future great name of public education, was only 32 at the time and not yet active enough to sit on the board. And those who would benefit from the Republic's new school offer were still children.

Looking back on the year 1870, Clarisse Coignet notes that 'it was with a conscientiousness, a calmness, a goodwill and a good agreement that could serve as an example to many men's meetings that [the Ladies' Commission revised] the primary education curriculum⁵⁴ ". This *a priori* harmless remark is in fact revealing of the way in which these women, excluded from political life, set themselves up as models of democratic debate. When the men's and women's commissions met on 3 December 1870 to exchange their conclusions, the women's report, read by Clarisse Coignet, contradicted the men's. Unlike the rival report, the women's report demanded, for example, that all female teachers be required to have an elementary certificate, as nuns had until then enjoyed the privilege of a letter of obedience. After negotiations, the women's conclusions were accepted by a large majority.

Following this event, and in order to avoid dissent, a joint sub-committee of 14 members was created. Clarisse Coignet sat on it while continuing to attend the meetings of the women's committee. The existence of a mixed committee did not prevent the women's committee from producing a special report. This text, signed on 8 February 1871, shows the name of its principal drafter, Clarisse Coignet⁵⁵. In it, she presented her study in favour of the introduction of coeducation in schools, which the women's committee supported by 15 votes to one. The report also addressed other issues, such as the prospect of a state monopoly on education. It should be remembered that the pioneering Élisabeth Lemonnier schools were part of the free education system, and that many of the women on the committee were associated with these schools. Two-thirds of the ladies' commission also declared itself in favour of secular education by excluding all religious teaching. It also called for equal salaries for male and female teachers and the same secondary education for girls and boys. The report ends with three wishes: the organisation of a real vocational education for both sexes, the reform of secondary education for boys and the creation of a secondary education for girls.

The years 1870-1871 appear to be a laboratory for the educational reforms introduced ten years later. For Clarisse Coignet, it was a time of socialisation in the future political networks of power. It was during this period, for example, that she met Ferdinand Buisson: "Bound by the conformity of patriotic feelings and scholastic views, we

54 Clarisse Coignet, *Memoirs, volume 3, op. cit.*

55 Clarisse Coignet, *Rapport présenté au nom de la Commission des dames chargée d'examiner les questions relatives à la réforme de l'instruction primaire* (appendix by Fanny Delon), Paris, imprimerie Paul Dupont, 1871.

We often worked together.⁵⁶ " Indeed, Clarisse Coignet's name appears in the patronage committee of the Batignolles orphanage, which Ferdinand Buisson directed in 1871⁵⁷. This innovative mixed orphanage soon merged with the one in Cempuis, which was popularised by a murderous press campaign in 1894. Clarisse Coignet's interest in this establishment is not surprising. Indeed, in 1871, the report of the Ladies' Commission made much room for innovative pedagogy, in particular the Froebel method. Thirty years later, in her memoirs, Clarisse Coignet criticised the pedagogical methods that had directed her own instruction:

Our girls [having] a teacher who awakens their minds [...], have no idea what the lessons were for their grandmothers [...]; geography: a parade of capitals, chief towns, rivers, capes, gulfs, etc.; history: names and dates; languages: rules and words. [All this] to be learned and repeated literally⁵⁸.

Convinced of the need to change these methods, Clarisse Coignet founded the Association for the Reform and Dissemination of Education in France. It was on behalf of this society that in 1871 she contacted Octave Gréard, Director of Primary Education for the city of Paris, who had taken part with her in the Public Education commissions the previous year. She obtained his authorisation to try a pedagogical innovation in a Parisian school. The association introduced the Froebel method and organised a trip for the headmistress to Liège, to a school that was already applying innovative methods, so that she could continue them on her return⁵⁹.

During this period of political transition, Clarisse Coignet also worked as a publicist for the *Revue politique et littéraire*, better known as the *Revue bleue*. The director of this journal, Eugène Yung, with whom she shared many of her convictions, was the husband of her eldest daughter. It was in the pages of the *Revue bleue* that she criticised the bill on primary education presented to the Chamber by Jules Simon in 1872. She deplored his renunciation of the secularisation of education: "In our view, there is too much of a gap between the conceptions of the existing government and the most legitimate wishes of liberal democracy⁶⁰ ". Clarisse Coignet also considers that the introduction of compulsory education should be a government priority:

"In a democracy, indeed, when all can indiscriminately come to power and dispose of it by vote, the ignorance of individuals is the most dangerous evil. Compulsory education would be a guarantee for the whole of society: "The public interest therefore demands that it be generalised [...] by all means, and if absolute gratuity is one of these means, gratuity will be generalised." She also concludes brilliantly that the "solution to the debate between secular and congregational education will be found in the separation of Church and State".

56 Clarisse Coignet, *Où allons-nous*, *op. cit.* p. 31.

57 Patrick Cabanel, *Ferdinand Buisson*, *op. cit.*

58 Clarisse Coignet, *Mémoires*, tome 1, Lausanne, C. Pache-Varidel, 1899, p. 142.

59 This episode is recounted in volume 3 of Clarisse Coignet's memoirs, *op. cit.*

60 Clarisse Coignet, "Le projet de loi sur l'instruction primaire", *Revue bleue*, 2 March 1872.

F) Clarisse Coignet in the development of the school policy of the Republic of the Republicans

After a decade of the Moral Order, the new Republican government launched a series of school laws. In 1879, when the project to create secondary education for girls was being discussed, Clarisse Coignet wrote in the *Revue bleue*. She began by establishing the history of girls' education in France since the French Revolution. She declares that "if the consequences of [the Revolution] were so slow to occur, [...] it is firstly because morals are not transformed in one day like laws, and secondly because women themselves, far from helping the transformation, delayed it with all their might⁶¹". Faced with this observation, Clarisse Coignet believes that French women must be republicanised through school. Above all, high schools must give girls "a real love of their country's institutions". Because she remembered the controversy surrounding the Duruy law in 1867, Clarisse Coignet was aware of the difficulties that secondary education for girls would encounter before being accepted: "The education of girls [...] is the last reservation of the old parties; they will be relentless in defending it. She was convinced, however, that "no reform would reach deeper into morals, [...] none would give the republic a firmer foundation".

Clarisse Coignet saw the introduction of women's lycées as a much more effective reform than that introduced by Victor Duruy in 1867. For the philosopher, the secondary courses created at that time did not succeed in "forcing [the student] to think". In the courses, and unlike in the lycées, teachers and pupils had no ongoing relationship, which destroyed any pedagogical effectiveness⁶². Furthermore, Clarisse Coignet accused the classes, which were attended by the pupils' mothers, of not having the character of "simplicity and recollection that befits the school; they do not create for young people that atmosphere of reflection and study which, separating them [...] from the dizziness of the world, gives their thoughts a more serious and firm direction".

A supporter of the lycées, Clarisse Coignet hoped that they would offer girls the same studies as boys: "We will not go so far as to ban Latin and Greek: it is childish to say that men need ancient languages above all for the study of law and medicine; the classics are above all a powerful means of intellectual and moral education.

Moreover, like Paul Bert, Clarisse Coignet was opposed to the existence of boarding schools in the new lycées. She saw the threat of barracking in an overly strict discipline inherited from old educational models. As she declared in 1881, the cloistered education given to women was not suitable for a democratic society⁶³. Clarisse Coignet also feared a consequence of boarding schools: the need to provide pupils with religious instruction. In general, she encouraged legislators to be bold and not to reproduce the male secondary school model: "The State, having never done anything for the education of girls,

61 Clarisse Coignet, "Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles - les projets de loi de MM Camille Sée et Paul Bert", *Revue bleue*, 19 April 1879.

62 A similar criticism was made by Madeleine Daniélou 30 years later. See chapter 6.

63 Clarisse Coignet, *De l'éducation dans la démocratie*, Paris, C. Delagrave, 1881, 344 p., p. 142.

has the great advantage that the past does not bind him: he does not come up against any routine, any prejudice of the teaching profession [...]. He can create from scratch.⁶⁴ " Clarisse Coignet's desire to adapt women's education to modern times is accompanied by absolute confidence in the Republic: "Democracy has done infinitely more for [women] than all the kings [...] and, if legislation still contains certain injustices concerning them, the principles of modern society condemn these injustices to disappear one day⁶⁵ ".

However, by analysing the parliamentary debates on the creation of a female secondary education, Françoise Mayeur has shown that the Republicans did not make it a priority: "The isolation of [Camille Sée] at the time of the vote, the lack of interest on the part of the very people who voted for the law, seem to show that the republicans were not asking for much [...]. The Camille Sée law remains the work of a single man⁶⁶. " The support given by parliamentarians to the Sée law was more a manifestation of republican orthodoxy than a deep conviction of the need to reform girls' education. It was out of anticlericalism that the Republicans voted for a law designed against convents. In these circumstances, Clarisse Coignet's praise of Jules Ferry bears witness to an enthusiasm that overestimates the interest that the republicans have in the education of girls: "No one in education does more for women. [...] Driven by this feeling of justice which is the nobility of democracy, he is committed [...] everywhere to opening up the resources of education equally to both sexes⁶⁷. "

It is true that Jules Ferry was one of the few politicians to reject the model of separation of spheres that confined women to their role as wife and mother. In his 1870 speech on equality of education, hailed by *Independent Morality*, he invoked the American example to extol the virtues of coeducation and women's access to liberal careers. On many points, he had an affinity with Clarisse Coignet, who said she had known him personally⁶⁸. In her eyes, Jules Ferry was not only a supporter of female education: he was the great name in secular education.

G) Teaching secular morality in the schools of the Republic

With the advent of the Republic, Clarisse Coignet reinvested her past as a philosopher in the development of a secular morality. In 1874, she published an article in the *Revue bleue* entitled "On the teaching of morals in secular schools⁶⁹ ". In the same year, in the midst of the Moral Order, she wrote a *Course in Morality for the Use of Secular Schools*⁷⁰. Then she published *De*

64 Clarisse Coignet, "Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles - les projets de loi de MM Camille Sée et Paul Bert", *Revue bleue*, 19 April 1879.

65 Clarisse Coignet, "Secondary education for girls. De l'enseignement de la morale. Plan, méthode et esprit de cet enseignement", *Revue bleue*, 24 July 1880.

66 Françoise Mayeur, *L'éducation des filles en France au XIX^e siècle*, Paris, Hachette, 2008, p. 214.

67 Clarisse Coignet, "Une école de peinture à Rome, Miss Mayor", *Revue bleue*, 6 August 1881.

68 Clarisse Coignet, *Mémoires, tome 4*, Lausanne, imp. C. Pache-Varidel, 1904, p. 282.

69 Clarisse Coignet, "De l'enseignement de la morale dans les écoles laïques", *Revue bleue*, 7 March 1874.

70 Clarisse Coignet, *Cours de morale à l'usage des écoles laïques*, Paris, Le Chevalier, 1874, 311 p.

*Education in Democracy*⁷¹ in 1881 and *Morality in Education*⁷² in 1883. These texts follow a similar philosophical line: God is never mentioned, the principle of morality lies in human freedom, morality is communicated rather than taught. The freedom to publish textbooks explains why not all morality textbooks are alike. For primary education, it was the cantonal teachers' conferences and the departmental commissions that proposed a list of textbooks from which teachers could draw. Following the example of Clarisse Coignet, several works completely dissociate morality from the idea of God. Mme Henry Gréville's *L'Instruction morale et civique des jeunes filles* was even put on the Index by the Vatican. This did not prevent the works of these two women from appearing in the list of 25 moral instruction manuals adopted by teachers' conferences for the 1883-1884 school year, which gave them a quasi-official consecration, alongside those of Paul Bert, Gabriel Compayré and Jules Steeg⁷³.

Clarisse Coignet's books do not mention the duties towards God included by Jules Simon in the curricula despite Jules Ferry's opposition. When the latter was questioned by the Duke of Broglie in the Senate on 31 May 1883 about moral textbooks that did not mention duties towards God, he defended Clarisse Coignet's book:

[It is] the most free [...] of metaphysical and religious data, [but it] expresses itself with all the respect, all the conscience that is necessary: "Irreligion," she says, "must never find a place in the school, beyond the truths of experience... This 'beyond' is the domain of religion, which will not be taken away from it... When religion ceases to be a social power, it will regain an authority over souls that no one will dispute".⁷⁴.

Clarisse Coignet remained faithful to the positions of the *Morale indépendante*: her morality was distinct from religious dogma, but was in no way anti-religious. However, while Jules Ferry welcomed the philosophical line followed by Clarisse Coignet, Eugène Manuel, the future Inspector General and President of the jury for the women's agrégation de lettres, criticised her textbook in the very official *Revue pédagogique*: "Doesn't this book give reason to fear, by this very silence, that secular society will become an atheistic society⁷⁵?" Conversely, Charles Defodon considers in the *Manuel général de l'Instruction primaire* that "if Mme Coignet combats theocracy as a tyranny of conscience, she respects religion, without taking its source from it, as a free expression of feelings⁷⁶". He agrees with the comment of the philosopher Émile Boutroux, who considers that Clarisse

71 Clarisse Coignet, *De l'éducation dans la démocratie*, op. cit.

72 Clarisse Coignet, *La morale dans l'éducation*, Paris, C. Delagrave, 1883, 82 p.

73 On this point, see Pierre Ognier, *Une école sans Dieu? 1880-1895, l'invention d'une morale laïque sous la Troisième République*, Toulouse, Presses universitaires du Mirail, 2008.

74 For an analysis of the speech, see Louis Capéran, *Histoire de la laïcité républicaine. 3, La laïcité en marche*, 1961, Paris, M. Rivière, 328 p., p. 44 - the debate in question is reported in the official journal of 1^{er} June 1883.

75 Eugène Manuel, "Compte-rendu du livre de Clarisse Coignet: *De l'éducation dans la démocratie*", *Revue pédagogique*, February 1882.

76 Quoted by Pierre Ognier, *Une école sans Dieu? op. cit.* p. 112.

Coignet fights theocracy without fighting religion⁷⁷. Jules Ferry, Eugène Manuel, Charles Defodon, Émile Boutroux, all key figures in the republican school system, commented on Clarisse Coignet's textbooks in large audiences. If her works were the subject of such debate in the 1880s, it was because moral education, dedicated to the training of future citizens, crystallised conflicts. Clarisse Coignet defines it as follows: "The practice of this morality alone will raise democracy to its true rank. It is to help spread it, to make it penetrate especially in education, that we have written these interviews. Placed between a world that is no longer, and a world that is not yet, we endeavour to shed light [...] on the confusions that are inevitable in times of transition⁷⁸."

But if a new morality is needed for a new regime, its teaching methods must also be modified. Clarisse Coignet insists on the fact that morality, being the art of governing oneself, cannot be taught as "a collection of maxims, a rule that is learned or an order that is carried out⁷⁹". For the philosopher, morality must inspire all school life: "it is dangerous to multiply rules. [...] They must be few in number [...] but rigorously applied. Let us also avoid giving surveillance the character of suspicion. Distrust makes people want to do wrong, while trust inspires honesty.⁸⁰" The personality of the teacher is fundamental: "If morality can hardly be taught in the literal sense of the word, to a very great extent it can be communicated, and the first quality of the teacher will be to be [...] penetrated by it⁸¹."

Clarisse Coignet also states that her books are only aids to the teacher's teaching. The more the topics of the conversations are drawn from the children's daily lives, the more effective the moral lesson will be. His moral textbooks are in fact in the form of discussions. The process is similar to the Socratic method: the teacher starts with simple questions and then moves on to more general issues, always bouncing off the pupils' answers. In this respect, Clarisse Coignet warns the teacher. They must put themselves within the reach of the pupils and reject any professorial posture: "Morality, for the child, is summed up in the *examination of conscience*. If we lead him to make this examination freely [...] we will have succeeded, because he will draw from it the energy of light that the most eloquent speeches [...] will not give him⁸²."

If Clarisse Coignet's works were used for moral education in primary schools, the philosopher also considered this teaching in girls' secondary schools. In her article in the *Revue bleue*, published before the Sée law, she assumed that secondary education for girls would last eight years, divided into two cycles⁸³. She recommended that in the first cycle (from the age of twelve), the same teacher should follow the pupils for several years in a row, in order to

77 Quoted in *Ibid*, p. 125.

78 Clarisse Coignet, *De l'éducation dans la démocratie*, *op. cit.* p. IX.

79 Clarisse Coignet, *Cours de morale à l'usage des écoles laïques*, Le Chevalier, 1874, 311 p., p. 1.

80 Clarisse Coignet, "Instruction secondaire des jeunes filles", *Revue bleue*, 24 July 1880.

81 Clarisse Coignet, *Cours de morale à l'usage des écoles laïques*, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

82 Clarisse Coignet, "De l'enseignement de la morale dans les écoles laïques", *Revue bleue*, 7 March 1874.

83 Clarisse Coignet, "Secondary education for girls. De l'enseignement de la morale. Plan, méthode et esprit de cet enseignement", *Revue bleue*, 24 July 1880.

The second cycle would be a period of reflection on morality and its implications. The second cycle would open a period of reflection on morality and its implications. From the sixth year onwards, Clarisse Coignet recommends studying the history of moral ideas, from Antiquity to the present day. She then suggests studying the relationship between the French Revolution and the institutions of the Third Republic. This approach to morality through the history of philosophical ideas is based on the conviction that humanity is progressing towards an emancipation of the human spirit and a recognition of individual dignity, from the state of savagery to the civilised being of the Republic. In their seventh year, students would study the evolution of morals in the XIX^e century through the analysis of the transformations of the family and the social place of women. The final year would finally be devoted to a commentary on the Constitution of the Third Republic.

The moral education programme that Clarisse Coignet wanted to offer young girls was ambitious. It was a source of inspiration for those who created the new lycées the following year. Thus, the Society for the Study of Secondary Questions, which met 24 times in 1881 to establish the content of teaching, modelled its proposal on that of Clarisse Coignet⁸⁴. Nevertheless, the programme actually put in place was much less ambitious: philosophy was discarded, as was the history of religions. Clarisse Coignet had obviously been too bold for girls... Her project came up against the conservatism of many Republicans. Nicole Mosconi reports on a session at the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique (Higher Council for Public Instruction) where the introduction of a study of the great moral systems in girls' lycées was discussed: "Jules Simon protested: 'They will be made into quibblers, debaters, ungovernable women!', 'ungovernable', that is to say, insubordinate to the power of the father and the husband⁸⁵. " The intellectual emancipation of women must not be achieved at the expense of male power.

Source of the photograph by Clarisse Coignet on p. 58: Besançon Museum of Fine Arts and Archaeology.

II- Youthful memories of Albertine Eidenschenk and Marie Baertschi: "Fontenay wanted to make us free"⁸⁶ "

In 1879, Paul Bert passed a law making it compulsory to have a girls' normal school and a boys' normal school in each department. This led to an increase in the number of women's institutions, with 64 new girls' schools being opened compared to six boys' schools.⁸⁷ At the end of the Duruy ministry, ten years earlier, France had only nine girls' normal schools, seven of which were in the hands of religious congregations. The Bert Law thus marked a turning point in the State's takeover of the training of female primary school staff.

84 Patrick Cabanel, *Le Dieu de la République*, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

85 Nicole Mosconi, *Femmes et savoir: la société, l'école et la division sexuelle des savoirs*, Paris, l'Harmattan, 1994, p. 198.

86 A. Eidenschenk, "Le devoir présent", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1899.

87 Linda L. Clark, *Schooling the Daughters of Marianne*, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

It is true that there were lay teachers before the Bert Law. However, according to Anne T. Quartararo, they did not really differ from the nun teachers: "Most of these teachers had probably been educated in convents and cannot be considered less religious than the women who had formally pronounced their vows⁸⁸. " The adjective "lay" associated with the profession of teacher took on a new meaning from the 1880s onwards. Lay teachers were no longer just women outside any congregation, they were professionals who were supposed to fulfil a "lay mission" in the service of the Republic. To this end, the ENS for primary education in Fontenay trained the staff of the girls' normal schools. The aim is to study this institution through the experiences of two Fontenay women, Marie Baertschi and Albertine Eidenschenk, who both highlight the originality of the new institution in the landscape of female education at the time. These trajectories also make it possible to explore the birth of a professional group marked by a strong esprit de corps: the community of Fontenays women.

A) Personalities involved in the de Fontenay Foundation

The new teacher training colleges, the showcases of the regime, needed an elite staff. The Paul Bert law was therefore accompanied by the foundation of two ENSs, that of Saint-Cloud (1882), for boys, and that of Fontenay (1880), to train the future teachers and directors of girls' teacher training colleges. Ferdinand Buisson, who became Director of Primary Education in 1879, was the key figure in the organisation of these two ENS. He would have benefited from the help of Clarisse Coignet, whom he had known since 1870. It was on the advice of the philosopher that he contacted Édouard Jacoulet, the inspector of the Académie, to offer him the direction of the ENS of Saint-Cloud⁸⁹. At Ferdinand Buisson's request, Clarisse Coignet wrote a letter to Ferry, the Minister of Public Education, to support this candidacy, which was finally approved⁹⁰.

Similarly, Clarisse Coignet probably played a role in the appointment of Jeanne de Friedberg to head the ENS de Fontenay. The latter had sat on the Ladies' Commission in 1870 alongside Clarisse Coignet, who held her in high regard. Indeed, in 1879, in an article in the *Revue bleue*, the philosopher advocated the creation of a model high school in Paris, for which it would be useful to call upon "Mme de Friedeberg [*sic*], director of the École normale de la Seine, who has made such great progress in this school⁹¹ ".

It was finally at the ENS de Fontenay that Jeanne de Friedberg became director. If her name was overshadowed by that of Félix Pécaut, Inspector of Studies, it is because at the beginning, the

88 Anne T. Quartararo, *Women Teachers and Popular Education in Nineteenth-Century France*, *op. cit.* p. 41 :

"Many of these *institutrices* were probably educated in convent schools and cannot be considered any less religious than the women who had formally taken vows.

89 Clarisse Coignet, *Where are we going?* *op. cit.* p. 36.

90 Pierre Ognier, *Une école sans Dieu?* *op. cit.* p. 209.

91 Clarisse Coignet, "Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles, les projets de loi de MM. Camille Sée et Paul Bert", *Revue bleue*, 19 April 1879.

The management of Fontenay was conceived in a two-headed way. In a context of rivalry with religious boarding schools, it was impossible for a public girls' boarding school to be run solely by a man, hence the choice of a woman to manage the overall running of the institution. Marie Baertschi, who entered Fontenay in 1887, recalls in 1903 her two years at the ENS and remembers the division of tasks between the two heads: Jeanne de Friedberg was

"In addition, he had the task of organising the material and, in a way, family life of Fontenay, ensuring order, the good behaviour of the pupils, etc. M. Pécaut was careful to avoid encroaching on his collaborator's attributions⁹²". Mme de Friedberg had been chosen among the most brilliant women in public education. In 1879, her superiors described her as "a woman of high spirit, firm, endowed with all the aptitudes necessary for the intellectual and moral direction of a normal establishment⁹³". She was much appreciated by the families and pupils, had a great deal of authority over her staff and "devoted herself to her duties with absolute abnegation⁹⁴".

Like Jeanne de Friedberg, Félix Pécaut was entirely devoted to the cause of popular education. Clarisse Coignet, who frequented Fontenay, described him as "a pedagogue in the highest sense of the word [who] possessed a [...] deep intuition of the human soul [and] had the gift of arousing young people to the good fight, of facilitating their victory⁹⁵". Pécaut ended up embodying Fontenay in his own right. However, his appointment as head of the ENS was not at all obvious: a former Protestant pastor who had broken with the law, he was not an academic.

A regular collaborator of the school where she came to give conferences as inspector general of nursery schools⁹⁶ Pauline Kergomard returned years later to Pécaut's particular trajectory. In 1899, convinced that she was being led by a bureaucratic administration, she described the 1880s as the golden age of public education, where great men with atypical backgrounds were active:

Ferry, Buisson, Pécaut, had they passed competitions, the first to swear to organise secular education, the second to invent and organise it; the third to found the pedagogical education of women? [...] What is lacking in our country [...] is, for most leaders, *faith* in their work⁹⁷.

92 Marie Édouard-Fuster, "M. Pécaut à Fontenay", article published in *L'École nouvelle* of 31 January and 7 February 1903, in the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes* of June 1903, and in *Pages libres* of 18 July 1903.

93 Letter from the Vice-Rector to the Minister, 20 March 1879, Jeanne de Friedberg career file, F/17/22872.

94 Inspection of 1876.

95 Clarisse Coignet, *Mémoire, tome 4, op. cit.* p. 291. Did Coignet know Pécaut before 1880? It is possible, as Pécaut had directed the Duplessis-Mornay school, a pioneering institution in which her sons were educated.

96 Pauline Kergomard's correspondence and the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes* show that she spoke at the school at least in 1902, 1908, 1911 and 1913. Did she give lectures in Fontenay during the Pécaut period? There is no evidence to support this. She did, however, collaborate with him, notably in the commission on overwork instituted in 1887, which included Mme de Friedberg, Mlle Marchef-Girard and F. Buisson.

97 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 4 February 1899.

Félix Pécaut was indeed one of those who communicated to their pupils their faith in education. He left his mark on a whole generation of teachers and headmistresses who passed through Fontenay when he was in office, between 1880 and 1896. Thus, Marie Baertschi remembers that the 'Pécaut myth' was alive and well in the schools run by Fontenay women who had just graduated from the ENS:

Like most of the pupils who entered Fontenay at that time, I came from a primary school. My headmistress and teachers were former Fontenaysiennes. For several years, my companions and I had heard Mr. Pécaut spoken of with such veneration, such ardour, that he had become for us like a legendary figure. [...] It was Mr. Pécaut who attracted us to Fontenay⁹⁸.

B) Félix Pécaut, the soul of Fontenay

Félix Pécaut seems to have lived up to his myth for Marie Baertschi. Fifteen years after leaving school, she declared: 'I owe the best of my being and my life to M. Pécaut'. In the same way, Albertine Eidenschenk wrote in 1905: "Whatever subject of education presents itself to my reflections, almost always, at the very source of my thought, I find a word from my teacher F. Pécaut⁹⁹". Like Marie Baertschi, Albertine Eidenschenk claimed to be Pécaut's spiritual daughter. Belonging to the class of 1884, she left Fontenay in 1886 to become a teacher at the Ecole Normale, but returned there as a literature tutor¹⁰⁰ between 1887 and 1892, when Marie Baertschi was studying. These seven years spent at Fontenay as a pupil, then as a tutor, brought her into close contact with Pécaut: "[I lived] with him in a daily communication of ideas, in a union of feelings of which I am proud; [...] none [has] put more sincere docility of heart, more application to understand this great soul, to penetrate his thought¹⁰¹."

Albertine Eidenschenk's first mission was to perpetuate the memory and teachings of her teacher within the Fontenay Alumni Association. This association, founded in 1894 with Pécaut's encouragement, published a monthly bulletin aimed at maintaining links between former classmates. From the end of the 1890s onwards, Albertine Eidenschenk was very involved in the association and the journal. Two years after the death of "Monsieur l'Inspecteur", she called for the ENS to be renamed "École Félix Pécaut" and suggested that the cover of the bulletin should bear the last words spoken by Pécaut to the assembly of former students on 6 August 1896: "We will maintain¹⁰²". The

98 Marie Édouard-Fuster, "M. Pécaut à Fontenay", *L'École nouvelle*, January-February 1903.

99 Albertine Eidenschenk, "La femme française et la République", *La Femme nouvelle*, 15 January 1905.

100 In Fontenay, there are several repetitors in arts and sciences. Their role is to facilitate the appropriation of the course by the students. They have an intermediary status between the students, the teachers and the administration.

101 Albertine Eidenschenk, "Should our work be different from that of M. Pécaut?", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1911.

102 "Comptes-rendus des comités régionaux", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1900, p. 66.

The staff of the girls' teacher training colleges set themselves the task of "maintaining" the spirit of Fontenay in primary education.

Albertine Eidenschenk, who had become a great name in the Amicale and a renowned headmistress of a teacher training college, was invited to speak at the Sorbonne on 10 June 1930 to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Fontenay. According to her - and on this point she agrees with Pauline Kergomard - Pécaut's singularity lay in the fact that he was a stranger to the academic world. It was not as a holder of knowledge that he imposed himself on his pupils, but through his faith in the work of education and the exemplary nature of his life:

Fontenay has been for us more than a great school of intellectual education. Thanks to the exceptional personality of its director, it has been for us the focus of intense life from which [...] we have borrowed the fire to feed our own. [...] There was something in Félix Pécaut that immediately set him apart: an intense moral life, an ardent passion for the good of souls and the public good, an inner flame that gave him an extraordinary influence over all those who approached him¹⁰³.

For many Fontenay women who arrived at the school at the dawn of their twenties, Pécaut played a major role. Marie Baertschi remembers that his aim was to train

people, not clever, well-constructed mechanisms, nor society's mannequins, dressed, modelled and thinking according to fashion. Persons, that is to say, beings who live with a life of their own and sow life around them, this is perhaps Fontenay's characteristic trait. [...] In the advice he gave us at the beginning, he sometimes used this bold and concise phrase, which summed up everything he hoped for, everything he expected of us: "Dare to be¹⁰⁴ !".

This "Dare to be" reflects Pécaut's conviction that a teacher worthy of the name must become a being of reason, in love with truth and justice, in order to inspire her pupils. Her primary objective should not be to prepare them for an exam, but to raise them intellectually and morally, without which, according to Pécaut, school is no more than "a school workshop, where human tools are perfected with a view to the most useful production possible; [...] this is not education: it is [...] a well-assembled intellectual mechanism¹⁰⁵". Through his charisma, Pécaut is himself an example. Thus, Marie Baertschi declared in 1900: "the former pupils of M. Pécaut [know] what the ever-present sight or thought of a superior moral being can do to a soul¹⁰⁶".

103 Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, director of the Ecole normale d'institutrices de Douai, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

104 Marie Édouard-Fuster, "M. Pécaut à Fontenay", *L'École nouvelle*, January-February 1903.

105 Félix Pécaut, "La directrice d'école normale", *Revue pédagogique*, April 1892.

106 M. B. [Marie Baertschi], "Des puissances invisibles dans la formation du caractère", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, January 1900.

C) "Dare to be!"

With his call to dare to be, Pécaut urges future female teachers to break out of the straitjacket of teaching in order to forge personalities worthy of inspiring their pupils. In this invitation to the Fontenays women to lead "their own lives", we find the imprint of the man who made the independence of the individual the basis of a new liberal Christianity, of which he was the first pastor in Neuchâtel¹⁰⁷. André Encrevé underlines the interest of these liberal Protestants in feminist thought: "They want to integrate into Christianity the 'philosophy of the Enlightenment' [and] the proposals of the scientific spirit. [...] Among [them] are Jules Steeg, Félix Pécaut and Ferdinand Buisson, [...] those who, objectively, will give women their best chances of emancipation¹⁰⁸. Pécaut thus retains from the message of the Reformation that every individual is endowed with reason: women must therefore be recognised as having the dignity due to every human being¹⁰⁹.

Beyond his religious convictions, Pécaut's attachment to the autonomy of reason also stems from his political heritage. Like many republicans of his generation, he had a vivid memory of the 1852 plebiscite in favour of Napoleon III's empire. Distrustful of universal suffrage, which he considered formidable in a Catholic country that was "devout and ignorant", he convinced the Fontenaysians of the need to train intelligence to nourish democracy¹¹⁰. This thought of *self-government* permeated the organisation of studies at Fontenay. Marie Baertschi remembers it:

After the rather narrow regime of the normal school, [it was] free disposal of oneself, of one's time, of one's person; no more supervisors, no more good or bad marks, no more deprivation of outings or other punishments reminiscent of the barracks; a simple, broad, freely accepted and freely observed rule. [...] No control, in any form whatsoever, of intimate and private life: correspondence is free, outings are free¹¹¹.

At Fontenay, every student is treated as a reasonable person and is systematically taken at her word. The way the courses are run is just as confusing for girls who have just graduated from the normal schools. It was no longer a question of restating the knowledge delivered in lectures, but of constructing a lesson to be taught in front of one's classmates. Jules Toutain, who taught at Fontenay, explained that the students took an active part in the teaching, that they were pushed to take a critical look at the mass of knowledge they had accumulated, that they had to be able to justify the way in which they had constructed their lesson, the bibliography on which they had relied. He insists that Fontenay is

107 See Patrick Cabanel, *Le Dieu de la République*, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

108 André Encrevé quoted by Geneviève Poujol, *Un féminisme sous tutelle, les protestantes françaises (1810-1960)*, Paris, Les éditions de Paris, 2003, p. 12.

109 *Ibid.*, p. 21 (Geneviève Poujol repeats the words of Liliane Crété).

110 Patrick Cabanel, "Les nouvelles Provinciales: Félix Pécaut et la formation de l'esprit républicain dans les années 1870", *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*, vol. 142, Nov-Dec 1996, pp. 755-774.

111 Marie Édouard-Fuster, "M. Pécaut à Fontenay", *L'École nouvelle*, January-February 1903.

both a school of general education and a school of application where girls are introduced to intellectual debate¹¹². Marie Baertschi's testimony concurs with that of Jules Toutain: she remembers that, after her presentation, each pupil was pushed into a corner by the criticism of her classmates and encouraged to question her preconceived ideas.

These methods were not widely used until then, especially in women's education. We need only quote Henri Marion, the first holder of the chair of science of education at the Sorbonne, who warns those who teach girls: "It is not a question, let us be careful, of purely and simply emancipating their minds, but of disciplining them¹¹³ ... " How did Marion, who was reluctant to use education as a lever for the emancipation of women, and who favoured a pedagogy adapted to "female psychology", get on with Pécaut when he taught at Fontenay? Marie Baertschi remembers that, like Henri Marion, many teachers were wary of an education that was too advanced for women: "They still wondered what credit could be given to the female mind and we know of some who had to be converted to the idea of a higher education for women¹¹⁴. " According to her, Pécaut always succeeded in convincing his collaborators: it was to him that the quality of the education provided for young girls was due.

Félix Pécaut shared his convictions with Ferdinand Buisson and Jules Steeg. The trio first became famous for their desire to renovate Protestantism before committing themselves to school reform with the advent of the Republic. Pécaut, Buisson and Steeg were all convinced of the need to open up intellectual life to women. Ferdinand Buisson was known for his feminist commitment; Félix Pécaut found a new lease of life among the "good pupils of the Republic", where he was, according to Marie Baertschi, "*the right man in the right place*"; Jules Steeg took over from Pécaut as inspector of studies at Fontenay between 1896 and 1898. Is the "feminist" conviction in pedagogy therefore the heritage of Protestantism, where "the universal priesthood implies a radical equality of men and women, equally responsible and autonomous before God [and where it is necessary] that each one be put in a position to decide for himself the greatest, the highest of all questions¹¹⁵ " ? In any case, Pécaut's modernity in the area of women's education upset Albertine Eidenschenk:

[Pécaut is] in his place at the beginning of a study on the role of women in the Republic [...]. No one better than him has understood them; [...] no one has known better all the advantages that could be drawn [from them] for the recovery of the country and national greatness; and because he believed them capable of rising to a life that is largely human, the exclusive privilege of men [...], they are religiously grateful to him¹¹⁶.

112 Jules Toutain, "L'enseignement de l'histoire à l'École normale supérieure de Fontenay-aux-Roses", *Revue pédagogique*, October 1902.

113 Henri Marion, in *Psychologie de la femme*, quoted in Geneviève Fraisse, *Muse de la raison : la démocratie exclusive et la différence des sexes*, Aix-en-Provence, Alinéa, 1989, p. 216.

114 Marie Édouard-Fuster, "M. Pécaut à Fontenay", *L'École nouvelle*, January-February 1903.

115 Patrick Cabanel, *Le Dieu de la République*, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

116 A. Eidenschenk, "La femme française et la République", *La Femme nouvelle*, 15 January 1905.

The freethinker Albertine Eidenschenk is therefore 'religiously' grateful to Pécaut for having supported female education in this way. It was not *in spite of* their femininity that Pécaut wanted a higher education for the Fontenays women, but *because* they were women:

"It is right [...] to demand from you, in your very capacity as women, lights, strengths, directions, in short, help which you are expressly qualified to give, on the sole condition that you remain faithful to your true nature¹¹⁷". Convinced that "man cannot be worth his weight in gold if woman remains mentally inferior to him"¹¹⁸ "He condemned the male egoism that kept women in a situation of intellectual subordination. If, for him, women must "remain women", he condemned the model of the "passive sheep". In a text published in 1892 in the *Revue pédagogique*, in which he paints a portrait of the ideal headmistress of a teacher training college, Pécaut insists on the need for her to possess qualities of strength and reason that are wrongly considered virile. Confident in their abilities, he defended women, who were too badly treated by writers who

do not notice enough how much energy, courage and perseverance a large number of women, and in particular plebeians, display before our eyes [...]. Living in a select society, they almost always have in view only young girls of the *world*, [...] more suited to be the ornament of elegant circles than the assiduous and vigilant guardians of the home and the valiant educators of their children¹¹⁹.

The ideal of the educating mother remains prevalent in Pécaut's eyes, but it should not prevent women from playing a new social role, worthy of them. The defence of their right to participate in the life of the city is done by praising working-class women at the expense of bourgeois women, presented as counter-models.

D) Popular education, "the holiest of works"¹²⁰

For the 'spirit of Fontenay' is closely associated with a belief in popular education, the instruction of the masses being necessary in a country of universal suffrage. Pécaut makes a clear distinction between the "primary vocation" of the normal schools, which, being free, are aimed at the

"This is the reason why the two ENSs are so different from each other: the 'people' and the 'secondary vocation' of the high schools intended for the bourgeoisie. But while the difference in ambition between the two girls' ENSs seemed obvious, Yvonne Oulhiou noted that in the early years, the candidates at Fontenay and Sèvres came from the same social background. Hence the astonishment of the philosopher Alphonse Darlu at the decision to create two schools¹²¹. Although the teacher training colleges were originally intended to be the breeding ground for Fontenay, Pécaut

¹¹⁷ Pécaut quoted by Marie Édouard-Fuster, "M. Pécaut à Fontenay", *L'École nouvelle*, January-February 1903.

- 118 Pécaut quoted by A. Eidenschenk, "La femme française et la République", *La Femme nouvelle*, January 1905.
- 119 Félix Pécaut, "La directrice d'école normale", *Revue pédagogique*, April 1892.
- 120 Pécaut quoted by Marie Édouard-Fuster, "M. Pécaut à Fontenay", *L'École nouvelle*, January-February 1903.
- 121 Yvonne Oulhiou, *L'École normale supérieure de Fontenay-aux-Roses à travers le temps*, *op. cit.*

noted that in the 1890s, more and more girls were taking the competitive examination after leaving the lycée. He complained about this in 1897 to Albert Bayet, Buisson's successor as head of primary education, in a letter in which he deplored the lack of a "primary vocation"¹²² of secondary school girls. In his view, Fontenay should first recruit women of the people, from the primary education system, to enable them to return to the people and raise them to the level of democracy. Thus, when defining the role of a headmistress in the *Revue pédagogique*, Pécaut wrote

She will never fall into the trap [...] of believing herself to be of higher status than her pupils [...]; but she will not neglect an important part of her task as a teacher, which is to train her pupils in civility, good taste, delicacy of manners and language, and in all that outwardly distinguishes a well-bred woman¹²³.

Raised above their original environment by the acquisition of a knowledge inaccessible to them without the institutions of the Republic, the teachers and principals of the normal schools had to return to "the people" to make their knowledge shine. But their role was also to train future teachers in the 'civility' that was the mark of belonging to the bourgeoisie. For the teacher cannot be a vulgar woman of the people. As a representative of the Republic in the working classes, she must take care of her social image. Fontenaysian women had to place their inner life above all else, fulfilling a primary vocation that obliged them to go to the people, but they also had to conform to the codes of bourgeois respectability that suited their status as women of knowledge. Popular education was conceived in Fontenay as a transmission of bourgeois culture to the elite of the little people. Albertine Eidenschenk recalls that in 1906 Pécaut declared that he wanted, through the normal schools, to offer the girls of the people what

...] There can be no viable democracy without an aristocratic education, that is to say, one that is imbued with the thinking of the *best*, ... an education that liberally dispenses to the humblest members of the city, whether men or women, the bread that is considered most nourishing for the privileged of fortune and science¹²⁴.

The Pécauldian project did not meet with unanimous approval. In 1911, the philosopher Frédéric Rauh criticised her for having instilled in her pupils the importance of intellectual and spiritual life, but for having forgotten that the teacher must also be involved in social life. Faced with what she considered a bad trial, Albertine Eidenschenk took up the pen and showed, on the contrary, how much the 'social' teacher was at the heart of her master's concerns:

122 Letter from Pécaut to A. Bayet, 16 October 1897, Lucie Saffroy's career file, F/17/22543/A.

123 Félix Pécaut, "La directrice d'école normale", *Revue pédagogique*, April 1892.

124 Quoted by A. Eidenschenk, "Les écoles normales et le projet de M. Massé", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1906.

If the Écoles Normales must be centres of moral life, they must also be centres of national and social life. It is not possible to separate these two aspects of Pécaut's thinking. [...] This eminently national and social character, M. Pécaut himself always put it in the foreground. [...] "You are of the people, you have to instruct the people; learn therefore to know them; go down to them"¹²⁵."

Albertine Eidenschenk recalls the morning lectures in which Pécaut declared that in the face of social inequity, "we are no longer proud to read Pascal! Fontenaysians, who have the privilege of enjoying the life of the mind, are accountable to society. Albertine Eidenschenk acknowledges, however, that the first generations did not sufficiently nurture the Pécaudian heritage:

With the habit that we, the women of the generations from 1880 to 1890, had of living outside the city, we took from his teaching what seemed to us to be the essential thing in the semi-conventional life of the nascent Écoles Normales, [...] that very high moral inspiration, the taste for the interior life and for withdrawal into ourselves. But this life of half-nuns was not what M. Pécaut wanted for us.

E) The morning lectures or the secular and social teaching of Fontenay

It is in his morning lectures that Pécaut most emphasises the need for concrete action in the working classes. Marie Baertschi praises this ritual meeting:

His tone was one of conversation; he thought and spoke not only for us, but with us, seeking out our objections, formulating them himself as he read them on our faces, responding to them, suggesting new points of view. [...] Even though he spoke alone, his thought was no less *dialogical*¹²⁶.

Patrick Cabanel sees the author of these talks as a professor of philosophy and a pastor: "Pécaut had both"¹²⁷ ". However, the latter defended himself from preaching: "To inspire [...] is not to dominate minds and consciences, nor to ask others to sacrifice their judgement and their will; [that] is immorality and pedagogical impiety. [...] One resists whoever preaches; one surrenders to whoever surrenders"¹²⁸. " Marie Baertschi confirms that Pécaut is not a director of conscience: "I have never known anyone who was more perfectly respectful of the

125 A. Eidenschenk, "Should our work be different from that of M. Pécaut?", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1911.

126 Marie Édouard-Fuster, "M. Pécaut à Fontenay", *L'École nouvelle*, January-February 1903.

127 Patrick Cabanel, *Le Dieu de la République*, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

128 Félix Pécaut, "La directrice d'école normale", *Revue pédagogique*, April 1892.

He bowed to every sincere opinion. He bowed to every sincere opinion, he himself proclaimed the right to exist of those ideas which most opposed his own.¹²⁹ "

Pécaut knows all the Fontenaysians personally. He is convinced that one can only be a good educator by loving those one teaches. For all that, he never asks for the slightest confidence. In spite of the religious spirit that drives him, he makes it a point of honour to respect consciences. The talk he gives every morning is, in his words, the result of a "secularisation of moral wisdom"¹³⁰ ". Pécaut embodied the "religious secularism" that characterised the early days of the secular school. Thus, when he received in 1885 the article "Prayer" that Buisson had written for the *Dictionnaire de pédagogie*, he presented it to Mme de Friedberg and Jules Steeg, then read and commented on it during a conference¹³¹. Indeed, for Pécaut, moral education must preserve the aspiration of all to transcendence. He saw this teaching as a means of building a national community beyond the classes, to create this "*spiritual democracy*, without which political democracy is only a vain and precarious form"¹³² ".

In 1897, when he spoke to the president of the Association of teachers of the Seine for the patronage of young people, Pécaut welcomed the creation of adult classes but deplored the absence of moral subjects in the association's programme. He advocated introducing them into familiar conversations, stories or readings, convinced that the churches should not arrogate to themselves a monopoly on morality: "when I consider the moral state of our country, [...] I say to myself that in truth it would not be too much to have direct moral teaching, given from time to time by the unsuspecting voice of the laity". It is precisely because French society is in the throes of secularisation that the secular school must take over from the spiritual refuges, and that the word of teachers must replace that of ministers of religion:

The old spiritual institutions have lost much of their credit, [...] it is natural that we should turn to the school, the great lay institution, of a spiritual order, which covers the whole country with its shadow [...]. [The teachers] teach as laymen, that is to say, in the name of experience and reason; and their word [...] is listened to because it is the vulgar language, that of everyone and because it is presumed to be absolutely sound, being absolutely free. Secular speech, speech of reason, free speech, sincere speech, serious speech, all correlative expressions¹³³.

For Pécaut, lay women teachers have a social role to play. But they must be able to look critically at the society of their time and contemporary events.

129 Marie Édouard-Fuster, "M. Pécaut à Fontenay", *L'École nouvelle*, January-February 1903.

130 Félix Pécaut, "La directrice d'école normale", *Revue pédagogique*, April 1892.

131 See Patrick Cabanel, *Ferdinand Buisson*, *op. cit.*

132 Félix Pécaut, "Letter to the President of the Association of Teachers", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, December 1897.

133 Félix Pécaut, 'Letter to the President of the Association of Paris Schoolteachers', *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1897.

It is, among other things, the morning talk that fulfils this objective in Fontenay. The *post-mortem* publication of her father's lectures by Élie Pécaut gives Marie Baertschi the opportunity to return to the particularity of these daily talks:

The subjects? M. Élie Pécaut's collection shows the extreme variety of them; it is wrong in not showing enough of their topicality. By deleting the dates of these talks, by presenting them in a jumble - although the chronological order was necessary [...] - we have taken away from M. Pécaut's thought a part of its interest: because [...] all these conferences were topical, I mean that they were linked to a precise and current fact: an event in national life, [...] a visit from a foreigner, an article in a review¹³⁴.

The principle of free examination, so deeply rooted in the former pastor, was applied to all subjects of society. Albertine Eidenschenk, who had become headmistress of a teacher training college, took up Pécaut's methods and organised a daily talk in which she addressed a wide range of social issues. Her daughter recalls these daily lectures at the Douai teacher training college in the years before and after the Great War:

We discussed a wide range of subjects: literary, poetry appreciation (Hugo), scientific and medical. She spoke to us about Louise Michel, the red virgin, about the emancipation of women (she was an ardent feminist); about Franco-German rapprochement; [...] she spoke about personal hygiene; about anti-alcoholism; she told us about the Dreyfus Affair, the life of Marie Curie; she thought that everything that touched or shook the national conscience should be known to the Pupil-Mistresses¹³⁵.

This imitation of Pécaut by a headmistress of a teacher training college is not an isolated example. The tradition of the morning lecture, inspired by Pécaut, continues almost everywhere¹³⁶.

F) Félix Pécaut, a common reference for intellectuals

Although Marie Baertschi and Albertine Eidenschenk made Pécaut their spiritual father, the influence of the latter was not limited to these two Fontenaysiennes with a brilliant career path, who a few years later became key voices in the debates on the school. In the same way, Mme Janin, one of the pillars of the Fontenaysian association, testified to her admiration for her master in a brochure published in 1906 and entitled *Note sur la vie et l'œuvre de Félix Pécaut*¹³⁷. All the staff of the teacher training colleges were inspired by the man whom Albertine Eidenschenk compared to

134 Marie Édouard-Fuster, "M. Pécaut à Fontenay", *L'École nouvelle*, January-February 1903.

135 J. Mauchaussat-Eidenschenk, in *Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, op. cit.*

136 See letter from Albertine Eidenschenk to the rector, 6 December 1909, 2 T 265, AD du Nord, Lille.

137 Document available in the Marguerite Durand Library, Marie Rauber collection, boxes 1 to 6.

Socrates for his moral exemplarity, his emancipatory action and his influence on his disciples¹³⁸. Even though she had not been trained at Fontenay¹³⁹ Denise Billotey, the headmistress of a teacher training college, mentions Pécaut in an article from 1910 in which she defends the need for an ambitious education for women¹⁴⁰. In the same way, Miss Price, a language teacher at the Ecole Normale de Rouen who had not studied at Fontenay, discovered Pécaut in 1896 when he came to give a lecture to her pupils. She was amazed and understood better the admiration that the teachers showed him. As she wrote in 1898, "all these ladies bore the imprint and had what is called the Fontenay spirit. [...] None of those who attended the morning lectures at M. Pécaut could not fail to be struck by [his] intense moral ardour¹⁴¹".

Pécaut's aura radiated even outside the world of the teacher training colleges. Thus, Mathilde Salomon, who directed the Collège Sévigné while he was at the head of Fontenay, considered that in order to make women capable of participating in the construction of the new society, it was necessary to have "that heroic and gentle spirit of devotion which M. Pécaut, one of our own saints, was able to inspire in his pupils¹⁴²". Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, headmistress of the Lycée de Lyon, honoured the founder of Fontenay whom "memory reveres¹⁴³". From Clarisse Coignet to Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, via Marie Baertschi, Albertine Eidenschenk and Mathilde Salomon, many intellectuals paid tribute to the defender of popular education, the militant of girls' education and the thinker of secularism who converted to Dreyfusism. It was at his grave that Ferdinand Buisson declared his conviction of Dreyfus' innocence in a speech that was widely reported in the press. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello returned to this brilliant move when she presented Buisson to the Université populaire lyonnaise a few years later: "Gathering as a sacred legacy the cry of protest of your friend Pécaut, you spoke in his name and yours, you addressed the public conscience, you were one of those who dared to say that there is no right against the law, that nothing on earth is above justice. In short, the filiation with Pécaut is evident in many of those who have, in one way or another, 'dared to be'.

III- Complete freedom" before the "secular veil" : the Sevrierian experience of Marguerite Aron and Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben

While the Fontenay school was designed for popular education, the Sèvres school aimed to train lycée teachers for middle-class girls, although it was possible to teach at secondary school without being a Sèvres teacher. After passing the

138 See Odette Laguerre, 'Portrait de femme: Mme Eidenschenk', *La Fronde*, 1^{er} July 1904.

139 It is not necessary to be a student at Fontenay to take the teaching and management certificates of the teacher training colleges, although Fontenay is the main source of candidates.

140 Mlle Billotey, "L'institutrice maternelle", *Résumé des cours Turgot*, n°1, 1^{er} October 1910.

141 Miss Price, "L'école de Fontenay jugée par une Anglaise", *Revue pédagogique*, June 1898.

142 Mathilde Salomon, "Struggle for life", *Revue universitaire*, February 1899.

143 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "Presentation of Ferdinand Buisson to the UPL", *Annales de l'UPL*, n°3, July 1901.

The Sèvres School was the female counterpart to the Rue d'Ulm School, but it did not train women scholars, only teachers, who were not supposed to be involved in research or teaching. However, although the École de Sèvres was in theory the female counterpart to the École de la rue d'Ulm, it did not train female scholars, but only female teachers, who were not expected to engage in research or acquire a high degree of specialisation, which would make them potential competitors for men. As Nicole Mosconi writes, "everything happened as if the division of the Ancien Régime (to men the learned knowledge, to women the pragmatic, oral knowledge) had been replaced by a new division: to women the transmission of knowledge and to men the creation and production of new knowledge¹⁴⁴." The paradox between the intellectual qualities of Sevrier women and the poverty of their career prospects and the lack of prestige they enjoyed is striking. In fact, at the turn of the century, the profession of teacher did not enjoy a positive social image. Female secondary school pioneers were still regarded as declassed members of the bourgeoisie.

As in Fontenay, the first 16 classes of Sevres girls were trained by a prominent figure, Madame Jules Favre. A fervent Protestant and a philosopher who admired Stoicism, Mme Jules Favre established rituals at Sèvres equivalent to those that Pécaut had set up at Fontenay: the daily good evening and Wednesday tea replaced the morning chat. As in Fontenay, the reign of the moral law allowed for a very flexible disciplinary regime.

Through the recollections of Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben and Marguerite Aron [*biographical points 1 and 2, p. 612, 614*], the aim is to grasp what constitutes the "spirit of Sèvres" but also to understand the role that the ENS played in the creation of the most highly qualified body of female civil servants in public education. As the first women became lycée teachers, did this consecration translate into the acquisition of individual independence? Or did these first generations of women teachers pay for their intellectual emancipation by taking on the 'secular veil' that entering the profession represented before 1900? Faced with these questions, it seems that a comparative analysis of Fontenay and Sèvres is necessary: did the two ENS play the same role in the constitution of a community of committed female intellectuals at the turn of the century?

A) Mrs. Jules Favre, "Executive power of Sèvres

Like the Fontenay school, the Sèvres school was designed to have a two-headed and mixed governance. Ernest Legouvé, a 74-year-old academician, was appointed Inspector General. His name is attached to women's education: he wrote a lecture at the Collège de France on the history of women in 1847, a text that was destined to have great posterity. But in the 1880s, Legouvé's convictions were no longer avant-garde. Françoise Mayeur states that his appointment as head of Sèvres "could only satisfy the most conservative¹⁴⁵ "in a context where the Sée law had awakened fears of an upheaval in the social and family order.

144 Nicole Mosconi, *Femmes et savoir, op. cit.*, p. 20.

145 Françoise Mayeur, *L'éducation des filles en France au XIX^e siècle, op. cit.*, p. 231.

Although Ernest Legouvé agreed to associate his name with the new school, he was not really involved. It was therefore Mme Jules Favre, appointed to the same position as Mme de Friedberg at Fontenay, who made her mark. For Paul Souday, who taught literature at the school, "it seems obvious that the first headmistress [...] was the real executive power for this school¹⁴⁶". Henry Lemonnier, professor of history, goes further: "by giving [Mme Jules Favre] the direction of the School, she was given, in a happy phrase, a share in the direction of secondary education¹⁴⁷". Sèvres was the breeding ground for female teachers and headmistresses.

But the part played by Mrs. Jules Favre in the management of Sèvres was not at first obvious. In 1882, she complained that, unlike Pécaut at Fontenay (a simple "I respect the authority of Mr. Inspector General Legouvé, and for myself personally I ask for nothing. But since the *École normale secondaire* is assimilated to that of Fontenay, from the administrative point of view, I do not understand that, in the official acts, the respective titles are not the same for the two schools¹⁴⁸". Mme Jules Favre, who was herself appointed principal, considered that the fact of appointing Legouvé as headmaster was a "sign of inadequacy" in her regard. She feared that in the presence of this fact, the public would imagine "that the administration could not find a woman capable of directing a teacher training college for women¹⁴⁹". However, the Minister refused to withdraw Legouvé's title of director, believing that it was "very regrettable to hurt, by a measure of questionable utility [...] a man whose work had contributed greatly to creating the current of opinion favourable to the education of women and whose name honours the *École*¹⁵⁰". The administration appointed Legouvé to head Sèvres because of the symbolism of his name. These are the same reasons which lead it to associate Mme Jules Favre with him two years after the death of her husband¹⁵¹. At the funeral of the director in 1896, the senator and lecturer at Sèvres Joseph Fabre thought it necessary to speak of "the patriot, the illustrious orator who, while alive, was [for Mme Jules Favre] her joy, [who,] when dead, was her pride, and whose name she bore with a dignity that was at the same time so modest and so proud¹⁵²".

A Germanist, Julie Velten had made herself available to the government of national defence in 1870 for any translations needed in the context of the war. This is how she met Jules Favre, Minister of Foreign Affairs, before their marriage became official in 1874. They then began an intellectual companionship¹⁵³. Jules Favre wrote in one of his books that the

146 Paul Souday, "Mme Jules Favre", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, February 1896.

147 Henry Lemonnier, "Discours à l'inauguration du buste de Mme Jules Favre", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, July 1898.

148 Letter from Mme Jules Favre to the Rector, 22 [28 ?] June 1882, Mme Jules Favre career file, AJ/16/1067.

149 Letter from Mme Jules Favre to the Rector, 11 June 1882.

150 Letter from the Minister to the Vice-Rector, 16 June 1882.

151 Jules Favre died on 19 January 1880. The ENS de Sèvres opened on 12 December 1881.

152 Speech at the funeral of Mrs Jules Favre, F/17/22861.

153 See Raymond Darteville, Mélanie Fabre (eds.), "Couples d'intellectuels, de l'intime au politique (1880- 1940)", *Les Études sociales*, n°168, 2019/2 - See also the article by Jacqueline Lalouette, "Épouser une protestante : le choix de républicains et de libres-penseurs au siècle dernier", *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*, n°137, April-May-June 1991, pp. 197-231.

His wife's name should be attached to his on all his publications, since he has found in her the most reliable intellectual and emotional guide¹⁵⁴.

B) Mme Jules Favre or the indomitable defence of women's right to intellectual life

Belonging to a generation that did not have access to high-level diplomas, Mrs. Jules Favre only held a brevet de capacité. In 1882, she said that she was ready to leave her position if the administration deemed it more desirable for Sèvres to be directed by a woman with more academic qualifications¹⁵⁵. However, although she was not a member of the University - like Pécaut -, Mme Jules Favre was nevertheless considered by the administration, by the professors of the school and by the Sèvres women as a woman of great intellectual authority. It must be said that she had published several works and that her mastery of philosophy shone through in daily discussions.

Two secondary school teachers have left a testimony of their experience as Sevrieries in the time of Mrs. Jules Favre. Both of them highlight the tutelary figure that the headmistress was. In her *Souvenirs d'une jeune fille bête*, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben devotes half of her account to describing her training at Sèvres under the gaze of Madame Jules Favre. The same is true of the *Journal d'une sévrienne*, which Marguerite Aron published first as a serial in 1901-1902 in *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles* and then in 1912 by Alcan. It is a transcription of the diary she kept during her three years at Sèvres and her first year of teaching.

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben remembers that Mme Jules Favre attended some of the lessons given by the teachers and did not hesitate to intervene. Author of several works on morality and admirer of the Stoics¹⁵⁶ She never missed the lessons of the philosopher Joseph Fabre:

Amélie, his maid, was arriving, preparing her chair on the left of the professorial platform, facing the students, with her heater. Then the little black figure would appear in turn, very upright, with her cape crossed over her chest. If a discussion arose, Mme Jules Favre took part in it, not afraid to fight [...] the ideas of the teacher. [...] I remember epic battles between them which did not always end in the teacher's favour¹⁵⁷.

By engaging in a *disputatio* with the teachers, Mrs. Jules Favre adopts a symbolically powerful stance. Through the example of their headmistress, the Sevrieries learn that all statements are subject to debate and realise that knowledge is not acquired in a dogmatic way, but is

154 Jo Burr Margadant, *Madame Professor, op. cit.*, p. 75.

155 Letter to the Rector, 11 June 1882, AJ/16/1067.

156 Among others, *Montaigne moraliste et pédagogue*, Paris, Fischbacher, 1887; *La morale de Socrate*, Paris, Félix Alcan, 1888; *La morale de Cicéron*, Paris, Fischbacher, 1891.

157 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, *Souvenirs d'une jeune fille bête*, Paris, Debresse, 1971, 677 p., p. 458.

They also discover that a largely self-taught woman can compete in the field of intelligence with university pundits. They also discover that a largely self-taught woman can compete in intelligence with university pundits.

Where did Mrs. Jules Favre get her stature as a woman of knowledge and headmistress of an institution? The daughter of a pastor, she entered Mrs Frèrejean's evangelical boarding school as an assistant teacher in 1853 and became its headmistress in 1860. In this very religious boarding school where the Bible was read every morning, the teaching staff applied Jacotot's theories encouraging an active approach to learning by the pupil, as opposed to a vertical distribution of knowledge. Moreover, according to Françoise Mayeur, "instead of practising coercion, [Mme Jules Favre] appealed, with apparent success, to the pupils' conscience and personal responsibility¹⁵⁸". Her pedagogical ideals and her religious convictions converge on the autonomy of individuals. Like Pécaut at Fontenay, Mme Jules Favre wanted a regime of freedom for the Sevrier women. To this end, she resisted certain directives from the administration. In 1888, Octave Gréard, in charge of the administration at Sèvres, complained to the Minister: it was not that there was disorder there, but everyone did as they pleased and the director herself refused to apply his recommendations. For example, the students sit at the table they wish without Mme Jules Favre silencing these happy meals¹⁵⁹.

In 1909, Louise Belugou, a former teacher at Sèvres who had become the school's headmistress in 1906, took on the publication of a text by Mme Jules Favre on Plutarch's morality. The preface to the book, in which she paints a portrait of her former headmistress, is commented on in *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*. The author regrets that Louise Belugou glossed over Mme Jules Favre's administrative indiscipline: "Perhaps Mlle Belugou could have emphasised more strongly Mme Jules Favre's proud attitude towards the powers and the official world. When it was a question of the interests of the school and the well-being of the pupils, she knew how to say: 'This is what is needed, or I am leaving'.¹⁶⁰" Mme Jules Favre threatened to resign several times in conflicts with her superiors¹⁶¹. In August 1891, she sent a protest to the president of the jury for the agrégation, Eugène Manuel, with a copy to the administration. She accused the jury of having failed in its duty of impartiality. The Minister, taking up the cause of the jury, reprimanded Mme Jules Favre. She therefore submitted her resignation. But, under pressure from the school's teachers, she gave in, withdrew her resignation and apologised. At the same time, she also came into conflict with her administration over the non-specialisation of women's agrégations, which she deplored. Thus, while the Normaliens at Ulm specialised in one of the five disciplines of the men's agrégation, the Sevrier women only had the choice between a literary competition and a scientific competition. In 1894, Mme Jules Favre was invited by the CSIP to sit on a commission on women's agrégation.

158 Françoise Mayeur, "Madame Jules Favre, première directrice de l'école normale de Sèvres, 1834-1896", in Patrick Cabanel (ed.), "Parmi les intellectuels protestants", *Bulletin de la Société d'histoire du protestantisme français*, tome 149, n°3, July-September 2003, p. 437-448.

159 See Jo Burr Margadant, *Madame Professor*, op. cit. p. 67.

160 J. F., "Mme Jules Favre", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, January 1909.

161 Documents in her career file show that she had submitted her resignation in the spring of 1885 and the summer of

1891, later reversing her decisions.

obtained eleven years after the creation of this competition that the two sections be subdivided, thus creating four streams: literature, history, mathematics, physical and natural sciences¹⁶².

This new aggregation recognises the right of women to greater specialisation. In her book on the sexual division of knowledge, Nicole Mosconi shows that this is a necessary step towards the recognition of the intellectual equality of men and women. Women are finally recognised as "belonging to a body of specialists responsible for managing [a] particular field of knowledge"¹⁶³ Women are finally recognised as "belonging to a body of specialists responsible for managing a particular field of knowledge" by demonstrating expertise in a specific discipline, and not just general knowledge. It should be remembered that the creation of the agrégation competitive examination, set up to select female high school teachers, had already caused a lot of ink to flow. It was only after a struggle at the CSIP, in which some representatives of male teachers sought to retain a monopoly on the title, that the diploma was called an agrégation.¹⁶⁴

Although Mme Jules Favre struggled for women to gain equal recognition with men in public education, her discourse was less subversive than that of Pécaut: according to Henry Lemonnier, she hoped "that women, without any demands and without any fuss, would find their place in the world through work, that they would contribute gently, modestly, humbly, by the simple practice of moral obligations, to the progress of social ideals"¹⁶⁵. " She also applied to herself the modesty that she inculcated in the women of Seville. Thus, when she discovered in 1886 that she had been appointed Officier d'académie in the *Journal officiel*, she sent a letter to the minister refusing this honorary distinction and any other honour¹⁶⁶. As much as a mark of feminine reserve, this contempt for honours is linked to her Protestant ethics and goes hand in hand with her explicit refusal to allow any speech to be made at her funeral¹⁶⁷.

C) Mrs. Jules Favre, the "Spirit of Sèvres" and the Sevres community

Convinced that "Sèvres does not need an office manager, but a mother who lives among her daughters, who knows them and loves them"¹⁶⁸ "Mrs. Jules Favre maintained a relationship with the Sèvres girls comparable to that between Pécaut and his Fontenays girls. Where Pécaut instituted a morning chat, Mme Jules Favre instituted a nightly "bonsoir": she received each of the Sevrier women in turn each evening. Marguerite Aron remembers this:

162 Minutes of the CSIP sessions, F/17/12971 - the second woman to sit was Mathilde Salomon.

163 Nicole Mosconi, *Femmes et savoir*, op. cit, p. 79.

164 See Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature*, op. cit, p. 133. She repeats the conclusions of André Chervel, *Histoire de l'agrégation, contribution à l'histoire de la culture scolaire*, Paris, INRP, 1993. Yves Verneuil states that the agrégation for women was created to 'show the consideration that was intended to be given to the new teaching', thanks to the prestige of the title, *Les Agrégés*, op. cit.

165 Speech by Henry Lemonnier at the funeral of Madame Jules Favre, F/17/22861.

166 Letter dated January 1887, F/17/22861.

167 According to Henry Lemonnier at his funeral, F/17/22861.

168 Paul Souday, "Mme Jules Favre", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, 15 February 1896.

I entered. She was sitting [and her] smile was open. [I don't know why, a serene confidence, a tender joy was in me. It was the 'good evening', the quiet, accented word that closes the day, wipes away all the insignificant dust, and brings the peace of the evening down to the depths of our being¹⁶⁹.

On the eve of an assessment, Marguerite Aron was ill and hesitated to ask Mme Jules Favre for a dispensation during the good evening. That evening, she noticed that the headmistress was unusually distant. The next day, after having completed her composition in due form, she returned to the bonsoir:

"They told me you came down to do the composition, that's right my child. [...] So she guessed last night! So she did it on purpose! She expected me alone to make the effort she didn't even want to ask for¹⁷⁰. "

This cult of individual autonomy is also revealed in the letters exchanged between Mme Jules Favre and the Sevriens after their posting. In her preface to *La Morale de Plutarque*, Louise Belougu quotes a letter to a Sevrier woman about to enter into a civil marriage:

You want to know what I think. But, my child, I am of the opinion that you should act according to your convictions. There is nothing I value more than sincerity, and it is precisely because I respect religion that I detest faithless religious acts. I regret very much that you do not believe; but I would not wish you, out of human respect, to do what so many others do out of conviction. I wish you would come to believe, and I do not understand that such a soul as yours is not religious. But I believe that deep down it is, only it cannot accommodate itself to traditional religion. Make your own¹⁷¹...

How can we not compare these words with those of Félix Pécaut when a pupil confided in him that she did not believe in God, and he replied: "I could not, for my part, live without this belief, but I understand that it is not shared.¹⁷². "

It was a secularism marked by religiosity that Mme Jules Favre applied at Sèvres. When, in 1886, she distributed a Bible to the entire class, she did so because she saw it as an example of moral wisdom¹⁷³. She acted in the same way as Pécaut when he read the article "Prayer" in the *Dictionnaire de pédagogie* during a morning talk: neither of them saw school neutrality as incompatible with an aspiration to transcendence, spirituality and philosophy.

During the Wednesday teas organised by Mrs. Jules Favre, the Sevrier women who wished to do so would indulge in a philosophical reading in her dining room. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben remembers:

169 Marguerite Aron, *Le journal d'une sévrienne*, Paris, Félix Alcan, 1912, 241 p. , p. 13-14.

170 *Ibid.* , p. 65.

171 Quoted in J. F., "Mme Jules Favre", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, January 1909.

172 Marie Édouard-Fuster, "M. Pécaut à Fontenay", *L'École nouvelle*, January-February 1903.

173 Françoise Mayeur, "Madame Jules Favre, première directrice de l'école normale de Sèvres, 1834-1896", art. cité.

"Once the discussion starts, it goes on its own and sometimes even becomes interesting. Madame Jules Favre becomes animated. Ah, she is quite different, in these small intimate evenings, than in her law class. She is not even lacking in a certain mischievous and playful humour.¹⁷⁴ " Madame Jules Favre's publications find their subject matter in these weekly meetings with her pupils, to whom she dedicates her works: "Is it necessary to say that in choosing these beautiful pages, we were thinking above all of our dear pupils from Sèvres, with whom we have read and commented on these texts so many times? They will find in this memory of our readings and our intimate talks, precious encouragement to pursue the moral ideal in the education of oneself and of others¹⁷⁵. "

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben remembers living at Sèvres under the aegis of the Kantian categorical imperative, the counterpart of which was a freedom that seemed absolute to her. Coming from the Collège Sévigné where discipline was already broad, she was astonished, like Octave Gréard, at the freedom of meals at Sèvres: "What a difference with the École Sévigné, where each table was presided over by a mistress! It is really complete freedom.¹⁷⁶ " If Sèvres and Sévigné are similar, it is in the religious diversity of the pupils they receive, which leads Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben to declare that she "never thought of establishing differences between people based on their religion¹⁷⁷ ". Raised in the Catholic faith, she followed the same spiritual path as many of her colleagues: "I no longer accept ready-made dogmas, [...] the beliefs of my childhood have suffered the assault they did for all those of my generation¹⁷⁸ ". Mrs. Jules Favre's lay Protestantism mixed with stoicism leaves her free of her agnosticism.

Neither social distinctions, nor religious diversity, nor the boundaries between classes seem to undermine the unity of the Sevriev community. The accounts of former students - Louise Belugou, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, Marguerite Aron and Mlle Küss¹⁷⁹ - all highlight the importance of esprit de corps in the institution. Marguerite Aron evokes the writing by the newcomers of a *manual of the perfect Sevriev* to be submitted to the "third year¹⁸⁰ "She remembers the bonds forged with her fellow students, different from her previous friendships:

How could I admit it to my former companions? When I meet them now on Sundays and they talk to me about their dresses, [...] they bore me. [...] They have never, in the contemplation of a study, in the evening, thought with me about a page of Descartes; and their friendship, [...] made up of frequent mechanical company, is not steeped in that disinterested and superior interest of the affinities of reason¹⁸¹.

174 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, *Souvenirs d'une jeune fille bête*, op. cit, p. 475.

175 Quoted in Henry Lemonnier, "Discours à l'inauguration du buste de Mme Jules Favre", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, July 1898.

176 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, *Souvenirs d'une jeune fille bête*, op. cit, p. 453.

177 *Ibid.*, p. 469.

178 *Ibid.*, p. 120.

179 Miss Küss, "Speech by the President of the Association of former pupils of Sèvres, Director of the Lycée Victor Hugo in Paris", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, June 1907.

180 Marguerite Aron, *Le journal d'une sévrienne*, op. cit, p. 40.

181 *Ibid.*, p. 68.

Still a student at Sèvres, Marguerite Aron looked forward to the Alumnae General Assembly to see her classmates from previous years. When she left the school, she became aware of the importance of this association founded in 1885 under the auspices of the headmistress: "It was from the school that the *Bulletin of the Association of Former Students of Sèvres* arrived last week, a reminder of names, people, and cherished ideas, an eloquent sign of a union that continues uninterruptedly between our diverse but fraternal solitudes.¹⁸² " Like Pécaut at Fontenay, Mme Jules Favre was attached to the Alumni Association. On her death in 1896, the headmistress left the association a legacy of 1,000 francs.

The affection of the Sèvres girls for their school was particularly evident at the 25th anniversary of Sèvres. Marguerite Aron reports on the event for *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*: she emphasises that despite the large number of participants, the celebration has something of an intimate, family atmosphere¹⁸³. The first classes were particularly well represented. Their presence reveals the attachment to their school of those who lived through the era of Mme Jules Favre. Their over-representation can perhaps also be explained by the weight of celibacy which marked the lives of the first Sevrier women, who were undoubtedly more attached to the community of students than their married colleagues. During the celebration, Marguerite Aron noted that the "spirit of Sèvres", far from bourgeois worldliness, continued to reign: "People of very different conditions, ages and ranks are mixed together; and, without any etiquette, there is a truly democratic equality between them, that rare equality which is made up of simplicity of manners.

D) Training women teachers, not scholars: an incomplete intellectual emancipation

Unlike the students of the rue d'Ulm, the Sevrier women have a schooling that is far removed from the university. Nicole Mosconi reminds us that the purpose of their studies is completely different from that of their male counterparts: 'the aim is to make these students good secondary school teachers and not at all future university teachers and researchers¹⁸⁴. " Although Sevrier women had a level of education hitherto unavailable to young girls, they were constantly reminded that their knowledge should make them teachers, not scholars. This is what their teacher Joseph Fabre said: "Educated enough to avoid the superstition of knowledge, graceful without frivolity, serious without pedantry, and deeply aware of their mission [...], the teachers trained at Sèvres were above all souls who inspired souls¹⁸⁵. " Any desire on the part of Sèvres women to participate, like men, in scientific production, would be a "superstition of knowledge" and a manifestation of In the case of the "pedantry": women must remain confined to the task assigned to them.

182 *Ibid.* , p. 134.

183 Marguerite Aron, "La journée de Sèvres", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, June 1907.

184 Nicole Mosconi, *Femmes et savoir*, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

185 Speech by Joseph Fabre at the funeral of Madame Jules Favre, F/17/22861.

Marguerite Aron was well aware of the injunction for Sevrièr women to confine themselves to their strict pedagogical role. When her book was published in 1912, she dedicated her text to her colleagues:

The work in which you are going to collaborate, and from which I have lived, absorbs too much of all the living forces to leave [...] time [...] to polish sentences and to search for words. [...] To be an educator is often to be a scholar, hardly a man of letters; and you, my sisters, are women... You are workers, and you are young girls: these are two reasons why you should prefer, to the banal noise of printed words, the collected rustle of your task as bees¹⁸⁶.

This is a far cry from the calls for political reflection and social action made by Albertine Eidenschenk and Marie Baertschi to their colleagues in the name of loyalty to the spirit of Fontenay! On the contrary, Marguerite Aron discouraged her colleagues from participating in the production of knowledge. A woman must prefer the 'collected rustle' of daily labour to the publicity of a personal thought. Marguerite Aron describes her own account in the negative: "Neither a woman's gossip, nor a professor's rhetoric: I was brought up in horror of these two extremes, which touch each other more often than has been said.¹⁸⁷ " We thus find condensed in the pen of a Sevrièrian woman the residues of a rhetoric that is both misogynistic and anti-intellectualist. This gives an indication of the ideology that governs Sèvres: on the one hand, bourgeois worldliness (or 'womanly gossip') is set up as a counter-model for the female professors of the Republic; on the other hand, women must not imitate the male model of the orator (and his 'professor's rhetoric'). To respect this injunction to modesty, Marguerite Aron first published her text anonymously. She also anonymised the personalities in her story: "I may be reproached for this voluntary erasure of our Sevrièrian personalities¹⁸⁸ ". Marguerite Aron's recollections are erected to the glory of an institution and must not, above all, bring out the individuality of women.

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben shares the same scruples in her memoirs. In a foreword in which she refuses to use the "I" and hides behind the third person, she refuses to assume her status as a memoirist: "Her real aim was not to tell the story of herself: [...] so it was not, strictly speaking, a book of memoirs that she wanted to write; and, although she was obliged to continually put herself on stage [...] she never wanted to focus interest on her person.¹⁸⁹ " Even in the 1940s when Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben was writing her memoirs, the note of intent of her autobiographical text can only begin with a statement of modesty. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben devotes a large part of her account to Sèvres, which she remembers as being incredibly open to intellectual life and independent thought. Marguerite Aron shares this feeling:

186 Marguerite Aron, *Le journal d'une sévrienne*, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

187 *Ibid.* Foreword, p. X.

188 *Ibid.* p. VIII.

189 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, *Souvenirs d'une jeune fille bête*, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

I free myself from ready-made formulas and the servitudes of memory; I dare to feel for myself alone. [...] "Say! Say!" Mr Fabre shouts cordially to us. Our tutors invite us to free discussion. Sèvres, said Mme Jules Favre [...] is a Republic. - What do you think? What do you believe? That is the basis of all the questions. - Assert yourself, [...] that is the basis of almost all the advice¹⁹⁰.

The atmosphere at Sèvres oscillates between encouraging students to assert their critical individuality and the imperative to conform to the ideal of female modesty. The contradiction between these two injunctions is regularly apparent in individual courses. For example, Marguerite Aron was unable to come to terms with her life at Sèvres. Returning to Paris thanks to a transfer after having led a reclusive life in the provinces, she contradicted her own advice and allowed herself to be carried away by the temptation to participate in the "banal noise of printed words". From 1907 onwards she contributed to *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles* and published several works. Obviously, she could not be satisfied with her job alone, which did not provide sufficient intellectual stimulation. An inspector remarked in 1920 that she "would like, I think, to direct consciences, to give lectures at Sèvres, to move in a theatre larger than a simple high school class... She is a malcontent [...] with very estimable intellectual gifts¹⁹¹. "

The contradiction between the level of training of Sevrièr women and their professional prospects is obvious: as Loukia Efthymiou explains, the latter 'are required, unlike men, to be pedagogues first before being literate ¹⁹² ". This was explained by Léon Brunschvicg in a conference at Sèvres reported by Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben in June 1910. The problem the lecturer tackled could be summarised as follows: how could future female high school teachers make the intellectual seeds they had received at Sèvres bear fruit in a profession that often boiled down to popularisation? Her answer rules out solutions that involve putting women in competition with men in the fields they already occupy. Knowing that female secondary school teachers cannot embark on writing a thesis, Léon Brunschvicg shows how lucky they are to be deprived of it:

They are not condemned to choose from the most obscure corners of literature or history a subject for new research. [...] Let them take advantage of their disinterestedness, let them go where their personal taste leads them, let them explore all aspects of the question or the work that has retained them. [...] The essential thing is not the publication that might be drawn from the subject; the essential thing is to constitute for oneself a centre of reflection that pleases¹⁹³.

190 Marguerite Aron, *Le journal d'une sévrienne*, op. cit, p. 19.

191 Inspection for the school year 1926-1927, Marguerite Aron's career file, F/17/24282.

192 Loukia Efthymiou, "Le genre des concours", *Clio, Histoire, femmes et société*, 2003, n°18, p. 91-112.

193 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJF", *Revue universitaire*, June 1910.

According to Léon Brunschvicg, women must contribute to research in other ways than by publishing their thoughts. Through their personal work, they can complete scientific research by correcting errors: no contribution is to be despised in the construction of science. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben concluded her account of the conference with what seemed to her to be the most innovative aspect: according to the speaker, women teachers must take an interest in political and social issues if they are to be able to train future women voters in the Republic. However, their action should be done outside the parties, by acting in philanthropic associations. Once again, and even in the words of a feminist¹⁹⁴ There is no question of women taking up the same spaces as men.

Even during the feminist upsurge of the Belle Époque, Sèvres was presented by its new director as a school for training women teachers, without there ever being any question of bringing it closer to the Ulm model in order to open up research opportunities for women. At the Congress of Women's Works and Institutions held during the Universal Exhibition in 1900, Mrs Henri Marion, the successor to Mrs Jules Favre, presented a report in which she called for further professional training for Sevrièr women. However, they were already obliged to do an internship in a lycée¹⁹⁵. Mrs Henri Marion called for more visits to secondary schools or the creation of a secondary school annex at Sèvres.¹⁹⁶ Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben did not like this:

I give thanks [...] to Fate for the fact that I belonged to those first generations of Sèvres, where Pedagogy was somewhat forgotten. We were obliged [...] to correct out loud the written assignments sent by the high schools; but that was the exception rather than the rule. The rest of the time we could believe that we were at Sèvres to learn and be initiated into science, not to learn to teach¹⁹⁷.

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben did not believe in the effectiveness of the teacher training given at Sèvres. The preparation of lessons that were then taught in front of the rest of the Sèvres girls under the teacher's watchful eye had nothing to do with the reality of the profession. Marguerite Aron also mocked the illusory nature of these "school exercises"¹⁹⁸. Both remember having passively accepted their destiny as teachers and regret not having been able to maintain the research habits they had acquired during their studies: teaching seemed to them to be a downgrading after the intellectual idyll of their Sevrièr years.

194 See Cécile Formaglio, 'Un engagement commun pour la République : Cécile et Léon Brunschvicg, un couple d'intellectuels démocratiques', in Raymond Dartevelle and Mélanie Fabre (eds.), 'Couples d'intellectuels, de l'intime au politique', *Les Études sociales*, 2019/2, n°170, p. 53-74.

195 On the very pedagogical character of the training at Sèvres, see Yves Verneuil, *Les Agrégés*, *op. cit.*

196 *Deuxième congrès international des œuvres et institutions féminines*, Paris, 1902, p. 236.

197 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, *Souvenirs d'une jeune fille bête*, *op. cit.*, p. 467.

198 Marguerite Aron, *Le journal d'une sévrièr*, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

E) Becoming a teacher, a 'secular veil'?

Did the prospect of transmitting knowledge, if not participating in its production, have much appeal for Sevrier women? Did they all consider, like Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, that entering the profession was a "secular veil"¹⁹⁹ ?

When they entered Sèvres, the girls were already entering a "lay convent"²⁰⁰ "which, according to Henry Lemonnier, should embody "recollection, but not isolation"²⁰¹ ". Marguerite Aron, however, spoke of her "reclusive existence at the School"²⁰² "and Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben compares the ten-year commitment to perpetual vows: "I was like those young girls of yesteryear who were forced into convents to become nuns against their will, because their families had no money"²⁰³ ".

Even when, after leaving Sèvres, she refused the post she was given to stay in Paris, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben still felt the gaze of Mme Jules Favre weighing on her, like a reproving mother superior: "I am aware that Mme Jules Favre, the stoic, will find that I am not doing my duty, and I will fall in her esteem"²⁰⁴ . "

The first generations of Sevrier women did not enjoy the social image of their male counterparts, the high school teachers. They suffered the disapproval that surrounded working women. According to Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, this very title of 'teacher',

[women] have not worn it long enough [...] to benefit from the authority it confers. Secondary education for young girls, high schools, all of this is new and unknown. The general public was still confused in 1890; it could hardly distinguish the "teacher-woman" from the honourable but confused herd of schoolmistresses [...]. Later, when she has proved herself and won over public opinion once and for all, we shall see the emergence of the modern woman teacher, whose sense of independence gives her a proud appearance. [...] [During my years at Sèvres,] I too remained [...] with the ancient vision of the shabby teacher, an intermediary between the domesticity and the masters, [...] with no happiness other than the austere happiness of self-denial²⁰⁵ .

The "taking of the veil", therefore, was the beginning of one of the only careers open to women without a dowry; the "taking of the veil", also, was the dedication of Sevrier women to their studies and then to their profession; the "taking of the veil", finally, was the conviction that a career as a teacher was accompanied by the sufferings of celibacy. Loneliness is indeed the lot of many Sevrier women. Many

199 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, *Souvenirs d'une jeune fille bête*, *op. cit.* , p. 26.

200 *Ibid.*, p. 390.

201 Henry Lemonnier, "L'école de Sèvres depuis sa fondation (1881-1900)", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, January 1900.

202 Marguerite Aron, *Le journal d'une sévrienne*, *op. cit.* , p. 71.

203 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, *Souvenirs d'une jeune fille bête*, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

204 *Ibid.* , p. 651.

are young female teachers who find themselves isolated from their families and overwhelmed by the workload, which explains the rapid deterioration of their health²⁰⁶. Louise Belugou also evokes the way in which Mme Jules Favre herself was moved by "the simple and valiant deaths of those who, prematurely, among us, sometimes heroically, fell in the line of duty²⁰⁷". The professional functions of Sevrier women were presented by the institution as worthy of the sacrifice of a life, while being despised in public opinion as a sign of social decline.

On leaving school, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben was lucid: "Being a teacher in 1891 meant almost forced celibacy, a dull and petty life; I would like it to be full and brilliant. I would like it to be full and brilliant. It is the renunciation of all my dreams, and I am only twenty years old!²⁰⁸ !" Raised from boarding school to boarding school since her childhood, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben has only been with single teachers. She has never met any young men, and when she meets boys her own age at the home of a Sevrier friend, they seem to her to be from another planet²⁰⁹.

Celibacy was a prevalent reality among the first generations of female high school teachers. Jo Burr Margadant, author of a prosopography of the 213 female teachers who passed through Sèvres in its first ten years, notes that 60% of them did not marry, six times more than the national average²¹⁰. Because they were unmarried, these teachers were subject to constant social surveillance, accentuated by the control exercised by their hierarchy. Thus, when Henriette Wurmser, a teacher at the lycée in Saint-Quentin, went to Paris twice a week to meet her friends, the inspector reproached her for her comings and goings:

A female professor should not be [...] too often on the train. And then nature has endowed Miss Wurmser with an expressive physiognomy and a very accentuated type which do not allow her to go unnoticed. I'm not saying that she's trying to be noticed, but the fact is that she is noticed, and that's a disadvantage²¹¹.

A married woman, accompanied by her husband and children, is freer than a single woman. Many women teachers were struck by the contrast between the freedom of Sèvres and the subjugation of a single woman teacher by the social codes she had to follow. Marguerite Aron notes that despite the recent innovations of the Republic concerning women's education, the Catholic heritage remains omnipresent:

206 Faced with this state of affairs, several women, including Dick May, Mathilde Salomon, Léonie Allégret, Mmes Henri Marion and Dejean de la Bâtie, supported the creation of rest homes for female teaching staff.

207 Quoted in J. F., "Mme Jules Favre", *L'enseignement secondaire des filles*, January 1909.

208 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, *Souvenirs d'une jeune fille bête*, *op. cit.*, p. 602. Her own mother wanted at all costs to avoid this fate for Jeanne, which had been traced out for her by her great-grandmother.

209 *Ibid.*, p. 487.

210 Jo Burr Margadant, *Madame Professor*, *op. cit.* See also Marlaine Cacouault-Bitaud, "Diplôme et célibat. Les femmes professeurs de lycée entre les deux guerres", in Arlette Farge, Christiane Klapisch-Zuber (eds.), *Madame ou Mademoiselle, Itinéraires de la solitude féminine, XVIII^e-XX^e siècle*, Paris, 1984, pp. 177-203. In 1911, the average rate of celibacy among women born in the 1860s was 11% (see Louis Henry and Jacques Houdaille, "Célibat et âge au mariage aux XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles en France", *Population*, 1978, n°33/1, pp. 43-84).

211 Inspection report by Adrien Dupuy, 19 April 1900, Henriette Wurmser's career file, F/17/24059.

Yes, it is the old ecclesiastical tradition that still weighs on us. It wanted - in its original asceticism - that the education of children be entrusted to men and women living apart from the century and ignoring its infirmities; and, even now, a young woman, a teacher, who goes out alone, walks, travels, goes to the theatre, dresses well, converses openly with men, scandalizes the pedagogical beliefs of the French bourgeoisie²¹².

Far from the new woman who embodied freedom of movement in the Belle Époque, the agrégée who graduated from Sèvres was, according to Marguerite Aron, "neither completely independent nor completely cloistered²¹³". In his novel *Jean-Christophe*, Romain Rolland denounces the iniquity of the fate reserved for female high school teachers. He recalls one of his friends in the provinces:

If she were locked up in an airless jail, she would not be more lonely and suffocated; the bourgeoisie closes its doors to these women who try to live by working [...]. Their colleagues at the boys' high school keep them away, either because they are afraid of the gossip of the city, or out of [...] disgust [...] for intellectual women. [...] Their lack of wealth and connections prevents them from marrying. [...] When such an existence is not sustained by an exceptional religious or moral feeling [...], it is a living death²¹⁴...

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben was one of the 40% of Sevrièr women who escaped this fate. By marrying Paul Crouzet, also a high school teacher, in 1898, she inaugurated a new model, that of university couples. Anne Martin-Fugier, drawing on the work of Adeline Daumard, shows that these marriages did not become commonplace until the beginning of the XX^e century:

"Before 1914, insofar as being bourgeois meant [...] having a wife who did not work and a maid to serve her, a professor did not marry one of his colleagues²¹⁵". This is why, when she left Sèvres, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben was about to become the woman who was called "Mademoiselle" all her life and who "grew old in this way, self-effacing and resigned [...], having no other joy than that of bringing up other people's children. [...] She is not a woman: she is a teacher²¹⁶".

For Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, studying at Sèvres and then pursuing a teaching career meant sacrificing her femininity. The institution was so keen not to train women scholars or socialites that students, like her, came to feel ashamed of their beauty and embarrassed about their knowledge. On the verge of death, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben half-heartedly concludes that the model of woman that emerged from Sèvres in the 1890s is quite simply unnatural:

212 Marguerite Aron, *Le journal d'une sévrienne*, op. cit., p. 233.

213 *Ibid.*, p. 234-235.

214 Quoted in Pierre Guiral and Guy Thuillier, *La vie quotidienne des professeurs de 1870 à 1940*, op. cit., p. 138.

215 Anne Martin-Fugier, *La Bourgeoise*, op. cit.

216 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, *Souvenirs d'une jeune fille bête*, op. cit., p. 643.

What is the use [of a young girl being pretty], since this rare achievement is considered non-existent? [...] She is buried in a gangué; she is made to be seen by no one [...]; and soon she will be condemned to wither within the four walls of a classroom, without having enjoyed herself for a moment²¹⁷.

When Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben took her secondary school teaching certificate at the end of her second year at Sèvres, she realised that the president of the jury was observing her: "You were the first to be admitted, I wanted to see your face. Thank God," I said to myself, "it's pretty²¹⁸". Given that Sevrier women are brought up to despise their physical appearance, how can we explain this comment by Raymond Thamin? Without wishing to make young girls coquettish and proud, the architects of the new educational institutions do not wish to provide their opponents with arguments confirming that educated women are becoming masculine. They have in mind this undesirable figure of the 'third sex' and rejoice in the success of young girls who correspond to the model of femininity that they seek to safeguard.

The attention their superiors pay to the physical appearance of these teachers, who are supposed to embody the respectability of girls' high schools, is visible in their career records²¹⁹. Thus, Henriette Wurmser, who was reproached for not being unnoticed, received the support of Pastor Wagner in her dealings with the administration: "Her hair [*word ill*] gives her an extraordinary air; but I assure you that no one is more serious than this poor girl and that judging her on her exterior alone would be unjust²²⁰". This warning did not change the behaviour of the Inspector General Eugène Manuel. After a lesson by Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, he declared: "It would be unfair to Mlle Benaben if we did not insist on the pleasantness of her person, the gentleness of her speech, the naivety of her manners, all the natural qualities which have earned her the sympathy of the pupils²²¹". The Inspector General had the same view of Marguerite Aron: "Mlle Aron has a neatness and ease of speech [...] that many men would envy her. Of a distinguished ugliness, she has an excellent voice, very pleasant to hear, and a remarkable authority²²²".

The inspection reports reflect the view of a male superior on this new female profession. Inspectors push female teachers to conform to a socially acceptable female model, in the hope that this will reflect on the reputation of their school. This is done at the expense of the individual freedom of female teachers, who are constantly under surveillance. This shows the paradox between the intellectual emancipation that the new female teachers enjoy and the social straitjacket in which they are forced to operate.

217 *Ibid.*, p. 434.

218 *Ibid.*, p. 552.

219 Yves Verneuil notes that this also happens with men, but more marginally. The example he gives again calls into question E. Manuel, who notes that a teacher "has thickened". See *Les Agrégés, op. cit.* pp. 192-193.

220 Undated letter, Henriette Wurmser's career file, F/17/24059.

221 Inspection report by Eugène Manuel, 14 April 1894, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben's career file, F/17/24295.

222 Inspection report, year 1910-1911, Marguerite Aron's career file, F/17/24282.

F) A stronger injunction to commitment in Fontenay than in Sèvres?

At the very end of the nineteenth century, while Fontenay's legacy was claimed loud and clear by Albertine Eidenschenk and Marie Baertschi in their commitment to Dreyfus, no Sevrier woman, as far as we know, adopted the same approach. Should we conclude that the ENS de Sèvres did not provide the same contingent of committed intellectuals as its primary school counterpart? Several avenues point to this conclusion. To establish this definitively, however, it would be necessary to carry out a prosopographical study of the Fontenay school similar to that carried out by Jo Burr Margadant on the first generations of Sevrier women²²³.

If we stick to the four biographical accounts analysed here, we can see that Félix Pécaut encouraged the Fontenays women to become politically and socially involved to a much greater extent than did Mrs Jules Favre with the Sevrier women. While the Fontenay women were kept abreast of current events, the Sevrier women lived in a bubble of knowledge disconnected from the life of the country. Marguerite Aron remembers: "Mme Louis [...] reproached me [...] for ignoring even the ministerial crisis! It's true: newspapers don't attract me, 'everything that happens' interests me less than an idea by Tolstoy²²⁴. " At the same time, Pécaut could not have let a student ignore the ministerial crisis and despise "everything that happens" outside the walls of Fontenay. Thus, while the memories of Fontenay recounted by Marie Baertschi and Albertine Eidenschenk are for them a means of calling on their former classmates to keep Pécaut's spirit alive by engaging in the city, the accounts of Marguerite Aron and Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben betray, on the contrary, the conviction that female teachers must not step outside their role as pedagogues. If Pécaut called his "daughters" to

"Marguerite Aron and Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben seem to have remembered that at Sèvres they praised the sublimity of self-effacement. In both institutions there was a regime of freedom and trust, an aspiration to moral exemplarity, but despite these similarities, it must be said that Félix Pécaut and Mme Jules Favre did not aspire to the same social role for "their daughters". The "Dare to be" is an injunction that has no real equivalent in Sèvres.

It is obviously difficult to consider four life experiences as sufficiently representative to draw global conclusions. To complete this analysis, we can try to study the bulletins of the Sèvres and Fontenay alumni associations in parallel. Here again, the comparison is very difficult, as the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes* has been preserved for the entire period we are interested in - from its foundation in 1894 to the war in 1914 - whereas we have only been able to access the issues of the *Bulletin des sévriennes* published between December 1901 and July 1906²²⁵. Since the strictly Dreyfus period was not represented in the *Bulletin des sévriennes* - publication of which was interrupted during this period - we have been able to access only the issues of the *Bulletin des sévriennes* published between December 1901 and July 1906.

223 Jo Burr Margadant, *Madame Professor*, *op. cit.*

224 Marguerite Aron, *Le journal d'une sévrienne*, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

225 The BnF is the library with the most complete collection, but it only has the issues from 1886 to 1890 (n°4 to n°38)

and from 1901 to 1938 (2nd series, n°1 to 75). I was able to consult the issues contained in the 1901-1906 box, but my request for special authorisation was not successful for the other periods.

For example, it is difficult to analyse the impact of the Affaire on the amicale. However, it should be noted that of the 19 bulletins published in the wake of Dreyfusism, during the period of combisme and at the time of the Separation of Church and State, none of them contains a text on the country's political or social news. The bulletin consists almost exclusively of lecture notes taken at Sèvres, articles on scientific subjects and examples of lessons. In a 1904 issue, Louise Belugou, president of the association, announced the publication of the proceedings of the Congress of Women's Works and Institutions held in 1900²²⁶. Similarly, in April 1905, an article by Louise Belugou was published on the relevance of the school-leaving diploma awarded in secondary schools, while the Collège Sévigné now offered a preparation for the baccalauréat²²⁷. Like most of the texts published in the *Bulletin des sévriennes*, the tone is informative. The bulletin does not seem to be a good place to publish opinion articles or calls for mobilisation. The most controversial political and social issues did not make it into its pages between 1901 and 1906. And when they did, it seemed to be by breaking and entering. This is notably the case of a sonnet, published post-mortem in Mlle Lejeune's obituary in April 1904, which clearly refers to the Dreyfus affair: it is entitled "To Picquart", evokes the eternal "duel of right against wrong" and concludes that "justice is done when the just has suffered"²²⁸. While the committed nature of this sonnet is obvious, the fact that it appears in the midst of other poems written by a woman who is now deceased, without the obituary devoted to her even mentioning her Dreyfusism, leaves one wondering about the intention behind its publication.

Unlike the *Bulletin des sévriennes*, the Bulletin des fontenaysiennes is peppered with articles seeking to make the link between the vocation of teachers and the fate of French society. As early as 1895, the bulletin published a conference by Alphonse Darlu entitled "Socialism and the social question"²²⁹. In 1899, Rachel Albert, who had just graduated from the school, published an article on the popular university movement as it was taking shape in England and mentioned the lessons that France could draw from it²³⁰. In 1905, Alphonse Darlu again published a summary of a conference, this time on the weak points of secular thought²³¹. In 1906, Mlle Kieffer wrote an article entitled "Féminisme, route barrée" (Feminism, the blocked road), on the refusal of women to apply for inspectorships²³². Three years later, the same Fontenaysienne wrote an article on the National Council of French Women and urged her colleagues to join it²³³. In 1908, two lectures given at the École des hautes études sociales by Dick May to the Union des libres penseurs et des libres croyants on the question of secularism in France were transcribed²³⁴. To these

226 L. Belugou, "Congrès international des Œuvres et institutions féminines en 1900", *Bulletin des sévriennes*, July 1904.

227 L. Belugou, "À propos du diplôme de fin d'études", *Bulletin des sévriennes*, April 1905.

228 Obituary of Mlle Lejeune, headmistress of the Lycée de Montpellier, *Bulletin des sévriennes*, April 1904.

229 Alphonse Darlu, "Le socialisme et la question sociale", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, May 1895.

230 Rachel Albert, "University Extension in England", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1899.

231 Alphonse Darlu, "Les points faibles de la pensée laïque", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, January 1905, p. 36-42.

232 E. Kieffer, "Féminisme, route barrée", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, January 1906.

233 Mlle Kieffer, "Conseil national des femmes", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, October 1909.

234 "Notes" on the Conferences at EHES by the ULPLC, *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1908.

In addition to these examples, there are numerous contributions by Marie Baertschi and Albertine Eidenschenk at the turn of the century, where the themes of secularism, school neutrality and the social role of women teachers are particularly developed. The influence of the Affaire is evident.

Were the Fontenaysians therefore more openly Dreyfus supporters than the Sevrierians? On this question, it is worth noting the importance of the effect of Félix Pécaut's conversion to Dreyfusism in the spring of 1898. Conversely, neither Mme Jules Favre - who died in 1896 - nor her successors, nor even more generally the management of secondary education, were on the side of the Dreyfusards. Jo Burr Margadant writes that unlike the ENS on rue d'Ulm, at Sèvres "even battles as fierce as the Dreyfus Affair did not produce the slightest ripple"²³⁵. The historian also notes the scarcity of calls to order in administrative files concerning possible violations of school neutrality, whether in the political or religious domain. Yet there must have been many Sevrier women who were convinced of Dreyfus's innocence and concerned for the Republic. But it is as if they did not allow themselves to speak out on this issue. For example, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, who was married to the Dreyfus supporter Paul Crouzet, never wrote a text related to these contemporary events. Her first article, published in June 1899 in the *Revue universitaire*, was on the teaching of antiquity in girls' lycées²³⁶. Among the secondary school staff whose files we have studied, only Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Henriette Wurmser and Léa Bérard - the only Sevrier of the three - were given formal notice of their political commitments.

Conversely, but without a rigorous quantitative comparison being possible here, numerous administrative investigations related to breaches of school neutrality appear among Fontenays women. Marie Baertschi was forced to take a leave of absence from 1897 to 1904 because of what was considered a violation of neutrality. Albertine Eidenschenk was investigated on this subject in 1904. Similarly, in 1895, Marie-Thérèse Allégret, headmistress of the Bourg-en-Bresse teacher training college, was at the heart of a case analysed by Patrick Cabanel. Close to Protestantism and a member of the Union for Moral Action, she welcomed Paul Desjardins and Pastor Wagner into the school. Bibles were distributed and articles from the *Bulletin de l'Union pour l'action morale* were read and commented on during the morning lectures²³⁷. Accused of being the head of a secular Port-Royal, Marie-Thérèse Allégret was displaced. However, the student teachers defended their headmistress in a letter to the Minister: "No one in the School has ever opposed or forced our religious opinions: we do not think that it is propaganda for any religion to tell young girls to always act loyally according to their conscience by lending each other mutual support"²³⁸. "

235 Jo Burr Margadant, *Madame le Professeur*, *op. cit.* p. 92: 'even such ferocious battles as the Dreyfus Affair did not produce a ripple'.

236 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "L'enseignement de l'Antiquité dans les lycées de jeunes filles", *Revue universitaire*, June 1899.

237 Patrick Cabanel, *Le Dieu de la République*, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

238 Document dated 9 September 1895, Marie-Thérèse Allégret's career file, F/17/23176.

The last indication of the difference between the Fontenaysian and Sevriarian legacies in terms of the relationship between women teachers and contemporary society is the relationship they collectively have with feminism. As early as 1909, Miss Kieffer asked in the bulletin that the *Amicale des Fontenaysiennes* send its membership fee to the National Council of French Women. This was done on the eve of the Great War. It was not until 1929 that the *Association des sévriennes* did the same, which put an end to "almost five decades of indifference to organisations promoting women's rights²³⁹". The most feminist Sevriarians, such as Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben and Léa Bérard, did not express themselves in the *Bulletin des sévriennes* or in the journal directed by Camille Sée, but in a new section of the *Revue universitaire* and in *La Femme nouvelle*, respectively, which were created precisely in order to break away from publications that were considered too blind to contemporary issues.

At the end of this brief assessment, it seems that the ENS de Fontenay under the Pécaut era encouraged more commitment than the ENS de Sèvres under the leadership of Mme Jules Favre. The field of popular education undoubtedly left more room for manoeuvre for women teachers than the bourgeois climate in which the staff of the lycées evolved.

Conclusion of Chapter 1

By going back to the roots of the secular and republican school in the debates of the Second Empire, this chapter has highlighted the dynamic that, from the 1880s onwards, allowed an elite of young women to enter intellectual professions that had previously been exclusively male in public education. The exercise of an intellectual profession is indeed at the basis of the concept of the intellectual, which Jacques le Goff defines as one who makes "a profession of thinking and teaching [his or her] thoughts [in an] alliance of personal reflection and its dissemination²⁴⁰". The women teachers trained in the institutions created at the time of the school laws made scholarly culture their profession and were the links in its transmission to working-class and bourgeois girls. In studying their career paths, the aim was, following the advice of Nicole Racine, to question "the link between their professional identities and the construction of their individual identities²⁴¹". There is no doubt that their passage through Sèvres or Fontenay constitutes a major stage in their personal construction, their integration into a female community united by shared values, as well as their politicisation, which was more or less encouraged depending on the school they attended.

The right of these women to live off scholarly culture²⁴² is the result of a struggle, led from the 1860s and 1870s by Clarisse Coignet in particular. But if the new

239 Jo Burr Margadant, *Madame Professor*, *op. cit.* p. 307.

240 Jacques le Goff, *Les intellectuels au Moyen-Âge*, Paris, Points, 2014 [1972], p. 3.

241 Nicole Racine, "Intellectuelles", in Michel Leymarie, Jean-François Sirinelli (eds.), *L'histoire des intellectuels aujourd'hui*, Paris, PUF, 2003, p. 341-362.

Although the women's institutions created by the school laws were presented by the republicans as a major advance in the education of girls, the women who were trained there were not treated on an equal footing with their male counterparts. Félix Pécaut had to convince some of the teachers at Fontenay of the value of providing women with a high level of education, while Mme Jules Favre fought for her students to prepare for something other than a cheap agrégation. This study has thus made it possible to study two activists for women's education who served as "leaven for the following generations"²⁴³ "These were Félix Pécaut in Fontenay and Mme Jules Favre in Sèvres, who are discovered through

"the imprint they left on those they inspired"²⁴⁴ ". For, as Jean-François Sirinelli writes, "a cleric is always defined in reference to an inheritance, as a legatee or as a prodigal son: [...] the heritage of the elders is an explicit or implicit element of reference"²⁴⁵ ". Pécaut's Fontenay and Mme Jules Favre's Sèvres are precisely the common and consensual references in the Fontenay and Sèvres communities, and even more widely in the ranks of the supporters of secular female education. In particular, Pécaut was very much involved with those of "his daughters" who claimed to be his heirs by expressing themselves at the turn of the century on various subjects, and particularly in the Dreyfus struggle.

Educated in the cult of individual autonomy and free examination, Fontenay and Sevrier women experienced a form of intellectual emancipation during their studies. However, although they were encouraged to produce individual thoughts, they were still subject to the gender norms of their time, when women's work was still considered a sign of economic inferiority without always being a means of access to personal independence.²⁴⁶ But even if these first generations of female professors did not have much room for manoeuvre in a society and institution that observed them, their high education "cannot [...] be entirely dissociated from the results it could have [...] in public life"²⁴⁷ "as Françoise Mayeur explains. Thus, after studying in this chapter the emergence of a female elite in a new intellectual profession, the next chapter will show how some women made critical use of their knowledge by getting involved in debates on education in the two decades following the school laws. For, as Emmanuel Jousse reminds us, the intellectual is not defined solely "by what he is, a function, a status, but by what he does, his intervention in the field of politics"²⁴⁸ ".

242 On this notion, see Jean-Pierre Chaline, 'Culture des élites' (p. 218) and Dominique Kalifa, 'Culture populaire' (p. 226), in Christian Delporte, Jean-Yves Mollier, Jean-François Sirinelli (eds), *Dictionnaire d'histoire culturelle de la France contemporaine*, Paris, PUF, 2010.

243 Jean-François Sirinelli, "Le hasard ou la nécessité? Une histoire en chantier : l'histoire des intellectuels", art. cit.

244 *Ibid.*

245 Jean-François Sirinelli, "Effets d'âge et phénomène de génération dans le milieu intellectuel français", *Cahiers de l'IHTP*, n°6, November 1987, p. 5-18.

246 See Françoise Mayeur, *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles sous la Troisième République*, op. cit, p. 205.

247 *Ibid.*, p. 24.

248 Emmanuel Jousse (preface by Marc Lazar), *Les hommes révoltés: les origines intellectuelles du réformisme*, Paris, Fayard-histoire, 2016, p. 309.

Chapter 2

Female voices and intellectual postures in the 1880s debates on girls' education

Introduction to the chapter 2

After studying the creation of new educational institutions for girls at the time of the school laws, both at primary level - Fontenay and the écoles normales - and at secondary level - Sèvres and the public lycées -, the aim here is to focus on the discussions that accompanied the emergence of these new forms of female education. These debates provided an opportunity for women who had recently been promoted to the new careers in public education (agrégées, inspectors, directors of teacher training colleges, etc.) to speak out. The latter mobilised the intellectual heritage they had acquired and the legitimacy recognised by the institution to participate in the definition of a secular and republican education for women in the pivotal period of the decades that followed the "pedagogical fever that accompanied the political victory of the Republicans¹ "in the 1880s.

First, it will be shown that, while the school laws stimulate research into the history of education, several women reread the national heritage with the questions of their present. They draw arguments from the past to support their own pedagogical convictions. We must then analyse the vogue for missions abroad, which some women take advantage of to build up a highly prized international expertise. These women are gradually acquiring their own skills which legitimise their intervention in the public debate. Finally, we will look at the way in which these personalities adopt a critical stance towards their own institution. Although deprived of any decision-making or consultative role in public education² Although they were deprived of any decision-making or consultative role in public education, which only recognised them as "educators", "a collective characteristic of women as a group"³ Although they were deprived of any decision-making or consultative role in public education, which only recognised them as "educators", "a collective characteristic of women as a group", they showed themselves capable of a certain autonomy by criticising decisions, suggesting reforms and even arguing with policy-makers. How do these women adopt an intellectual posture? Do they propose a different discourse from that of men who speak on the same subjects?

I- Historians of education of girls : a reading gendered reading of the national heritage?

As Rebecca Rogers points out, the tradition of writing the history of women's education "was inaugurated by the reforming Republicans of the Third Republic⁴ ". Several women participated in the construction of this historical discourse which accompanied and legitimised the

1 Françoise Mayeur, *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles sous la Troisième République*, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

2 For the period 1880-1900, women were hardly represented in the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique (except for Pauline Kergomard from 1886 and Mathilde Salomon from 1892).

3 Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature*, *op. cit.*, p. 284.

4 Rebecca Rogers, 'Girls' education: a century and a half of historiography', *History of Education* [Online], 115-116 | 2007, online 01 January 2012, accessed 30 September 2016, <https://www.cairn.info/revue-history-of-education->

institutional creations of the regime. Is there a specificity in the treatment of the history of female education by women? Do their discourses differ from those of the three republican thinkers mobilised here, namely Gabriel Compayré, philosopher, teacher at Fontenay and republican deputy, Paul Roussetot, author of pedagogical works and specialist in the education of girls, and Octave Gréard, who became vice-rector of Paris in 1879⁵ ? Do the studies produced by women nourish a different educational project from the one that men call for?

The aim here is to analyse the double battle of representations that is being waged on the subject of the reconstitution of a genealogy of female education between the secular and republican camps, but also within the supporters of the secular school, between men and women. In this vast symbolic war, several female intellectuals acted as historians, either by producing texts with historical pretensions or by discussing models of the past that were mobilised in contemporary debates. The historical dimension of their discourse is used as a pretext to express a critical opinion on their own present. While men hold the title of 'historian' and have a virtual monopoly on historical production⁶ How do women challenge the representations they have forged when they take up the pen on the same subject?

A) Republican men and women facing the pioneers of women's education

In 1887, when he studied Mme de Sévigné, Mme de Maintenon and Mme Necker, Gabriel Compayré refused to see them as pioneers of women's education who could pave the way for other female initiatives. Thus, in his review of Octave Gréard's *L'éducation des femmes par les femmes*, he returns to the omnipresence of Fénelon and Rousseau, whom he considers to be the true inspirers of women. According to Compayré, women lacked reflective autonomy:

Is it therefore the case that women, always superior in sensitivity and often in practical action, are only the next in line to men in terms of theoretical education, and will always need their initiative [to] think in turn? Mr Gréard does not say so, but his book tends [...] to prove it. Could we not find in our time [...] examples of the same kind: a strong virile impulse, starting from a man with an upright sense, with a warm heart, and communicated by him to a whole legion of young girls, who will then [...] spread [...] in the schools the treasures they have drawn from a common home of science, wisdom and moral strength⁷.

5 See Stéphanie Dauphin (preface by Jean-François Condette), *Octave Gréard : 1828-1904*, Rennes, PUR, 2016.

6 Isabelle Ernot, *Historiennes et enjeux de l'écriture de l'histoire des femmes*, op. cit.

7 Gabriel Compayré, "Le nouveau livre de M. Gréard: éducation des femmes par les femmes", *Revue pédagogique*, February 1887.

In a veiled way, Compayré evokes the figure of Félix Pécaut in Fontenay, who transmitted "to a whole legion of young girls" the breath of the Republic so that they could communicate it to the villages. He seems to forget that it was a woman, Mme Jules Favre, who gave Sèvres this "While Gréard's study precisely highlights women who have distinguished themselves by their intellectual production, Compayré concludes his account by reproaching them for having set themselves up as educational theorists instead of remaining simple educators:

What they lacked most, except for Mme de Maintenon who was truly a teacher, was to have been women teachers, active pedagogues. [...] They have left to the women of the XIX^e century the honour of showing the world what the practical teacher can and must be, the educator of action, not the one who with her fingertips [...] writes about the education of fine things.

Compayré could not more clearly deny his contemporaries the right to discuss educational issues. For him, women had been offered the right to be educated and to teach by the Republic, but this did not mean that they now had the right to publish their thoughts. When he looks at the history of girls' education, Compayré is haunted by the prospect of finding women competing with men in the intellectual field. Thus, when he refers to Mme de Lambert, he calls her a "reasoner", because she adopts the same posture as her male counterparts. He presents her as a "docile disciple of Fénelon", depriving her of the authorship of her ideas, and thus of her legitimacy to publish original thought. Like Compayré, Octave Gréard refused to treat women pedagogues as true intellectuals. Thus, although he places his work under the patronage of Mme de Sévigné, he is quick to minimise her intellectual stature:

I am 'coarse', she said of herself, smiling. Abstract reasoning [...] is contrary to her; she has a "square" mind and asks for things to be made thicker; she does not want to "philosophise" and limits herself to "dreaming simply". [...] This is enough for the inner perfection she is pursuing⁸.

This constant devaluation of women's intellectual abilities reflects a distrust of the learned woman, a distrust shared by both men and women who were expressing themselves at the end of the XIX^e century. The women who took up the pen presented the pioneers of the past as figures who respected gender norms, as if to show that their access to education did not represent a threat to the established order. Thus, in her 1883 article on Mme de Sévigné, Mathilde Salomon, director of the Collège to which this woman was a member of the family, writes about the role of women in education.

⁸ Octave Gréard, *L'éducation des femmes par les femmes: études et portraits*, Paris, 1907. p. XX.

The pioneer who gave her name to the project, assures us that she was not a lowly blue. On the contrary, the

The "wonderfully straight sense [of Mme de Sévigné] and the slightly ironic side of her so French spirit, always preserved her from subtlety, from false brilliance, from preciosity⁹". After taking the precaution of showing Mme de Sévigné's 'gender conformity', Mathilde Salomon makes her a model of intellectual achievement and uses her example to justify women's right to high culture. As Isabelle Ernot writes,

[women historians] use historical discourse to prove equality by demonstrating female capacity in all fields [...]. This use of historical discourse by women responds to similar male practices, to the use of historical discourse by historians to construct an advantageous representation of their gendered group¹⁰.

Indeed, while Mathilde Salomon makes Mme Sévigné an exemplary forerunner for women, Gréard, Compayré and Rousselot prefer to use the figure of the learned woman to justify the moderation with which knowledge should be distributed to young girls. In this respect, they show a leniency towards Rousseau that is not found among intellectual women. They were grateful to *Emile* for keeping women within the remit of their sex. Rousselot thus considers that 'Rousseau was wrong on more than one point, but [that] his errors are redeemed by the fundamental idea on which he insists: that woman is woman and must remain woman. [...] He hates the learned woman, and he is right¹¹'. Gréard also takes up Rousseau's thoughts on this question: "A perfect woman and a perfect man must not resemble each other more in spirit than in face [...]. [...] [The] destination [of the woman] is to be a mother. [...] She belongs to domestic life¹²". The women who evoke Rousseau take the opposite view. Thus, while adhering to the idea that "the woman must remain a woman", the Catholic intellectual Madeleine Daniélou treats the Rousseauist legacy differently¹³. She defined the true French woman as a highly cultured woman involved in intellectual life:

We do not come from a country where women are confined to the boudoir or the office, but where their gentle influence shines out in social life and in the world of ideas [...]. This is the true French tradition. Only, to find it again, we must go back beyond [...], to Rousseau's Sophie, who was raised for the pleasure of men, a greedy and coquettish doll, neither Christian nor French, and who, as you know, turned out very badly¹⁴.

9 Mathilde Salomon, "L'éducation de Mme de Sévigné", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, January 1883.

10 Isabelle Ernot, *Historiennes et enjeux de l'écriture de l'histoire des femmes*, op. cit, p. 10.

11 Paul Rousselot, *La pédagogie féminine extraite des principaux écrivains qui ont traité de l'éducation des femmes depuis le XIV^e s.*, Paris, Ch. Delagrave, 1881, p. 16.

12 Octave Gréard, *L'éducation des femmes par les femmes*, op. cit. pp. 219-220.

13 We will deal with Madeleine Daniélou in more detail in Chapter 7.

14 Madeleine Daniélou, conference reproduced in the *Revue du clergé français*, 1^{er} March 1913.

A battle of representations is emerging between men and women around the pioneers of female education. These differences are clear in the treatment of Fénelon's legacy.

B) A gendered reading of Fénelon's legacy

Fénelon is presented by republicans as an example of moderation with regard to female education. Octave Gréard contrasts him with Poulain de la Barre, his contemporary:

The 17th century [...] had its own drives, almost its follies, on [the] question [of women]. [...] People wondered [...] why women were not as capable as men of filling all the jobs in society. Poulain de la Barre wrote: "If at first one found it pleasant to see a woman teaching eloquence and medicine in a chair as a professor [...] it is only because of lack of habit that one gets used to it. Without doubt, the thesis should not be taken seriously; it is obvious that Poulain de La Barre was amused by his own arguments¹⁵.

When it comes to searching in French history for the roots of the new women's education set up by the Republic, it is not a question for Gréard of making Poulain de la Barre's text an example. On the contrary, the author of the famous maxim that "the mind has no sex", contravenes the dominant ideology of the Third Republic: by imagining women professors in universities, he makes female education a cause of social disorder. Fénelon was preferred to him. Like the republicans of the 1880s, the Archbishop of Cambrai rejected the ignorance in which women were held, but also opposed any equality with men. The phrases of Fénelon selected by Gréard are not insignificant: "Women [...] have no business governing the State, nor waging war [...]. Neither politics, nor jurisprudence, nor philosophy, nor theology, are suitable for her¹⁶". Gréard emphasises the wisdom with which Fénelon sets limits to the action of women:

He would fear that young girls would be more dazzled than enlightened by this knowledge, if he did not warn them "that there is for their sex a modesty about science almost as delicate as that inspired by the horror of vice". He is especially wary of knowledge that swells and of instruction that turns into speech¹⁷.

For his part, Compayré quoted Fénelon in his prize-giving speech at the Lycée de Lyon in 1897, and explained to the girls that they should wrap their knowledge in the

15 Octave Gréard, *L'éducation des femmes par les femmes, études et portraits*, op. cit. , p. 15.

16 *Ibid*, p. 17.

17 *Ibid*, p. 45.

discretion befitting their sex¹⁸. It is not certain that the headmistress of the school, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, a bachelor of science and a feminist, really appreciated the speech...

The women who took up the pen did not remember Fénelon in the same way as Compayré and Gréard. Thus, while the men praised Fénelon's moderation, Clarisse Coignet condemned his lack of audacity. In her article on Camille Sée's bill, she underlines the progress represented by the girls' lycées and shows how outdated Fénelon was, for whom "the strong woman believes, keeps silent and obeys¹⁹". While he is presented by Compayré and Gréard as a great innovator of the XVII^e century, Clarisse Coignet considers him the representative of a 'civilisation more than twenty centuries earlier'. Two years later, in her work *De l'éducation dans la démocratie*, she acknowledged that Fénelon had sought to reform female education in the direction of more serious instruction, but noted that

As soon as he begins to enumerate the reforms, he stops as if frightened of his own boldness. [...] Let girls especially not be learned and not be able to equal the other sex! [The idea of developing women for their own sake, in order to elevate them, to make them grow, seems to him and to his whole generation to be a heresy. Woman is by nature enslaved and subordinate. The first curse weighs on her forever²⁰.

Twenty years later, in her "Étude sur la pédagogie de Fénelon", Marie Baertschi makes the same observation as Clarisse Coignet. She considers Fénelon's directives inappropriate for the education of girls in the XX^e century. She condemns the model of the Catholic woman conceived by Fénelon: "She must listen only to the Church, she must know religion well enough to believe in it and to follow it exactly in practice, without allowing herself to reason about it²¹". Marie Baertschi reproaches Fénelon for despising feminine intelligence: "[the woman] will have, for the world and the figure she must make in it, a slight tint of history, eloquence and poetry."

But Fénelon's greatest fault, according to Marie Baertschi, is to have confused the position of the director of conscience with that of the educator: "What I reproach Fénelon with [...] is that he insinuated himself so well into the soul to be trained, that he ended up being himself the reason, the conscience, the will of his pupil, whose personality was thus entirely annulled. One can clearly feel in these lines the influence of Pécaut, who wanted his pupils to 'dare to be'. Marie Baertschi concludes with an example: Mlle de Maisonfort, a pupil of Fénelon, who did not want to enter the convent, nevertheless entered it because Fénelon had persuaded her that this was her duty. Marie Baertschi exploits the anticlerical vein here to condemn the model of instruction advocated by Fénelon.

18 Gabriel Compayré, "Discours de distribution des prix au lycée de jeunes filles de Lyon", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, November 1897.

19 Clarisse Coignet, "Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles - les projets de loi de MM Camille Sée et Paul Bert", *Revue bleue*, 19 April 1879.

20 Clarisse Coignet, *De l'éducation dans la démocratie*, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

21 M. B., "Étude sur la pédagogie de Fénelon", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1900.

While men praised Fénelon, women disowned him. Albertine Eidenschenk, for example, emphasised his 'shyness' and refused to allow the education of girls to be based on his precepts²². Similarly, when she was head of the Ecole Normale in Agen in 1886, Adèle Dejean de la Bâtie expressed reservations in a lesson on Fénelon, which did not please her inspector at all:

Fénelon seemed to me to be treated by her with too much cavalier flippancy, which turned, without reason or opportunity, to the glorification of women. This language was neither modest nor prudent in front of young girls [...]. There are other feelings to awaken in them than that of their superiority or equality to men²³.

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben still emphasised on the eve of the Great War how ambivalent, sometimes even contradictory, the discourse on Fénelon was. In the first decade of the 20th century, she became a militant for the assimilation of male and female secondary education, and wrote in 1911: "It is always to the principle of Fénelon that one refers, as do the supporters - and there is no shortage of them - of the *status quo*.²⁴." Both supporters and opponents of the modernisation of girls' education borrow from Fénelon the principle that girls should be given an education appropriate to their future destination. But while the supporters of the *status quo* want to keep women in their role as mothers and wives, for whom the study of Latin or obtaining the baccalaureate makes no sense, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben considers that the evolution of society leads to a different application of Fénelon's adage:

Fénelon, who wrote for young noblewomen who were to spend their lives at home, drew up a programme of instruction which we now find a little restricted [...]. Women now need diplomas that open up careers; they need to learn, not a feminine science, but science itself.

C) Fénelon: an issue of memory between Catholics and lay people

Republicans were inevitably confronted with the need to justify the use of a man of the cloth as a reference for female education, at a time when the state was institutionalising it precisely against the Church. How did the republicans appropriate Fénelon's legacy when it was also mobilised by Catholics for the opposite purpose? Compayré condemned Fénelon as a man of the Church: he criticised his participation as chaplain in the work of the *Nouvelles catholiques*, which consisted in locking up Protestant women for the purpose of

22 Albertine Eidenschenk, 'La femme nouvelle', *La Femme nouvelle*, April 1904.

23 Document dated 30 May 1886, Adèle Dejean de la Bâtie's career file, F/17/22316/B.

24 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "La clientèle secondaire féminine et ses besoins", *Revue universitaire*, November 1911.

convert²⁵. Compayré cannot ignore Fénelon's role in these times of intolerance, which he describes as the prelude to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. It is only after having distanced himself from Fénelon that he studies his pedagogy to see what can be "saved" from it.

But most other secular authors do not adopt the same strategy. Thus, while acknowledging that Fénelon's procedures were far from the conception of respect for consciences at the end of the XIX^e century, Gréard considers that Fénelon never desired any violence against Protestants: "joining to the counsels of an enlightened policy the practices of Christian charity, [he was] suspicious to the devout by his very benignity".²⁶ ". As for the place of religious instruction in Fénelon's educational recommendations, Gréard considers that "by making religion the basis of all education, he gives it an almost philosophical character". The point here is to secularise Fénelon. This seemed possible in the 1880s, at a time when religious inspiration was not considered incompatible with the principle of secular education.

Marie Baertschi was more radical in 1900, when she declared the application of Fénelon's pedagogical system in the schools of the Republic impossible. She could not conceal her tendency to act as a director of conscience, a drift which she believed to be consubstantial with Catholic teaching:

"This principle, which destroys all moral life, is inherent in Catholicism, and is found in all Catholic education²⁷. "

The freethinker Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello adopted another strategy, which involved the appropriation of the Catholic heritage by the Republicans. She went so far as to use Fénelon as an argument of authority in an anticlerical development in 1902:

If the republican element wants to achieve *unity* of education, [...] let it think of these words of Fénelon: "Men, who have all authority in public, cannot in their deliberations establish any effective good, if women do not help them to carry it out". And instead of worrying about men's congregations, let him *suppress only women's congregations dedicated to instruction*²⁸.

The Archbishop of Cambrai is used here to justify the suppression of female congregations. The malleability of the reference to Fénelon among republicans is striking.

The duality between a 'progressive' and a 'conservative' use of Fénelon's work can also be found in the Catholic ranks. With regard to his interpretation In order to understand the "conservative" approach, one can refer to the articles published in the *Bulletin de Société générale d'éducation et d'enseignement*. Refusing to imitate the "atheistic" programs of the high schools, Arnold Mascarel advocated that Catholic boarding schools follow the instructional program set out in the Bulletin.

25 Gabriel Compayré, "Le nouveau livre de M. Gréard: éducation des femmes par les femmes", *Revue pédagogique*, February 1887.

26 Octave Gréard, *L'éducation des femmes par les femmes*, *op. cit.*, p.9.

- 27 M. B., "Étude sur la pédagogie de Fénelon", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1900.
- 28 Paule Branzac [Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello], "Laïcisons les Femmes", *La Fronde*, 4 November 1902.

set up by Fénelon in 1687 and taken over by Mgr Dupanloup two centuries later²⁹. Gabriel Alix, a professor at the Catholic Institute, recommends taking inspiration from Dupanloup's *Lettres sur l'éducation des filles* (*Letters on the education of girls*), which he considers to be "nothing more than a re-edition [...] of two books which were published, just 200 years ago, by two priests. The first, [...] by Abbé Fleury, Fénelon's friend, and the second, written by Fénelon himself, is the famous *Traité de l'éducation des filles*³⁰. " In both cases, access to Fénelon is through Dupanloup, another essential reference for Catholics. If Fénelon was a reference shared by secularists and Catholics, Dupanloup's legacy was not claimed by the Republicans. Louise Renard, a feminist, socialist and freethinker, presents Dupanloup as the man who obstructed the creation of secondary schooling for girls at the time of the Duruy law in 1867: "The clergy, through the voice of Monseigneur Dupanloup, had cried scandal and abomination. How could they! We were going to teach women now³¹ ! " More nuanced, Paul Rousselot is one of the few republicans to present Dupanloup in a positive light:

M. Dupanloup [...] is infinitely more demanding than Rousseau in terms of female education; more demanding than M. Duruy in his attempts in 1867; at least as much [...] as the Commission which prepared the law on secondary education for girls, and the parliament which voted for it³².

But it is above all in the Catholic ranks that Dupanloup is positively mobilised. Like Fénelon, he allowed Catholics to prove that the Church had always been concerned with the education of women, and that it had no intention of keeping them in ignorance³³. Secondly, the reference to the curricula established by Dupanloup and Fénelon - in which the sciences, for example, had a limited place - aimed to maintain free education in a literary tradition, as opposed to the model of the public lycée, accused of throwing girls into the throes of science.

From 1904 onwards, when the Congregation was forbidden to teach, Catholic secondary schools for women were created which copied - and sometimes exceeded - the curricula of the public schools. And it was Fénelon and Dupanloup who were again involved in this conversion of Catholic education. Thus, Miss Chauvière, secretary of the Committee for the Free Education of Young Girls created in 1911, campaigned for a strong education to be given to girls so that they could take the state competitive examinations: "[Some] will perhaps express a certain concern about the pedantry of women. Fénelon, Mgr Dupanloup and Mgr d'Hulst have long since exorcised this ghost³⁴ ". Dupanloup and Fénelon serve here to justify

29 Arnold Mascarel, "L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles - nécessité de réformer les programmes", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1896.

30 Gabriel Alix, "Les lois opportunistes et l'éducation de la femme", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, August 1895.

31 Louise Renard, "Les mères et les filles dans l'évolution sociale actuelle", *La Française*, 12 November 1911.

32 Paul Rousselot, *La pédagogie féminine*, *op.cit.* p. 35

33 L. Lescœur follows this line, for example, citing Dupanloup and Fénelon in "L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles et la question des examens", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, August 1884.

34 Marguerite Chauvière, "La séance d'études consacrée à l'enseignement des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, June 1913.

the fact that free education conforms to state requirements, whereas they were used thirty years earlier to counteract this trend.

The malleability of the reference to Fénelon can only be seen in the names of the schools. Thus, the first girls' high school founded in Paris in 1883 was called the Lycée Fénelon. It was supposed to embody, in the capital, the new republican doctrine concerning the education of girls. But it was also under the patronage of Fénelon that one of the first "new generation" Catholic girls' teacher training colleges was founded in Clermont-Ferrand in 1908. It prepared students for state examinations, including the baccalaureate³⁵. This time, Fénelon embodied the renewal of Catholic education for girls.

D) The historical role of the Church in the education of girls

In the discourse of Catholics, the advent of Christianity is presented as the fundamental step towards the emancipation of women. Thus, the Viscountess of Adhemar, a Protestant who converted to Catholicism in 1884 and was in favour of ambitious education for girls, wrote in 1900 that

it is the Church, from St. Jerome to Fénelon, from Fénelon to Dupanloup, which has pushed for this progress, and that if this progress continues to develop outside the Church, it is precisely because the Christian principles which she has been propagating for eighteen centuries have penetrated the souls of the peoples. The official movement is a public triumph of the great idea which the Church and her apostles have [upheld] for nearly 2,000 years³⁶.

The evolution in favour of women's education would therefore be an intrinsically Christian movement. This is what Lescœur, a great opponent of the Sée law, wrote in 1884: "when they come to claim against us the intellectual rights of women, it is Christian principles that they invoke without knowing it³⁷". Arnold Mascarel followed the same line twelve years later:

The great movement which we are witnessing today, which dates from the seventeenth century, but which has, in the last forty years or so, taken on an immense extension [...] and which tends to raise the intellectual level of women and to increase [...] their dignity, [...] this movement, [...] considered in its principle, [...] is a Christian movement³⁸.

Catholics are not the only ones to consider that the Church has played a great role in the intellectual emancipation of women. Clarisse Coignet, although she was an activist in the secular camp, recognised the role of Christianity in this improvement:

³⁵ Mlle Taillandier, "L'école Fénelon, institut normal de jeunes filles à Clermont-Ferrand", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1912. On this issue, see Chapter 7.

- 36 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *La Femme catholique et la démocratie française*, Paris, Perrin, 1900, 316 p., p. 36.
- 37 L. Lescœur, "L'éducation secondaire des jeunes filles et la question des examens", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, August 1884.
- 38 Arnold Mascarel, "Opportunist Laws and the Education of Women", *SGEE Bulletin*, July 1896.

[In Rome, women] joined the movement of philosophy and letters [...]. Christianity further developed this feeling, because of the favour it found among women [...]. Also, from the first centuries of our era, we see great friendships being formed between the dignitaries of the Church and the converted Roman ladies. [...] What a more beautiful bond than that of Saint Jerome and Paula, working unceasingly together on letters and philosophy³⁹ !

This does not prevent Clarisse Coignet from considering that, at the end of the 19th century, the Church as a political institution was a retrograde power that hindered the efforts of the Republic with regard to female education⁴⁰. Many free-thinking intellectuals went further and considered that the Church had in fact never seriously contributed to women's education. For example, Albertine Eidenschenk uses the same example as Clarisse Coignet de Saint Jérôme and Paula, but does not draw the same conclusions at all:

When [the woman] became a Christian, no thought was given [...] to instructing her for herself, and what is more serious, she was taught to despise, to fear even [...] the joys of the family. The young Paula, for whom St. Jerome writes his *Letters*, will know nothing of the world or of life; she will hardly know anything but to pray for her eternal salvation. She is a very pure virgin, prepared for the cloister, not a woman destined for the secular life⁴¹.

The republicans condemned any instruction that would destine young girls for religious life. Their speeches targeted the conventual model against which female secondary education was built. Here again, Fénelon was used as an argument: nothing was more strategically effective than using a Catholic author against Catholic education. Thus, Rousselot writes that "the convent does not prepare girls for real life. [...] If the girls do not learn to live there, in the serious sense of the word, they do not learn to think either. [...] It is always Fénelon who testifies to this⁴². " Mathilde Salomon also condemned the teaching congregations. Already, in the XVII^e century, she considered that the instruction given in the convent "had to be summary if we are to believe Fénelon⁴³ ". But it was by using the example of Port-Royal that she dealt the most violent blows to the conventual model.

39 Clarisse Coignet, *De l'éducation dans la démocratie*, op. cit, p. 266.

40 Céline Béraud identifies tensions of this type in the contemporary Catholic Church. Her comments echo this work, particularly when she writes that 'the Roman discourse consists in holding, at the same time, the principle of equality in dignity of men and women and that of difference in functions [...] presented as founded in nature', with women's vocation consisting in realising this proper nature. See Céline Béraud, "Quand les questions de genre travaillent le catholicisme", *Études*, 2011/2, volume 414, p. 211-221.

41 Albertine Eidenschenk, 'La femme nouvelle', *La Femme nouvelle*, April 1904.

42 Paul Rousselot, *La pédagogie féminine*, op. cit, p. 7.

43 Mathilde Salomon, "L'éducation des jeunes filles à Port-Royal", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, January 1882.

E) The ambiguous legacy of Port Royal

While not yet director of Sévigné, Mathilde Salomon [*biographical point 3, p. 615*] devoted an article in 1882 to the education of girls at Port-Royal in the bulletin of Camille Sée. At a time when the staff of the lycées had not yet been trained - the first class of Sevrier women did not take up their duties until 1883 - it was a person from outside the University who defined state education in the quasi-official journal of female secondary education. In her analysis of female education in Port-Royal, Mathilde Salomon describes a counter-model:

When, in an attempt to put together the elements of a rational plan of discipline for the education of girls, one studies the methods in use for many years, one quickly realizes that they cannot be of much help. [...] Their aim seems to have been to extinguish as much as possible the personality, to develop above all [...] the spirit of submission. [...] Since the child is supposed to be naturally evil, it was necessary to [...] tame his perverse instincts. Now that [...] education is understood as having to [...] freely develop the faculties, the old methods will serve above all to show us how not to do it.

Mathilde Salomon's study of convent education is based on an examination of the rules of Port-Royal. This regulation was written by Jacqueline Pascal, Blaise Pascal's sister. The choice of Port-Royal is not insignificant. Indeed, the Jansenist experience is part of the heritage claimed by the republicans - and in particular by Protestants - in the 1880s. Thus, Patrick Cabanel recalls that Pécaut was considered to be the "Saint-Cyran of a secular Port-Royal" and that he took the Fontenaysiennes to the ruins of the abbey⁴⁴. Like the Protestant Reformation, Jansenism represents a moment in the history of the Church when a minority enters into dissent. Thus, for Pécaut, Port-Royal is "the spirit of independence, devotion to the truth; men, women, who knew how to believe freely, against the powers, against the King, against the Pope, and to assert the imprescriptible right of every conscience⁴⁵". Pécaut is also fascinated by "the fertility and pedagogical innovation demonstrated by Port-Royal between 1645 and 1660⁴⁶".

Like Pécaut, Compayré took a great interest in Port-Royal. He saw in the publication of two histories of Port-Royal by two primary school inspectors in the 1880s a "singular revenge"⁴⁷. He saw the publication of two histories of Port-Royal by two primary inspectors in the 1880s as a "singular revenge" for Jansenism, which had been persecuted by the Catholic Church and had been the victim of a "conspiracy of silence" until then. Compayré considers that Port-Royal "prepared the way for educational reformers and conceived in a new spirit the methods of

44 Patrick Cabanel, "Les nouvelles Provinciales: Félix Pécaut et la formation de l'esprit républicain dans les années 1870", art. cit.

45 Quoted by Patrick Cabanel, *Le Dieu de la République*, op. cit, p. 175.

46 *Ibid*, p. 174.

47 Gabriel Compayré, "Les pédagogues de Port-Royal", *Revue pédagogique*, December 1887.

teaching". In this praise of Port Royal, Compayré does, however, express a reservation about female instruction: "Here the monastic ideal dominates; and Pascal's sister, in her *Rules*, has drawn less the plan of a school than that of a convent". Paul Rousselot is much less critical: "[It] was a convent, but this convent was an exception. [...] The women who came out of it were women of high moral superiority. They forced the esteem of even Boileau.⁴⁸ " And Rousselot takes up Boileau's phrase, also used by Mathilde Salomon:

"The wife you take, without blemish in her conduct, To virtues, I am told, in Port-Royal instructed, To the laws of her duty rules all her desires.

But while Rousselot takes this quotation at face value, Mathilde Salomon devotes her study to unravelling Boileau's verses. Thus, contrary to what Boileau implies, the young girl is not educated at Port-Royal with a view to marriage: 'if these young girls were not directly raised for the cloister, at least their education was directed in such a way as to make them eternally regret it⁴⁹ ". Religious life is presented to them as an ideal of perfection. The daily rules are similar to those of nuns: they get up at four o'clock, the day's tasks are punctuated by prayers, all sociability is made impossible by the injunction to remain silent, and the children are encouraged to continually repent of their bad thoughts or actions. Mathilde Salomon particularly denounces the disgust of the body, "which must serve as fodder for worms". She considers that Congregational education has not evolved since Port-Royal: "The habit of not giving too much care to the body has long been preserved in many religious educational houses. The way in which recreation is conceived, which is spent in meditation and penance, has not changed either:

"This way of understanding recreation was not, moreover, peculiar to Port-Royal. Even today, people are not generally convinced of the usefulness for girls [...] of noisy games, which are a real physical exercise." According to Mathilde Salomon, Port-Royal could not serve as a model at the end of the XIX^e century, when the most innovative reformers sought to introduce playful methods into instruction. Indeed, Jacqueline Pascal's rule is more concerned with persuading children 'that mortification is preferable to anything else' and that the work undertaken by young girls will please God all the more if it pleases them less.

Mathilde Salomon's critique of the model of female education at Port-Royal constitutes a definition of the secular education of young girls in full construction. The choice to discuss Port-Royal is not innocent: while many republicans claim to be descended from Jansenism, Mathilde Salomon emphasises how much female education remained behind the reforms from which young boys benefited in the XVII^e century. The rules of the girls of Port-Royal furthermore serve her to present convent education as intrinsically contrary to childish and adolescent nature.

48 Paul Rousselot, *La pédagogie féminine*, *op. cit.*

49 Mathilde Salomon, "L'éducation des jeunes filles à Port-Royal", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, January 1882.

Like Mathilde Salomon, and although Port-Royal was a pioneering model for boys, several intellectuals saw it at the dawn of the twentieth century as a counter-model for the education of girls. Albertine Eidenschenk underlines this dichotomy: "At Port-Royal, where the education of boys was conducted with a superiority that has not been surpassed, one does not rise for girls above the conceptions of Saint Jerome⁵⁰." Marie Baertschi, for her part, was surprised that Jacqueline Pascal's rules were "so dark, so hard, so narrow"⁵¹.

While Port-Royal was an object of reflection among republican thinkers, on the other hand, this Jansenist institution did not appear in any of the 71 articles in the *Bulletin de la SGEE* dealing with the education of girls between 1880 and 1914.

F) The divide between Catholics and secularists: the legacies claimed by each side

There are other legacies claimed by secularists that are absent from Catholic discourse. The French Revolution is thus presented by the militants of the republican school as an important milestone in women's education. Even though the revolutionary period did not produce anything concrete in this field, authors from the end of the XIX^e century refer to Condorcet's texts, which are unanimously accepted. Albertine Eidenschenk portrays him as "the true theoretician of national education', [who] proclaimed the equal right of both sexes to education, the woman being a human being in the same way as the man⁵²." Rousselot confirms this interpretation: for him, if Fénelon broadened the intellectual horizon of girls, "Condorcet went one step further, by granting women the exercise of certain professions in competition with men"⁵³. It is hardly surprising, then, that feminist intellectuals should claim to be his followers. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben thus relied on Condorcet and his idea of equality of education in order to deplore the "regrettable inequality of sanctions between male and female education"⁵⁴. Condorcet thus became an argument in favour of girls' access to the baccalauréat.

While Condorcet and Port-Royal only appear in republican speeches, certain figures are only mentioned by Catholics, such as Joseph de Maistre. For, beyond the questions strictly related to pedagogy, it was above all two political cultures that clashed in these debates. The supporters of the secular school considered that the Republic, heir to the Revolution, the Reformation and the Jansenists, was finally offering women the education they were entitled to. Conversely, Catholics considered that the Republic had not invented the educated woman, but the incredulous woman. This explains the place given to the Catholic reactionary Joseph de Maistre among the models of female education. An article written by a teacher at the Catholic Institute was devoted to him in the *Bulletin de la SGEE* in 1898. The author

50 Albertine Eidenschenk, 'La femme nouvelle', *La femme nouvelle*, April 1904.

51 M. B., "Étude sur la pédagogie de Fénelon", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1900.

52 Albertine Eidenschenk, 'La femme nouvelle', *La femme nouvelle*, April 1904.

53 Paul Rousselot, *La pédagogie féminine, op. cit.*, p. 31.

54 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "Le surmenage du personnel féminin", *Revue universitaire*, May 1910.

recommends that young girls learn de Maistre's letters to his daughter by heart. Clearly terrified by the prospect of education creating androgynous monsters, it is on de Maistre that the author relies to prove the intellectual inferiority of women and to justify that they receive an education adapted to their abilities. He exclaims: "What could be more striking than this undeniable fact, that women have not made any scientific discoveries, have not composed any of the great artistic and literary works, of which the human race prides itself⁵⁵ ? "

The *Bulletin de la SGEE* most often claims male legacies in its reflections on the education of girls. And when, in 1907, the names of Mmes de Sévigné, de Maintenon and de Lafayette finally appeared in the bulletin, they were recognised for the depth of their faith more than for their intellectual production. Moreover, they were associated with female models that were never found in the writings of secular women, such as Blanche de Castille⁵⁶. Thus, in the *Bulletin de la SGEE*, it is not as intellectuals but as examples of faith that the women of the past are given as models for the girls of the Third Republic.

While several republicans, such as Gabriel Compayré, also refused to see Mmes de Maintenon, de Sévigné, de Staël and Necker as educational theorists, others, such as Octave Gréard and Paul Rousselot, were more inclined to present them as pioneers in the education of girls. In the writings of turn-of-the-century republican intellectuals, the tendency to value the audacity of these women is even clearer, and examples from the past are systematically interpreted in such a way as to support the development of higher education for girls. Female intellectuals who work as historians find evidence of their gender's intellectual capacities in the past. And even when they study men, they take from them what they have written about gender equality. History is clearly a material from which, like men, they select elements that legitimise their view of the world and gender relations. They thus adopt a critical historian's stance by constantly linking their studies to their contemporary concerns.

Interpretation of the following table

Four of the five male authors in the corpus (whether secular or Catholic) use Fénelon to justify limiting the curriculum for female education. The ten female authors in the corpus (whether freethinkers or Catholics) use Fénelon to justify an expansion of girls' education programmes. The divide in the treatment of Fénelon is less between supporters of the secular school and supporters of the Catholic school than between men and women concerned with female education.

55 Anonymous (teacher at the Institut catholique de Paris), "L'éducation des femmes d'après Joseph de Maistre et Napoléon Ier", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, September 1898.

56 L. Lesœur, "Les revues féminines d'éducation laïque", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, October 1907.

Reference to Fénelon in discourses on the education of girls Cross-referencing according to gender and whether the authors belong to the 'secular' or Catholic camp

The title of the fifth column is a shorthand for a longer question: is the use of Fenelon to limit girls' education programmes (considered non-feminist) or to provide expanded programmes (considered feminist)? Feminists are people who do not necessarily claim to be feminists, but whose position challenges the *status quo* in women's education.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Support for secular or Catholic education?</u>	<u>Treatment of Fenelon</u>	<u>Feminist ?</u> –
Gabriel Compayré	M	Secular	- Seen as the inspiration for the pioneers of women's education. - Rightly spoke of a "modesty" of science for girls. - Is condemned as an anti-Protestant clergyman.	No
Paul Rousselot	M	Secular	- Used as an argument against conventual instruction.	?
Octave Gréard	M	Secular	- Imposed fair limits on women's action. - Rightly encouraged women to return to family care. - Fénelon, who would never have wanted to harm Protestants (is secularised).	No
Mathilde Salomon	F	Secular	- Used as an argument against convent education.	Yes
Clarisse Coignet	F	Secular	- Fénelon lacked boldness in his plan for female instruction.	Yes
Marie Baertschi	F	Secular	- Fénelon lacked boldness in his plan for female instruction. - Condemns his 'conscience director' side.	Yes
Albertine Eidenschenk	F	Secular	- Fénelon lacked boldness in his plan for female instruction.	Yes
Adèle Dejan de la Bâtie	F	Secular	- Used to demonstrate the need for equality between boys and girls.	Yes
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	F	Secular	- Used to justify the assimilation of male and female secondary education and girls' access to the baccalaureate.	Yes
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello	F	Secular	- Used to justify the abolition of female congregations and the secularisation of girls' education.	Yes
Arnold Mascarel	M	Catholic	- The precepts of Fénelon must be adhered to in the fight against women's public schools: refusal of science.	No
Gabriel Alix	M	Catholic	- The precepts of Fénelon must be adhered to in the fight against women's public schools: refusal of science.	No
Miss Chauvière	F	Catholic	- Fénelon proves that ambitious education for girls is necessary.	Yes
Miss Taillandier	F	Catholic	- Fénelon proves that ambitious education for girls is necessary.	Yes
Mrs. d'Adhémar	F	Catholic	- Fénelon proves that ambitious education for girls is necessary.	Yes

II- Women in foreign missions: international expertise ?

The debate on female education that emerged in France at the end of the XIX^e century was part of an intense scholarly activity dedicated to the study of school systems on an international scale. Damiano Matasci, who devoted his thesis to this issue, reserved one of his chapters to missions, which "represent one of the main sources for the exercise of international comparison on the one hand and the work of self-reflexivity on the other⁵⁷". He notes that women are very poorly represented among the personalities sent on official missions. The aim here is to focus on those few women who travel to study foreign school systems, even when they do so outside an official framework. Knowing that "missions produce new knowledge and expertise on educational problems⁵⁸" "In what way are these study tours an important step in the acquisition of intellectual stature by these women? Does the fact that they are women determine how they are received in foreign environments? Finally, does the discovery of a foreign system change their pedagogical, political and social convictions?

It is also a question of analysing the attitude that the Education Ministry adopts towards women who wish to conduct fact-finding trips. While these women emphasised the added value they brought as women, the Ministry remained wary of their audacity. Despite this, several women intellectuals travelled to Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, Italy, the United States, the Orient and Algeria.⁵⁹ All of them questioned female education and its links with the place women occupied in society. In addition, all of them more or less openly compare the French case. The era of the Universal Exhibitions opened up a competition between nations in which the question of education was paramount. The texts published by the travellers were thus included in social debates and elicited responses and reviews in various journals. This new visibility enabled them to gain recognition on a national and even international scale.

A) Missions led by women civil servants in public education

Only two of the 100 official missions Damiano Matasci lists between 1842 and 1914 were carried out by women⁶⁰. However, most of those who belonged to the elite of public education at the turn of the century travelled abroad. As early as 1873, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello visited major Belgian cities and published a study on the organisation of schools

57 Damiano Matasci, *L'école républicaine et l'étranger*, Lyon, ENS éditions, 2015 (dematerialized resource) - introduction.

58 *Ibid*, Chapter 2.

59 A French department, of course, but where the school system is very different from that of metropolitan France.

60 The criteria are not very clear on how it selects the so-called official missions.

before founding the first institution of its kind in Bordeaux⁶¹. Ten years later, she published five texts in the magazine *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles* after visiting the Swiss National Exhibition in Zurich⁶². In 1908 and 1912, she took part in the International Congresses for Moral Education in London and The Hague, where she travelled with Pauline Kergomard, also a member of the French delegation.⁶³

Pauline Kergomard was a great traveller. In 1872, she took part in the Peace Congress in Lugano⁶⁴. In 1882, she requested a mission to study kindergartens in Switzerland⁶⁵. Jules Ferry agreed to her request and charged the expenses for her trip to the budget of Public Education. The Ministry provided her with two letters of recommendation to the French ambassador in Bern and the French consuls to facilitate her task. In 1890, she went to the International Congress in Antwerp on the patronage of prisoners and the protection of abandoned children⁶⁶. In 1896, Pauline Kergomard again requested a mission to Switzerland to study the school section of the Geneva Exhibition. This time it was Émile Combes who signed the official order for her mission⁶⁷. While travelling around the country every year, Pauline Kergomard also travelled regularly to foreign countries to study their school systems. She also played a role in representing public education at various international events, such as in London in 1908 and in The Hague in 1912, where she did not hesitate to speak regularly in defence of the secular morality instituted in French public schools⁶⁸. In the spring of 1914, when she was 76 years old, there was still talk of sending her to represent France at the Family Education Congress in Philadelphia, which she refused⁶⁹.

Marie Rauber, a teacher at the Sophie Germain primary school and then primary inspector, carried out several missions in Switzerland and Belgium. All the reports she wrote were concerned with the education of girls, and in particular with domestic education, which was not very institutionalised in France at the time.⁷⁰ Her studies were published in the *Revue pédagogique*.

It was in the same journal that Marie Baertschi wrote her report on the Coblenz School Congress after having been sent there in 1895 by the Ministry of Public Education to

61 A. Donis, *Historique de l'enseignement primaire public à Bordeaux*, *op. cit.*, p. 433.

62 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, in *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, "L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles à l'exposition de Zurich", December 1883, February, March and April 1884; "École secondaire et supérieure des jeunes filles à Genève et l'enseignement secondaire en France", September 1884.

63 See *London International Moral Education Congress*, 1st, London, D. Nutt, 1909 and *Proceedings of the Second International Moral Education Congress in The Hague*, edited by Miss Attie G. Dyserinck, The Hague, Nijhoff, 1913. Dyserinck, The Hague, Nijhoff, 1913.

64 Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard*, *op. cit.* p. 207-208.

65 The documents relating to this mission appear in her career file, F/17/23588/B. None of Pauline Kergomard's missions appear among the official missions studied by Damiano Matasci.

66 See the text by Pauline Kergomard in *L'Estafette* of 29 October 1890.

67 The documents relating to this mission appear in his career file, F/17/23588/B.

68 *Proceedings of the Second International Congress on Moral Education in The Hague*, *op. cit.* see pp. 41-42, pp. 87-88, p. 115-116.

69 Letter from Pauline Kergomard to one of her sons, 14 February 1914, in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard*, *op. cit.*

70 Marie Rauber, *Revue pédagogique*, "L'école ménagère en Suisse", Dec. 1892; "Les écoles moyennes de jeunes filles en Belgique", December 1893, February 1894; "Les écoles et classes ménagères en Belgique", April 1894.

advocate the Fontenay school and French successes in women's education⁷¹. Quadrilingual - she spoke fluent English, German, Italian and French - and had family in Switzerland. She used her linguistic talents for the causes that were dear to her outside of public education: she was said to have played a role as translator at the International Congress of Free Thought in Rome in 1904.⁷² In 1911, she went to the World Exhibition in Dresden to report on German advances in school hygiene in a study entitled "Popular education in hygiene"⁷³.

From Pauline Kergomard to Marie Baerstchi, via Marie Rauber, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello - and, as we shall see, Clarisse Coignet and Marie Dugard - women travellers were particularly interested either in early childhood or in female education. These are the rare areas in which they are recognised as having legitimacy. And yet this legitimacy is not acquired. The administration often takes a dim view of women's missions.

B) An example of mission refusal: Anna Lampérière's dealings with the Ministry

It was thanks to Gréard and Buisson that Anna Lampérière [*biographical note 4, p. 617*] was appointed to the French delegation to the Congress of Moral and Social Reforms at the Chicago Universal Exhibition in 1893. She received an allowance of 500 francs for this. But when, with the support of Joseph Reinach, she asked a few months later to carry out a new mission across the Atlantic, the administration reminded her that the Commission des voyages et des missions was opposed to working with women. Women could be members of a delegation, but not lead a mission on their own. Anna Lampérière wrote to the Minister:

I know that [the question of women's missions] has not been raised since women received professional preparation offering serious guarantees. All those who have received this preparation are employed in fixed posts and it is necessary in the rather exceptional circumstances in which I am placed for me to be free, that is to say on availability, at the orders of your administration. Thus, knowing that I can [...] render [to the United States] services which a man would not be able to render so easily, I take the liberty of insisting to you, after consulting [...] the Rector⁷⁴.

Considering that the exclusion of women from official missions is no longer justified at a time when women can pursue high-level studies, Anna Lampérière encourages the

71 Marie Baertschi, "Congrès de l'enseignement supérieur des jeunes filles à Coblenz", *Revue pédagogique*, February 1896.

72 Letter from Georges Renard, 21 October 1904: 'my first report on secular morality was read to the Education Commission by Mme Georges Renard, translated into Italian by Mme Bertschi [sic]', BHVP, Ms 2553.

73 Mme Marie-Éd. Fuster, "L'Éducation populaire en hygiène, le pavillon de l'Homme à l'Exposition internationale d'hygiène de Dresde", *Revue d'hygiène et de police sanitaire*, n°34, 1912.

74 Undated document, probably written in early October 1893. Anna Lampérière's career file, F/17/3014/2.

Minister to reconsider her refusal. She said that the choice of entrusting her with a mission in the United States would be strategic for promoting French culture in America:

I can [there] gather information on the higher education of women. I believe that I can [...] be useful to the national cause, which is somewhat neglected there outside of official demonstrations, - and all the more so as I propose to go to a country where, since men are absorbed in their own affairs, women are given extreme latitude in intellectual matters: they can hear from one of their own kind many things that a man could not say.

Anna Lampérière also recalls that missions have already been entrusted to women who have demonstrated their skills. Despite her pugnacity, the administration refused:

Mrs Yon Lampérière is not mistaken when she says that missions were entrusted to women. Indeed, a decree of [...] 12 March 1891 entrusts one to Mmes Coignet and Mille. These are exceptional cases. On the other hand, missions were refused to Mmes Lesinck and Roux. [...] Mme Yon Lampérière transforms into an acquired right for the future the unofficial and special favour of which she was the object [in 1893].⁷⁵.

C) Clarisse Coignet's missions: an ambiguous status

The administration remembers a mission granted to Clarisse Coignet and Miss Mille, headmistress of the Milianah Teacher Training College, in 1891. This trip is described as a pedagogical mission to Constantinople and Greece, but it was not an official mission:

It was Mr Buisson who asked for a mission for Mrs Coignet. This mission is, of course, purely gratuitous; it must also be acknowledged that it is a mere convenience. The Minister knows what a distinguished woman Madame Coignet is. She is anxious not to visit Greece and Constantinople without seeing the state of educational establishments wherever she goes. The mission she has been given has only the effect of making her give official recommendations⁷⁶.

Clarisse Coignet's mission is at her own expense, unlike funded missions where the Ministry gives the applicant a grant to cover travel and accommodation. But in reality, the point of this study trip is for her to benefit from the same diplomatic advantages as people on an official mission. Clarisse Coignet leaves with

⁷⁵ Letter from the Head of Office to the Director of Primary Education, 28 October 1893, F/17/3014/2.

⁷⁶ Undated document, 'Mission pédagogique - Clarisse Coignet', F/17/2949.

letters of recommendation which accredited her to all the French representatives present in the territories she visited, in particular the French ambassador in Constantinople and the minister of the Republic in Greece. This gave her the opportunity to be received by the Queen of Greece, who, wishing to found a professional school for girls, asked her about the French model⁷⁷.

On her return from her trip, Clarisse Coignet submitted her report to Léon Bourgeois, Minister of Public Education, to the *Revue bleue*. She had already published in 1879 "A school for peasants in the countryside of Florence", in 1881 "A secular school in Naples" and "A school of painting in Rome", and in 1891-1892, several articles on schools in Algeria and the Orient⁷⁸. Although only her mission to the Orient is recorded in the archives of the Ministry of Education, Clarisse Coignet was used to making study trips to schools. Although none of these trips were official, one day she called on Jules Ferry on his return from Rome:

For women, higher art education [...] does not exist anywhere [in France]. [We] are not asking [...] the Minister for a second École des Beaux-Arts in Paris and a second Villa Medici in Rome. We are modestly asking him to create a few scholarships that would [...] give young women artists entry to an establishment like the Miss Mayor⁷⁹.

Unlike the women civil servants who went on missions, Clarisse Coignet belonged to the bourgeoisie. Moreover, although she claimed to travel alone, she was always accompanied by her servant, Joséphine⁸⁰. The texts she wrote for the *Revue bleue* between 1879 and 1881 were more like the holiday impressions of a bourgeoisie than a detailed analysis of the school system. The reports she published a decade later were more in line with the expectations of a mission. These trips were the result of "the loneliness of her new existence"⁸¹ These trips were the result of "the loneliness of her new existence", after the death of her husband in 1889, when she was 66 years old. She spent three winters in Algeria, where friendships called her, including the staff of the Milianah teacher training college, whom she had known in Fontenay. For these trips, Clarisse Coignet enjoyed the support of the administration:

[I write first of all to my friend Mr Ferdinand Buisson, then director of public education. [He [...] asked me [...] to make an unofficial inspection of the schools, particularly those of the natives, and to send him a report afterwards. When this is done, I am accredited everywhere with the school authorities⁸².

77 As she says in her *Memoirs*, vol. 4, *op. cit.*

78 In the *Revue bleue*, C. Coignet, "Impressions de voyage, une école de paysans dans la campagne de Florence", 29 November 1879; "Une école laïque à Naples, Mrs Schwabe", 23 July 1881; "Une école de peinture à Rome, Miss Mayor", 6 August 1881; "Les écoles indigènes en Algérie", 4 April 1891; "Les écoles françaises en Orient", 31 October 1891; "L'Algérie: gouvernement des indigènes", 25 June 1892.

79 C. Coignet, "Une école de peinture à Rome, miss Mayor", *Revue bleue*, 6 August 1881.

80 See Clarisse Coignet, *Memoirs*, volume 4, *op. cit.*

81 *Ibid*, p. 205.

82 *Ibid*, p. 235.

Clarisse Coignet was visited in Algiers by the special inspector for indigenous education. He helped her to draw up the itinerary she was going to follow, which had various objectives:

Wherever I stop, I see the inspector, the teachers; I attend the lessons and often visit the native families. [The great advantage of my situation, while bearing the *sacred* mark of the administration, is that I do not belong to it. Strange to the ambitions of the hierarchy, [...] I do not inspire distrust or shadow. So I am welcomed everywhere with kindness and sympathy. [...] Not only are all the local questions concerning my task clarified, but I receive the confidences⁸³.

In her report to Ferdinand Buisson published in the *Revue pédagogique* in 1891, Clarisse Coignet emphasised the confidence shown in her by the teaching staff in Algeria, since they did not see her as a superior in inspection:

I shall end this brief report, Mr. Director, by thanking the members of the teaching staff, whom you kindly informed of my visit, for the way in which they facilitated my task. [...] We dealt with the question together in all its aspects, with the greatest freedom, ... without any dissent, as the minutes of our last meeting held in Constantine at the home of the inspector testify⁸⁴.

In her report, Clarisse Coignet defends the teachers against the administration, believing that, as experts in the field, they are the best judges of the school system in Algeria. She relays their complaints about the administration's lack of knowledge of local realities. According to her, they are the ones who should be relied on to reform the school in Algeria.

But Clarisse Coignet also came into contact with an Arab chief, thanks to an introduction written by the governor of Algeria. She was received in the house of this chief during an excursion to the oasis of Sidi-Okba⁸⁵. This helps to complete her study of the Algerian school system:

"I] make inquiries from all sides, from the colonist, the civil servant, the scholar, the scientist. I visit the natives, I read the annals of our conquest, the reports of our administration⁸⁶. "

Like Anna Lampérière in her letters to the administration, Clarisse Coignet describes the advantages of being a woman, especially when she goes to the indigenous quarters where, during the day, women are alone: 'At the sound of our footsteps [...], curious heads come forward from all sides. A man would run away. But the men here hardly venture out. Women, especially European women, are an event in these prisoners' lives⁸⁷. If Clarisse

83 *Ibid*, p. 236.

84 Clarisse Coignet, 'À propos de l'instruction des indigènes en Algérie', *Revue pédagogique*, April 1891.

85 Clarisse Coignet, *Memoirs*, volume 4, *op. cit.*

86 *Ibid*, p. 232.

Coignet can meet men thanks to his official recommendations, and his status as a woman allows him to meet Algerian women, which would be impossible for a French man.

D) Marie Dugard: an international expert on women's education

When Anna Lampérière went to the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893, she rubbed shoulders with Marie Dugard [*biographical note 5, p. 619*], who was one of the representatives of the Education Department⁸⁸. An Agrégée de Lettres, a teacher at the Lycée Molière in Paris, she had to present secondary education for girls in Chicago in a conference in English⁸⁹. When she wrote a book about her experience, it was the subject of a critical note in the *Revue Universitaire*, whose author, Miss Camus, pointed out the advantage of the fact that the mission was led by a woman: "Here is a new book in which the author, with a beautiful courage of impartiality and the need to get to the bottom of things, has endeavoured to follow the education of women in America step by step. She has [some] chances to see well: the woman before the man always lies, whether it is fear, modesty or malice⁹⁰". For Miss Camus, the study of women in American society could therefore only be properly handled by an investigator, who attracts female confidences, unlike men.

The only woman among the eight members of the school delegation⁹¹ Marie Dugard was praised by the head of the delegation to the Director of Secondary Education:

Miss Dugard was a real success at the congress. She was questioned a lot [...]. She gave a very careful account of the organisation of our female education and the ladies in particular, who are very numerous in the American congresses, took a great interest in it [...]. I believe that Miss Dugard will benefit greatly from her trip to America, and I would be happy if she could extend it: she will soon send you a request for leave. She is now in California⁹².

However, it was from Portland that Marie Dugard contacted the Minister on 9 August 1893 to request an extension of her leave until the end of the year. Having arrived in the United States on 7 July, during the school holidays, she had not been able to visit any schools in operation and was convinced that the World's Fair was not enough to give her a true picture of the school system. She wants to

87 C. Coignet, "Les écoles indigènes en Algérie, lettre à M. le directeur de l'enseignement primaire, mars 1890", *Revue bleue*, 4 April 1891.

88 On Marie Dugard, see Mary Beth Raycraft, 'Marie Dugard takes notes: the spirited reaction to 1890s America in *La Société américaine* (1896) by a Parisian secondary school teacher of girls', *Forum of Modern Language Studies*, vol 51, no 3, 2015, pp 316-334.

89 Marie Dugard, 'The Secondary Education of Girls in France', in *Addresses and Proceedings of the International Congress of Education of the World's Columbian Exposition*, New York, National Education Association, 1894.

90 Miss L. M. Camus, "De l'éducation des femmes en Amérique, d'après un livre nouveau", *Revue universitaire*, February 1896.

91 Anna Lampérière is not part of the school delegation.

92 Undated, Marie Dugard's career file, F/17/23835.

therefore continues her visits and is willing to make the financial sacrifices involved, as she is not paid during her leave⁹³.

Marie Dugard is the 'typical missionary' that Loukia Efthymiou describes⁹⁴. She is 31 years old and has a small amount of savings which enables her to extend her journey. Single, she was not constrained by any family responsibilities and enjoyed a great deal of independence in her travels, having to report only to her administrative superiors. The daughter of a cloth manufacturer who was not wealthy enough to provide her with a dowry, she was one of those civil servants whose zeal when travelling "is all the greater because they are fully aware that these very costly journeys represent a luxury for their class⁹⁵".

In the years following her trip, Marie Dugard wrote a book entitled *La Société américaine, which was awarded* a prize by the Académie française when it came out in 1896. This work was widely reported in the press and gave her the status of an international expert in a context of marked Americanism, even Americanophilia.⁹⁶ The fact that she was fluent in English, had already established links with foreign representatives in Chicago and had made a name for herself thanks to her book led the government to appoint her to the organising committee of the International Congress of Modern Languages at the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1900. Léon Bourgeois, whose daughter had been Marie Dugard's pupil at the Lycée Molière, realised the diplomatic skills of this teacher. He noted that her foreign colleagues recognised Marie Dugard as a true authority on teaching issues⁹⁷. He therefore contacted the administration of Public Instruction the following year to support Marie Dugard's wish to give a series of lectures at Sèvres on the education of young girls in France and abroad. The minister accepted⁹⁸. During the school year 1901-1902, Marie Dugard prepared her lectures and wrote the report on the Exhibition commissioned by her superiors. It was published in 1903 under the title *De la formation des maîtres de l'enseignement secondaire à l'étranger et en France*⁹⁹.

Marie Dugard then set about writing a biography of Emerson. She was on leave in Italy to complete this task when the Universal Exhibition in Liège in 1905 was being prepared. She received a letter from the director of secondary education who appointed her as a member of the French delegation in Belgium. Marie Dugard reluctantly accepted:

Is it very certain that if there were [...] a sort of rotation, the other teachers and the teaching itself would not be better off? As far as the prestige of girls' schools abroad is concerned, they should not be compared to these

93 Letter dated 9 August 1893, F/17/23835.

94 Loukia Efthymiou, "Quatre enseignantes à la Belle Époque", *Clio. Histoire, Femmes et Sociétés*, n°28, 2008, p. 133-144.

95 *Ibid.*

96 In the words of Damiano Matasci, *L'école républicaine et l'étranger, op. cit.*, chapter 3.

97 Undated letter from Léon Bourgeois, Marie Dugard's career file, F/17/23835.

98 Letter in reply to Léon Bourgeois dated 13 December 1901, F/17/23835.

99 Marie Dugard, *De la Formation des maîtres de l'enseignement secondaire à l'étranger et en France*, second edition, Armand Colin, 1903 [1902], 242 pp.

I hope you will excuse this objection, which stems from my attachment to secondary education and not from a desire to evade¹⁰⁰.

Tired of having become the sole international representative of France for female secondary education, Marie Dugard nevertheless went to Liège where she gave a lecture, the Ministry considering that she was one of the "scholars and [...] professors whom their recent discoveries or original methods naturally designated to be the popularisers of our national work¹⁰¹". She was the only woman to speak in the French delegation. If Marie Dugard is the face of women's high schools abroad, she is considered in France as a specialist of the United States. Her work contributed to the wave of interest in the United States that the historian J. C. Albisetti noted in the 1870s. According to him, between the Philadelphia World's Fair in 1876 and the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904, "the image of the United States changed from that of an archaic pioneer area to that of a giant in the midst of urbanization. [...] Contributing to this metamorphosis is the idea that if the position of women is an important index of the advance of civilization, then the United States has surpassed Europe.¹⁰²".

E) Marie Dugard and Anne Amieux: a feminist reading of the American example?

It was the place of American women in society across the Atlantic that struck foreign observers, led by Marie Dugard. As soon as she set sail, she noticed that Americans treated women as equals, and that American women, "instead of speaking only of fashions and novels, talked about literature, science, politics, and social economics with a free and flexible mind, broadened by study and numerous trips¹⁰³". Marie Dugard is pleased that Americans do not believe that intellectual culture in a woman makes her lose her grace. The intellectual distinction of American women is complemented by a cult of individual independence. Her impression was confirmed at the World's Fair in Chicago:

Women have a very important role in these Congresses; they are in the majority in the audience, are part of the commissions, fulfil the functions of President, secretaries, give speeches like men, show the same firmness, and are not afraid of being called to the carpet.

100 Letter sent from Siena, 12 February 1905, Marie Dugard career file, F/17/23835.

101 *Exposition universelle et internationale de Liège, 1905. Catalogue of the French section*, Paris, Vernot, p. 6.

102 James C. Albisetti, 'Europeans and the American Model of Girls' Secondary Education', in James C. Albisetti, Joyce Goodman, Rebecca Rogers (eds.), *Girls' secondary education in the Western World: from the 18th to the 20th century*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p. 183: "the image of the United States changed from a 'backward' frontier country to one of an urbanizing [...] giant. [Contributing [...] to this metamorphosis was the sense that if the position of women was an important measure of the advance of civilization, then the United States had moved ahead of Europe!.

103 Marie Dugard, *La société américaine, mœurs et caractères, la famille, rôle de la femme, écoles et universités*, Paris, Hachette, 1896, 320 p., p. 7.

The same qualities of abundant and sure speech, and the presence of these women, often young and pretty, who, sitting on the platform in evening gowns, preside, give or take away the voice of the speakers and debate the academic problems, contribute to throw into these meetings a note that surprises the foreigner and disconcerts him¹⁰⁴.

Marie Dugard emphasises the freedom with which women move in the social and intellectual sphere: "The male self-love which, in Europe, allows any man, however vulgar, to believe himself superior to a distinguished woman, is unknown here."¹⁰⁵ " Religious culture is said to play a role in the place of women in society. The American woman is said to have been "intellectually emancipated by an individual religion, which invited her, like man, to free examination"¹⁰⁶ .

The second thing that strikes Marie Dugard is the relationship that Americans have with the institution of marriage. For example, it would seem offensive to an American woman to consider marriage before she has met a man she likes. Flirting, which Europeans speak so ill of, is intended precisely to give future spouses the opportunity to discover each other. This conception of marriage as an individual choice is explained by the fact that the dowry system does not exist. Since parents do not contribute financially to the marriage, they have less reason to intervene in the marriage. Furthermore, once married, the American woman can inherit, manage her property and automatically obtain guardianship over her children in the event of her husband's death. Marriage is thus no longer an "annulment of the woman"¹⁰⁷ "but a mutually desired union. This female freedom characterises the new woman. Marie Dugard links its existence with that of an innovative marriage market: the new woman "will marry less easily; she will not give in to the temptation of the marriage of convenience, that 'legal immorality'".¹⁰⁸ ". The American model is used to critique bourgeois marriage. In her review of Marie Dugard's work, Miss Camus is struck by this female freedom. She dreams of it for France:

From American education we borrow this principle [...] of strict justice, that the woman has the right to exist by herself and that she must be brought up for herself. [We need] more initiative in the conduct of our girls, more frankness or simplicity in their relations with young men, more outdoor life and less piano¹⁰⁹.

Whereas Marie Dugard confines herself to an analysis of the New World without assuming a true comparative perspective, Miss Camus instead uses this immersion in American society as evidence of the need to change the system of education for girls in France. According to

104 *Ibid*, p. 46.

105 *Ibid*, p. 138.

106 *Ibid*, p. 168.

107 *Ibid*, p. 174.

108 *Ibid*, p. 293.

109 Miss L. M. Camus, "De l'éducation des femmes en Amérique, d'après un livre nouveau", *Revue universitaire*, February 1896.

In Damiano Matasci's words, "looking across borders at comparable countries serves as a frame of reference to guide and legitimise reform options¹¹⁰".

Benefiting from a travel grant offered by the philanthropist Albert Kahn, Anne Amieux, a science teacher at the Lycée Victor Hugo, left for the United States in 1905. Having just been received by President Roosevelt at the White House, she sent a letter to the rector in January 1906 to tell him about her trip. It was again the status of women that appealed to her:

All American women have "their chance" to marry, and whether or not they are married, society surrounds them and pampers them. So they do not make marriage a fixed idea. They go to school with pleasure [...] and take "grades".¹¹¹ ". Based on her American experience, Anne Amieux considers several solutions to remedy the prejudices that weigh on French women. She makes marriage a central issue: "It seems to me that society could 1°) modify its ideas on the conditions of marriage, 2°) accept the fact that some women are obliged to live alone, and that it must help them, encourage them to create an independent, honoured and useful existence. The social upgrading of women is inseparable, according to her, from a reform of education. Following the example of the United States, French women should, for example, be allowed to develop their spirit of initiative in the school environment and give greater attention to current issues in all fields: science, art, geography, politics, etc. School must become the antechamber of life.

Anne Amieux agrees with Marie Dugard, who describes at length in her book the secondary or higher schools for girls. James C. Albisetti's reading of numerous travel accounts from this period reveals that three institutions are frequently mentioned: the women's universities of Vassar, the University of the West Indies and the University of the West Indies. Albisetti notes that three institutions are frequently mentioned: the women's universities of Vassar, Wellesley and Bryn Mawr, founded between 1865 and 1884¹¹². These colleges were accessible from the major cities of the eastern United States, which made it easier for Europeans to visit them. Thus, Marie Dugard evokes Vassar, returns in detail to her visits to Wellesley and Bryn Mawr but also evokes the universities of the American West, more rarely visited by travellers from the old continent. Unlike in Europe, culture and science were taught to girls with the same ambition as to boys:

Equality is even so complete that in several Western universities, under the pretext that the best guardian of innocence is science, and that in order to fulfil her role fully [.....] the woman must know nothing of what her husband and sons might know, they do not hesitate to make certain subjects of morals and biology, which in our country we would scarcely dare to deal with in front of young men, the subject of regular instruction for young girls, and that at Vassar itself [...], the female students must complete their work on social economics by visiting the reformatories¹¹³.

110 Damiano Matasci, *The Republican School and the Foreigner*, *op. cit.* - introduction.

111 Letter of 14 January 1906 to the Rector, Anne Amieux's career file, F/17/24471.

112 James C. Albisetti, 'Europeans and the American Model of Girls' Secondary Education', *art. cit.*

Marie Dugard notes that in the American system, everything is geared towards forming free and independent beings in both boys and girls. The successes in the education of girls are striking: full of energy, endowed with an "almost masculine form of intelligence, [with] an extraordinary taste for knowledge", the American students impress Marie Dugard, who nevertheless rarely expresses herself in the first person in her text:

I had the impression of finding myself in front of new creatures: strong under her apparent weakness, sure of herself, with an active and firm spirit, the woman is no longer the illogical and impulsive being we know in Europe; she is a creature of another kind and, as she is already being called, the *New Woman*¹¹⁴.

In 1894, Marie Dugard wrote an account of her visit to Wellesley College for the *University Review*. She shows young girls dissecting rabbits, studying Sanskrit, philosophy, the history of socialism or embryology, all disciplines that it would seem insane to open to women in France.¹¹⁵ Conversely, the pleasure arts, which were essential to the social image of the bourgeois woman, had disappeared from American institutions. In addition to Marie Dugard's astonishment at the curriculum, she was also astonished by the daily lives of the girls. The poorer ones did not hesitate to work to pay for their studies, not considering manual labour as a degradation. The others gave their time to charity and fulfilled a social duty rooted in the American conscience.

The education they received enabled American women to enter careers previously inaccessible to French women. According to Marie Dugard, in the 1890s, the United States had 150 female lawyers, 4,555 female doctors and 200 female pastors. This difference with the French case led Anne Amieux, some ten years later, to look in the United States for examples of careers open to French women, such as medicine and the profession of "nurse", which would be entirely appropriate for girls leaving high school¹¹⁶. For her part, Marie Dugard did not advocate applying the American model in France:

Young America, which, in its impatient pursuit of equality and happiness, does not worry about obstacles, seems to forget too much here both the physical inferiority of women, and the limits which nature, [...] by making motherhood not a passing accident, but a function which absorbs the best of their existence, assigns to their progress¹¹⁷.

114 *Ibid*, p. 280.

115 Marie Dugard, 'Two Days at Wellesley College', *University Review*, February 1894.

116 Letter of 14 January 1906 to the Rector, F/17/24471.

117 Marie Dugard, *American Society*, *op. cit.* p. 296.

Anne Amieux also writes about American women: "Should we imitate them? No. We can only [...] obey the genius of each of our races.¹¹⁸ " The argument of cultural difference is used repeatedly by Marie Dugard. Thus, in no way does her American experience reconcile her with the feminist movement in France. She even uses it to attack the demands of French women, considering that American women did not claim any rights, but proved their abilities by practising new professions. European women should therefore follow their example, rather than "confine themselves to vain speeches¹¹⁹ ". Marie Dugard was even suspicious of American innovations in girls' education. On the subject of the potential extinction of the female gender through undifferentiated education, she writes:

Is it not to be feared that this prediction will come true, and for having wished, in the name of an equality justifiable [...] in a new country, but illegitimate when it [...] falsely assumes similar destinies, to give young girls the same education as young men, to teach them Greek and philosophy, will we not push them all towards these male careers which, for them, should only be the exception, to inspire them with an ambition which will divert them from their true role¹²⁰ ?

Marie Dugard and Anne Amieux thus act like their male colleagues, according to James C. Albisetti's observation: "The authors try to explain why what works in the US could not be successful in Europe. Albisetti: "The authors try to explain why what works in the United States could not be successful in Europe.¹²¹ " Their trip to the United States did not convert either of them to feminism. The recollections of Louise Weiss, who was one of Marie Dugard's students in the Belle Époque, are illuminating on this point. While visiting her teacher, Louise Weiss reads an extract from her travelogue. She presents it as a plea for the emancipation of French women:

[Marie Dugard] would not have wanted to shock anyone, but in order to tell the truth about the society that was developing on the other side of the Atlantic, she had to recognise that the emancipation of women was not detrimental to their personal grace or their family interests. At the risk of displeasing the University, many of whose notables were not in favour of secondary education for girls, she had concluded her report with the words of a Chicago orator¹²².

118 Letter of 14 January 1906 to the Rector, F/17/24471.

119 Marie Dugard, *American Society*, *op. cit.* p. 204.

120 *Ibid.* , p. 281.

121 James C. Albisetti, 'Europeans and the American Model of Girls' Secondary Education', *art. cit.*

122 Louise Weiss, *Souvenirs d'une enfance républicaine*, Paris, Denoël, 1938, 243 p., p. 98 - the Chicago speaker's phrase is: "The whole of society needs the female spirit, its ardour, its keen intuition, its tireless devotion. To prevent her energy from manifesting itself is not only to deprive half of humanity of its right, it is to deprive the world of a beneficent activity and to let divine gifts be lost."

Indeed, this is Marie Dugard's constant argumentative strategy. She almost never states her own point of view, but her book is full of footnotes to the references on which her argument is based. Marie Dugard hides her opinion behind authoritative arguments made by others. In her book on teacher training in France and abroad, which came out in the midst of the debate on the reform of secondary education for boys, she concludes that "after recalling its importance and the way in which the problem is solved elsewhere, we had no other purpose than to specify the state of the question in our country; we do not have to pronounce on these differences¹²³". Even though she mobilised an impressive number of studies drawn from the archives of various countries for this book¹²⁴ Even though it mobilised an impressive number of studies drawn from the archives of various countries for this book, it withdrew its right to give an opinion and refrained from making any recommendation in a debate that has been shaking up French secondary schools for several years. While the rigour of the study she provides gives her an unquestionable legitimacy to express herself, it is as if Marie Dugard is afraid to move from a posture of erudition to one of commitment. The same is true of her book on the United States. Marie Dugard reports the elements of the various controversies on social issues by reproducing the arguments of each side, without taking sides. It is often difficult to grasp her personal opinion.

It is therefore not surprising that Marie Dugard preferred to conclude her book with a quotation to which she subscribes rather than speaking in her own name. The use of an argument of authority at the end of a book dealing with a subject in which the author can claim to be an expert also testifies to Marie Dugard's difficulty in truly asserting herself as an intellectual, and in fully assuming the purpose of her book. She confided to Louise Weiss that if she had been too liberal on the subject of women's education, she would have feared that she would have displeased the University. In calling Marie Dugard a 'reasonable rebel', she retained her "Evangelical conformism curiously geminated with social reformism¹²⁵" Louise Weiss was not fooled by her teacher's emancipatory intentions. She concludes bitterly: 'Neither her creed, nor her livelihood, nor her travels, nor her personal work had freed Mademoiselle Marie Dugard from an instinct hostile to female independence. Between her tendencies and her words, the contradiction burst¹²⁶."

F) French educational work in Algeria and the Orient: the critical view of Clarisse Coignet

While the status of American women is generally a positive model for French women, the status of Muslim women in Algeria appears to be a counter-model. The situation of

123 Marie Dugard, *De la formation des maîtres de l'enseignement secondaire*, op. cit. , p. 201.

124 Taking England as a simple example, here is what it mobilises: reports of the *Oxford and Cambridge Commission* (1850-1852), the *Public Schools Commission* (1861-1864), the *Schools Inquiry Commission* (1864- 1867), the *Bryce Commission* (1894-1895), *Bill of Education* (1899).

125 Louise Weiss, *Souvenirs d'une enfance républicaine*, op. cit. , p. 100.

126 *Ibid*, p. 153.

Algerian women is proof that Muslim civilisation is lagging behind. In any case, this is the conclusion reached by Clarisse Coignet at the end of her travels. She explains that the law of the Koran, which according to her governs all Algerian society, is terrible against the weaknesses of the female sex, requiring the stoning of young girls and wives in the public square¹²⁷. Passing from paternal guardianship to marital guardianship, the Algerian woman would never belong to herself. Only the Kabyle woman escaped this gloomy portrait. According to Clarisse Coignet, she sits at the same table as her husband and is consulted in the administration of the community's affairs. In old age, her advice was listened to. As a widow, she attends the *djemmah*, the meeting of the men of the tribe.

But while Clarisse Coignet saw the reforms in girls' education as a guarantee of their emancipation in France, she was wary of the consequences of an overly liberal distribution of knowledge to Algerian women: 'Girls too must have a share in our schools; not, of course, with a view to inciting them to revolt against an unjust degradation, but to help them peacefully to emerge¹²⁸'. She considers that the best way to liberate Algerian women is to provide them with the means to earn a living. For Clarisse Coignet, the economic emancipation of women in Algeria must precede their intellectual, religious or political emancipation. Indeed,

deprived of the protection [...] of her father and husband, she has no other resource than the latest disorders. Now, if she suffers little in her personal dignity from this degradation, she suffers terribly from the misery that results from it. [...] Vocational schooling can easily lead to a minimum [income] without disturbing the family. [...] With the effort of work, a new feeling will awaken in her numb conscience: the respect she owes herself. [...] From being a *thing*, she will become a *person*¹²⁹.

Clarisse Coignet's speech confirms the observation made by Pascale Barthélémy when reading colonial texts: "As in metropolitan France, [the objective of] the school in the colonies [...] is to 'change the man' (or woman) through education, to give him access to part of the knowledge and universe of the dominant [...] while instilling in him a sense of the 'right distance' which assigns him a specific place in society¹³⁰." For the risk, by opening up education to Algerian women, would be to turn them into downgraded women. This is the pitfall into which the Fort National orphanage would have fallen: "Brought up in the French way, [...] when [the girls] leave the orphanage, their families no longer know them; they are strangers to it and could not, moreover, resume the old, enslaved existence there¹³¹." According to Clarisse Coignet, left to their own devices, unadapted to society, young girls slide into prostitution. The solution would lie in the creation of schools

127 C. Coignet, "L'Algérie, gouvernement des indigènes algériens", *Revue bleue*, 25 June 1892.

128 Clarisse Coignet, *Memoirs, volume 4, op. cit.*

129 *Ibid.*

130 Pascale Barthélémy, "L'enseignement dans l'Empire colonial français : une vieille histoire ?", *Histoire de l'éducation* [En ligne], 128 | 2010, online 01 January 2014, accessed 04 December 2018.

131 C. Coignet, "Les écoles indigènes en Algérie, lettre à M. le directeur de l'enseignement primaire, mars 1890",

Revue bleue, 4 April 1891.

In general, Clarisse Coignet was opposed to the idea of modelling indigenous schools on the French model: she thought that the French model was the only way to ensure that indigenous women were able to perform tasks in the home that would make them financially independent, such as laundry, ironing or sewing. In general, Clarisse Coignet was opposed to the idea of modelling indigenous schools on the French model:

One must take into account the psychological differences that distinguish the Arab from the French. Unfamiliar with the processes of criticism and rigorous observation, [...] the Arab is confusedly agitated by inner visions. [...] Between our two races there are intellectual incompatibilities which it would be foolish and dangerous to ignore¹³².

Clarisse Coignet is sceptical of any attempt at assimilation: "To believe that by didactic teaching we will achieve the assimilation of the Arab race, that we will communicate to it [...] our scientific philosophy, our methods of observation and reasoning, [...] our social habits, is, in our opinion, a serious error¹³³. " By offering the natives the same education as the French, Clarisse Coignet was afraid of making them into downgraders:

Swollen with knowledge [...], these young people mainly take away from our schools the disdain for the paternal home [...]. All the benefits of European education consist in their eyes in the possibility of becoming civil servants. [In] losing some of the prejudice and fanaticism of their race, they lose their only rule, that of religion.

Clarisse Coignet therefore advocates the transformation of schools into vocational training, hoping that the child will find, through the acquisition of manual skills, a way out of poverty. She suggests that young Algerians be introduced to trades such as blacksmithing, locksmithing, carpentry and masonry. The secret of the success of the colonial enterprise would lie in France's ability to "make the Arab [its] partner in action, to establish between him and [the French] the solidarity of work, interests, responsibilities, to arrive one day - if possible - at the fusion of feelings and ideas.

In the *Bulletin universitaire de l'Académie d'Alger*, it is precisely this sentence that the Rector quotes in italics. He comments: "Who would not want to share the author's illusions¹³⁴ ? " In an article reacting to Clarisse Coignet's publications, Rector Jeanmaire complained that he had not met her and had not been informed of her trip. He also took the complete opposite view of her proposals and reproached Clarisse Coignet for her ignorance of Algeria. To the idea that education would foster in the natives the desire to become civil servants, he retorted:

"Since we only know how to offer public jobs to educated Muslims, how can we

132 Clarisse Coignet, *Memoirs*, vol. 4, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-239.

133 C. Coignet, "Les écoles indigènes en Algérie, lettre à M. le directeur de l'enseignement primaire, mars 1890", *Revue bleue*, 4 April 1891.

134 C. Jeanmaire, "Observation de M. le recteur de l'Académie d'Alger", *Bulletin universitaire de l'Académie d'Alger*,
March 1891.

Can we be surprised that they ask for it? He also points out that teachers are not sufficiently trained to give children a vocational education, nor do they have the necessary equipment and premises. Not only is the solution recommended by Clarisse Coignet not feasible in practice, it is not even desirable in theory:

If we succeed one day in producing some change in [the Algerians], it will be more [...] by acting on them through education, through a general culture [...] than by teaching the eye or the hand [...]. If it is a commonplace in France to say that the school must train men before making carpenters or bricklayers, I would like to know why this truth would not be applicable in Algeria.

Here we encounter the contradiction pointed out by Denise Bouche concerning the role assigned to the school in French colonisation: there is a radical antagonism between those who 'insist on the inadequacy of teaching directly applied from the metropolis and denying local cultures [and those] who [denounce] a cheap education'¹³⁵. "

The rector of the Academy of Algiers also refuted Clarisse Coignet's proposal to introduce young girls to professional tasks¹³⁶. In general, he contested the anti-intellectualist character of Clarisse Coignet's recommendations and her dilettantism. He declares that if she had questioned him, "[he] could have rectified some of her errors, drawn her attention to a few points she had missed, and finally given her the opinion of someone who has already had a long experience in this matter'¹³⁷ ". While Clarisse Coignet presented the advantage of not being dependent on the administration, believing that her legitimacy was not impaired, this is not what emerges from the Rector's text.

If Charles Jeanmaire takes the trouble to answer Clarisse Coignet's argument point by point, it is because his investigation is widely reported. The *Revue bleue* is indeed widely read and esteemed in the intellectual world. Clarisse Coignet's report to Ferdinand Buisson was also published in the *Revue pédagogique*, which was widely read in teaching circles. In an introductory caption, the editorial committee states that the insertion of the text was delayed until the discussion on Algerian schools in the Senate drew public attention to the issue. It was then "felt that it was appropriate to publish Mrs. C. Coignet's letter, as a document that could help shed light on the situation that a Senate committee was currently studying'¹³⁸ ". Clarisse Coignet's texts thus appeared in a context that promised them a large audience. Indeed, following a speech by Senator Pauliat, who

135 Denise Bouche, "Autrefois, notre pays s'appelait la Gaule... Remarques sur l'adaptation de l'enseignement au Sénégal de 1817 à 1960", *Cahiers d'études africaines*, vol. 8, n°29, 1968, p. 110-122.

136 See Rebecca Rogers' biography of Madame Luce which discusses women's vocational education in Algeria in the XIX^e century: *A Frenchwoman's Imperial Story, Madame Luce in Nineteenth Century Algeria*, op. cit.

137 C. Jeanmaire, "Observation de M. le recteur de l'Académie d'Alger", *Bulletin universitaire de l'Académie d'Alger*, March 1891.

138 Clarisse Coignet, 'À propos de l'instruction des indigènes en Algérie', *Revue pédagogique*, April 1891.

denounced in 1891 the absence of a real 'Muslim policy' on the part of a France that had forgotten its mission of 'intellectual and moral conquest', Jules Ferry formed and chaired a study commission of 18 members in the Senate. This was the beginning of a vast investigation to determine the main lines of French education policy in Algeria, in which Charles Jeanmaire took part, unlike Clarisse Coignet¹³⁹.

This senatorial commission wondered about the advisability of exporting the secular model to the colonies and areas under French influence. Clarisse Coignet looked into this subject when she carried out her mission to Greece and Constantinople in 1891. Although none of these areas came under the direct control of the French administration, Clarisse Coignet nevertheless emphasised the special role that France played there: "France was the first to bring European civilisation to the East through the school; it must support the school there and make it bear fruit¹⁴⁰. " She visited the schools run by French people in Athens, Smyrna and Constantinople. She was soon confronted with the presence of Congregational teaching, whether it was the Ladies of Sion, the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition or the Brothers of Christian Doctrine. She declared that she had no difficulty in entering their walls, the educational mission with which she was charged making "her presence a privilege" in their eyes.

However, whereas in the 1870s and 1880s Clarisse Coignet fought Congregationalist teaching with all her might, her discourse was different when it came to the East, where she supported the Congregations. On the one hand, she believed that France historically owed its influence in the East to their action. Secondly, she considered that only the congregations, thanks to their own organisation, were able to ensure the survival of French influence in sometimes hostile environments. Finally, it states that in these particular circumstances, religious communities exercise their influence "in a surprisingly secular spirit". If religious orders are the most effective instruments that France can mobilise in its policy in the East, it is because the disciplined self-sacrifice of their members offers advantages: "As a worker for a day, the individual puts his stone in the edifice that the brothers will continue after him [...]. No less was needed to take European civilisation to the East [...], especially in the form of girls' schools".

The lay teacher is presented by Clarisse Coignet as unable to compete with the nuns who care for the sick and teach children to read and write. In order to be accepted by the population, the sisters are obliged to show tolerance. The situation of the congregations in the East should therefore not be assessed by the yardstick of France:

In France, the Church, believing itself to have a primordial right over a population that has turned away from its religious origins, engages in a struggle to bring it back to that point, in which the

139 Véronique Dimier, "Le cas du rapport Combes (1892) sur l'enseignement primaire en Algérie", in Jean Baudouin, Philippe Portier (dir.), *La laïcité, une valeur d'aujourd'hui?*, Rennes, PUR, 2015 (dematerialized resource).

140 C. Coignet, "Les écoles françaises d'Orient", *Revue bleue*, 31 October 1891.

congregation takes an active part. [In the East, the congregation isolated in a foreign land [...]] feels it has neither the same rights nor the same powers.

According to Clarisse Coignet, knowing that conversion was impossible, the religious orders in the East were guided by a humanist and disinterested logic. It is this "wisdom superior to all blind proselytising" that Clarisse Coignet would have found in the Eastern congregations. In this report addressed to the Minister of Public Education, she therefore urged the French State to support the Congregational work in the East without reservation, insisting on the savings thus made compared to a policy of opening and maintaining public schools.

However, if only the action of the congregations seemed possible in rural areas, secular French schools existed in the large Eastern cities. Clarisse Coignet, for example, visited a girls' school and a boys' school in Constantinople, founded by Frenchmen who applied the public school curriculum. She supported their desire to be assimilated into the University, which would not involve any expense for the State, as the schools would provide for their own needs¹⁴¹. On the subject of girls' schools, Clarisse Coignet considered that there was no female high school in France where secular education was better applied. Scientific and literary education was of a high standard and all religions were respected. Indeed, whether Catholic, Protestant, Gregorian or Greek-Catholic, the girls all accepted the idea that science was independent of religious dogma. For Clarisse Coignet, who would not like to see secularism rhyme with impiety, "this inspiration is that of France¹⁴². "

If the French state had to support secular initiatives in the East, it was also because of the context of rivalry with other powers. Despite its undeniable supremacy, "in terms of the educated classes and secular education, we find powerful rivals: Greece, the United States, England, Germany, Austria and Italy". France could not therefore be content with supporting the congregations in rural areas: it also had to take an interest in the urban elite and in secular schools. In fact, for Clarisse Coignet, the congregations could "collaborate with the State, not assimilate into it; the secular school represents it alone. She dreams of a peaceful collaboration between secular and religious education. According to Véronique Dimier's analysis, Clarisse Coignet was one of the republicans who adopted a double discourse on the secular question depending on the territory to which it applied, refusing to make secularism "an export product¹⁴³ ".

Whatever the purpose of their mission, the women who leave France for distant lands are transposing French issues abroad. They are all particularly interested in women's education, the status of women in society and their ability to enter the public arena, and even the intellectual world. However, many of them are

141 Clarisse Coignet, *Memoirs*, volume 4, *op. cit.*

142 C. Coignet, "Les écoles françaises d'Orient", *Revue bleue*, 31 October 1891.

143 Véronique Dimier, "Le cas du rapport Combes (1892) sur l'enseignement primaire en Algérie", *art. cit.*

are wary of any transposition from one country to another. This brings us to the paradox of missions: they show an attraction or even an admiration for radical otherness, but sometimes demonstrate an inability to claim bold innovations in practice. The mission was also an opportunity for these women to build up a stature as experts, which Clarisse Coignet had no difficulty in assuming by directly questioning the Minister of Public Education, but which was a delicate matter for Marie Dugard, who did not recognise her legitimacy to give a personal opinion.

Non-exhaustive table of women's missions abroad in relation to training

<u>Nam</u> <u>e</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Loca</u> <u>tion</u>	<u>Patter</u> <u>n</u>
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello	1873 1883 1908 1912	Belgium Zurich London The Hague	Study of girls' upper primary schools School section of the Swiss National Exhibition (female secondary) First international congress on moral education Second International Congress on Moral Education
Pauline Kergomard	1882 1890 1896 1908 1912	Switzerland Antwerp Geneva London The Hague	Kindergarten study International Congress (patronage of prisoners / abandoned children) School section of the Swiss National Exhibition First International Congress on Moral Education Second International Congress on Moral Education
Marie Rauber	1892 1893	Switzerland and Belgium	Study of household schools Study of girls' middle schools
Marie Baertschi	1895 1911	Coblentz Dresden	German Teachers' Congress (presentation of Fontenay) Dresden International Exhibition (school hygiene)
Anna Lampérière	1893	Chicago	Congress of Moral and Social Reforms of the World Exhibition
Clarisse Coignet	1879 1881 1890s 1891	Florence Naples/Rome Algeria Orient	Study of a farmers' school Study of a secular school / painting school Study of the school system Study of French schools
Marie Dugard	1893/4 1905	United States Liege	World's Fair in Chicago and then a nationwide survey World's Fair (presentation of women's secondary school)
Anne Amieux	1906	United States	Study trip thanks to an Albert Kahn scholarship

III- Inferior or innovative? Female teachers in the debate on female secondary education

Foreign models - notably American colleges - are particularly invoked in France in the debates on girls' lycées. These discussions are summarised by Antoine Prost in a formula - "Inferior or innovative?¹⁴⁴ ?" - which sums up the controversies surrounding female secondary education. The new lycées crystallised more heated debates than the girls' normal schools born of the Bert law. It was the female secondary school that was the most radical innovation in the educational landscape of the 1880s. While the

144 Antoine Prost, 'Inferior or Innovative? L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles (1880-1887)", *History of Education* [Online], 115-116 | 2007, online 01 January 2012, accessed 20 November 2019.

The designers of the girls' lycées made a point of not modelling the new institution on its male counterpart. Thus, in contrast to male students, female students studied modern languages extensively, but were deprived of Latin, Greek, philosophy and an ambitious science curriculum. Is this modern education an improvement on the old male high schools?

Between defending the new institution and criticising its inadequacy, women are making their voices heard by drawing on their expertise in the field. They question the doxa that suggests that certain disciplines are unsuitable for young girls¹⁴⁵. They sought to influence collective representations and used various strategies to influence the reform projects that marked the first decades of women's high schools. What is the ideal that these teachers aspire to for their pupils? How did they legitimise themselves in a debate to which they were not invited, being represented neither in Parliament nor in the Conseil Supérieur de l'Instruction Publique, since representatives of female secondary schools only sat on the latter after the war?

A) "Response to Camille Sée": Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello or the defence of science education by a woman of science

One of the first opponents of the girls' secondary education programme was Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, who, as early as 1884, wrote a plea for the strengthening of the science programme in girls' secondary schools in the Camille Sée bulletin as "than a graduate in science¹⁴⁶ in science, head of the Lycée de Lyon¹⁴⁷". This text, subsequently published by Cerf as a brochure, takes up arguments that Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello had been developing for two years on the subject of female secondary education. In 1882, during her first prize-giving speech as headmistress of the Lycée de Lyon, she was already criticising the sparseness with which scientific education was provided for young girls. On the contrary, she wanted the new establishments, which were not yet entangled in any paralysing tradition, to show ambition for their pupils, and even to set themselves up as models in relation to male secondary schools. Convinced of the pedagogical effectiveness of scientific experimentation, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello called for example for "even more demonstration equipment, if possible, than in boys' secondary schools¹⁴⁸". A year later, she defended the mathematics and geometry programme, the scope of which some eminent figures - including Camille Sée - wanted to reduce¹⁴⁹.

145 We use the term doxa in the sense given to it by Pierre Bourdieu: "The doxa is a particular point of view, the point of view of the dominant, which presents itself and imposes itself as a universal point of view", quoted by Hélène Charron, *Les formes de l'illégitimité intellectuelle*, op. cit, p. 30.

146 Interesting detail: she feminises her title, whereas Camille Sée, in her introductory note, leaves it in the masculine.

147 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "Les programmes de sciences dans les lycées des jeunes filles, réponse à M. Camille Sée", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, July 1884. Brochure published by Cerf, 11 p.

148 Reported by Odette Laguerre, "Portraits de femmes. Mme Desparmet-Ruello, doyenne des directrices de lycée", *La Fronde*, 26 December 1902.

149 Speech of 20 July 1883 archived in the career file of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, F/17/22067.

The father of the girls' high schools was not satisfied with the science curriculum. Noting that the timetables were too full, he argued for a reduction in the number of hours devoted to science teaching. However, the curricula only included "elements" of geometry, chemistry, physics and natural history for girls. For Camille Sée, these "elements" were already too heavy¹⁵⁰. While he defended his point of view in his journal, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello sent a scathing reply to the newspaper in 1884. Camille Sée published the text, but preceded it with a note signed by himself:

Our impartiality makes it our duty to put this *response* before our readers. It comes from one of our most skilful and devoted directors [...]. Mme Desparmet-Ruello, whose articles in this Review have been read and appreciated, has a degree in science. Although 'a great friend of letters', the headmistress of the Lycée de Lyon is, as she herself says [...] 'a woman of science'. We regret to part company with her on this matter¹⁵¹.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello considered that her status as headmistress of a lycée was not incompatible with a critical view of the institution: "I am obliged to apply the programmes voted by the Council, which does not prevent me from retaining my personal opinion of them and not finding that they achieve perfection¹⁵². " While there was talk of reducing the mathematics curriculum, she recalled that the youngest students had only two hours of science instruction per week. She goes into great detail about the content of science education in each of the high school classes, showing how rudimentary it remains. It is not enough for a woman to learn only [...] how to calculate the surface area of a room; [...] it may also be useful for her [...] to know how to find [...] the volume of the containers used in her kitchen, which are generally not cubic in shape. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello did not defend scientific education for girls in the name of the right of every individual to access knowledge, but rather in order to make high school girls conform to their social destiny. After giving the example of calculating the volume of kitchen utensils, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello invokes household accounting, but also the importance for a mother of a family to be "capable of guiding her young sons in their studies, [...] in order to be esteemed by them from an intellectual point of view". She also refers to the wife's duty to assist her husband. She quotes Jules Simon, who in 1867 demanded that the wife become "the intellectual companion of her husband [to] live in communion of ideas with him". Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello is clearly part of a "relational feminism", which

150 Jo Burr Margadant, *Madame Professor*, *op. cit.* p. 34.

151 Note signed C. S. at the beginning of the article by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "Les programmes de sciences dans les lycées des jeunes filles, réponse à M. Camille Sée", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, July 1884.

152 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "Les programmes...", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, July 1884.

Geneviève Fraisse sums it up as follows: "For a woman, access to knowledge and the use of her reason are for others before being for herself¹⁵³. "

In addition, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello makes scientific disciplines an essential part of the training of women citizens:

Let us not ignore the fact that the XIX^e century is [...] a century of science, and that the most cultivated mind from the literary point of view, but which does not know how to read in the great book of nature, will always remain a mind inferior to its time. [You want women to learn [...] to speak the language of reason instead of that of superstition? No teaching will be more suitable to bring her to this result than that of physics and chemistry. The marvellous has long been banished from these sciences¹⁵⁴.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello points out the inconsistency of the republicans with regard to the education of girls. Female secondary education was designed to take them away from the Church, but its designers were now afraid of the free-thinking woman. Most republicans - with the exception of Paul Bert, who campaigned for a deeper science curriculum - were not far removed from Michelet's thinking. Geneviève Fraisse's observation about men in the early nineteenth century is partly valid in the Third Republic: 'The militant atheist wants to take women away from the Church, [...] but it is not certain that he wants to take them away from religious superstition. His aim [...] is to regain power over women, not to emancipate them¹⁵⁵. "

For Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, if the programmes are overloaded in girls' lycées, it is not because of the place given to scientific education, but because of the division of secondary education into two periods: girls first complete a first cycle of three years crowned by an examination, before entering a second cycle of two years which leads them to the secondary school certificate. However, a large proportion of them only went to the lycée until the end of the third year: it was therefore in the first cycle that "the subjects were crammed together", with no real benefit for the pupils. Like Marie Dugard a few years later¹⁵⁶ Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, like Marie Dugard a few years later, was disappointed by this division into two cycles, which encouraged parents to leave their daughters for only three years at the lycée, while the boys spent seven years there. This state of affairs is not interpreted in the same way by all historians. Antoine Prost considers this division into two cycles as an appropriate response to a specific social demand in 1880:

153 Geneviève Fraisse, *Muse de la raison*, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

154 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "Les programmes de sciences dans les lycées des jeunes filles, réponse à M. Camille Sée", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, July 1884.

155 Geneviève Fraisse, *Muse de la raison*, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

156 Miss Dugard, "Education of girls: a few words on secondary education reform",

University magazine, January 1892.

The creation of a study certificate at the end of the first period is inspired by the desire to discourage early school leaving. To see in these measures a desire to limit female ambitions would be a misunderstanding. [...] The low demand for long-term education for girls [is] a social reality¹⁵⁷.

Françoise Mayeur considers, on the contrary, that by imposing two cycles, it was suggested "to parents that we could at least be satisfied with the first three years¹⁵⁸". Nicole Mosconi goes further: instead of preceding the social demand for female education, legislators only followed it, or even curbed it at the beginning of the 20th century, by seeking to maintain the male monopoly on knowledge, "the lack of education of women ensuring the intellectual superiority of men on which they base their economic, social and political domination.¹⁵⁹ "

Without going so far, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello deplors the overall inadequacy of women's education. She complains that science subjects are only kept in the second cycle on an optional basis. Not only is there nothing in the most advanced programmes "that could tire the mind of a young girl very much, nor frighten anyone¹⁶⁰" but these courses are optional, while literary culture is compulsory.

After defending a more ambitious science education, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello reassures policy makers of their main fear, that of the woman scholar:

On the contrary, it is through a serious and thorough scientific education that we will succeed in forming simple and modest women, for these women will know [...] that what they know is nothing compared to what they do not know. If, by misfortune, scientific education were to be reduced, [...] half-educated women would be formed, very much like those who come out of convents today, futile women [...]. In the eleven years that I have been in public education, I have trained many pupils, many of whom are today directors or teachers in primary and secondary education; almost all of them are [...] modest, and I have no hesitation in attributing this result to the scientific education they received at the *École supérieure de Bordeaux*.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello defended her position by using an argument to which republicans could not be indifferent: in the face of convents, the superiority of public high schools rested on the quality of scientific teaching. By reducing its scope, public education would be aligned with the congregations, which the headmistress of the Lyons high school, in her virulent anti-clericalism, described as

157 Antoine Prost, "Inferior or Innovative? L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles (1880-1887)", art. cit.

158 Françoise Mayeur, *L'éducation des filles en France au XIX^e siècle*, op. cit, p. 226.

159 Nicole Mosconi, *Femmes et savoir*, op. cit, p. 78.

160 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "Les programmes de sciences dans les lycées des jeunes filles, réponse à M. Camille Sée", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, July 1884.

of "futile women" factories. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello based her legitimacy on her experience in female education. According to her, the higher primary school she founded and directed in Bordeaux proved the virtues of scientific instruction for young girls. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello had already led the fight to introduce more science into the curriculum in her first position: in a report dated 24 October 1878, she asked her supervisory authorities to increase the number of hours devoted to mathematics in her school¹⁶¹.

The last argument used by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was that of the durability of the institution itself. She was wary of the competition that the teacher training colleges were creating for the girls' lycées. Of course, a social sorting separates the clientele of the normal schools, which are free, from that of the high schools, which charge fees. Despite this, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello notes that while the level of the girls' normal schools increases from year to year, that of the lycées would tend to decrease if the curricula were lightened. Since, in the absence of a satisfactory school-leaving examination, many female students take primary school certificates on leaving the lycée, female secondary education would lose its superiority over the normal schools if the science curriculum were cut. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello even expects that in the near future, female science enthusiasts will follow the same curriculum as her male counterparts by preparing for the baccalaureate and the licence ès- sciences. In her introductory note, Camille Sée states in this regard: "we cannot share [these] fears¹⁶²". It seems that Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was more aware than he was that the lycées did not meet the aspirations of families. In a premonitory sentence, she warned that it was not a question of stopping the movement of girls towards intellectual studies, but It is the only way to "direct with intelligence a movement that no one can stop".

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello did not confine herself to this article in Camille Sée's journal. In June 1885 and January 1886, she sent the journal two model lessons, one in zoology and physiology, the other in arithmetic¹⁶³. In June 1885 and January 1886, she sent the magazine two model lessons, one in zoology and physiology and the other in arithmetic, in order to explain to secondary school teachers the methods and objectives that should govern science teaching. In her course on the study of molluscs for students of about 17 years of age, she develops a practical work session. In front of the teacher are live molluscs that are readily available: mussels, oysters, snails, slugs. The teacher invites the students to open the shells. The girls have to touch a valve and note the reaction of the animal, which the teacher translates into scientific language by explaining the muscular action of the mollusc. Without being a real dissection, the lesson requires some manipulation with a scalpel. This type of teaching practice is disturbing: in the eyes of many, feminine delicacy is dangerously threatened by these crude gestures. Is Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, herself a science graduate, aware of the iconoclastic nature of the lesson she is publishing?

161 A. Donis, *Historique de l'enseignement primaire public à Bordeaux*, op. cit. , p. 437.

162 Introductory note to Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "Les programmes de sciences dans les lycées des jeunes filles à M. Camille Sée, réponse à M. Camille Sée", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, July 1884.

163 In *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, "Modèle de leçons - cours de zoologie et physiologie comparée", June 1885; "Modèle de leçons - équations du second degré", January 1886.

B) A fight doomed to failure? A plea for science in the wake of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello

While on certain subjects, the school systems of other countries are models, science teaching abroad is not taken as an example. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello despises the Swiss and German models, where the study of mathematics is very limited because "they are imbued with the false idea that women are not capable of serious scientific studies¹⁶⁴". Adèle Fanta, an associate professor of German, also deplors the system in Germany:

"The teaching of natural sciences and mathematics seems to us to be conceived in a less serious manner than in our country. [...] In mathematics, [we] seem to be convinced that girls do not have the aptitudes that we have been pleased to acknowledge in our latitudes.¹⁶⁵" The Germans stick to teaching girls the four operations, fractions, the rule of three and the rudiments of geometry. Without openly advocating such an example, Gabriel Compayré declared himself in favour of a middle ground. When he spoke at the prize-giving ceremony at the Lycée de Lyon, renowned for the quality of its science teaching¹⁶⁶ he declared:

There are countries, perhaps, where science is abused in the education of girls. Your schoolmates in the United States [...] delve into the sciences in their most obscure recesses: this is perhaps going too far. We, on the other hand, [...] seek a happy medium between foolish ignorance and vain erudition. If we teach you more or less the same things as your brothers, we teach them differently, by adapting them to the spirit of your sex¹⁶⁷.

One can imagine the silent disapproval of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, who presided over the ceremony.

In the 1890s, when there was a pressing need to lighten the curricula of girls' lycées, Marie Dugard, although an agrégée in literature, also feared a reduction in the importance of science. The risk is real, as those in favour of the humanities find a more attentive ear among policy makers. According to Marie Dugard, the latter consider the cold precision of the sciences to be "incompatible with that grace, that thoughtless spontaneity, that unconscious illogic which is, they say, one of the greatest charms of the female mind¹⁶⁸" which they say is one of the greatest charms of the female mind.

164 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "Les programmes de sciences dans les lycées des jeunes filles à M. Camille Sée, réponse à M. Camille Sée", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, July 1884.

165 Miss Fanta, "Critique of a secondary school textbook published by Mr. Wichgram, director of the secondary school for girls in Leipzig", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, November 1897.

166 In 1885, the academy inspector pointed out that each year, the student who was awarded first place at Sèvres came from the Lycée de Lyon. That year, it was Léonie Allégret who was awarded first prize in the order of science. See "Distribution des prix dans les lycées de jeunes filles", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, August 1885.

167 Gabriel Compayré, "Speech by M. G. Compayré, rector of the academy, at the Lycée de jeunes filles de Lyon", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, November 1897.

168 Miss Dugard, "Education of girls: a few words on secondary education reform", *University magazine*, January 1892.

disapproves of the associate professor. She asserted that in the event of a reform, nothing could be taken away from the scientific programme, since it had been conceived in a rudimentary manner from the start. Moreover, whereas Compayré spoke of 'the spirit of the female sex', Marie Dugard preferred to quote Gréard, for whom it was not a question of 'making for girls a less exact science, a science for their use, *ad usum puellarum*, but of making [...] true science [...] assimilable'.

When the CSIP attacked the curricula of girls' lycées in 1897, it was the science curriculum that it attacked, arguing for a more literary orientation. It should be noted that Mathilde Salomon was one of the seven signatories of the vow, along with Félix Pécaut, Octave Gréard and Ernest Lavisse¹⁶⁹. In reaction to this decision, many female teachers expressed their dissatisfaction. But on the eve of the Great War, the problem was still not resolved. Thus, in 1911, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben spoke of the "notorious insufficiency" of mathematics. To the argument that girls interested in the sciences were the exception, she replied: "If there were only a few well-trained women in this field, they would have to find somewhere an organised and sufficient mathematical education¹⁷⁰". She concluded by proposing that pupils be given the choice of a literary or scientific specialisation in the second cycle of secondary school¹⁷¹.

C) *The defence of modern literary education*

Although from the very first years of women's secondary education, several female teachers considered science teaching to be insufficient, this did not mean that the rest of the curriculum was free of criticism. Thus, in a speech in 1882, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello demanded "that contemporary history in particular [...] should not be alien to [secondary school girls], under the vain pretext that it touches too closely on politics¹⁷²". When she returned from Geneva in 1883, she recounted having attended a course on Montesquieu's *L'Esprit des lois* and deplored the fact that this author was not on the curriculum in France¹⁷³. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was in favour of teaching the history of political and philosophical ideas to girls.

While Mathilde Salomon, like most legislators, considered philosophy teaching inappropriate for secondary school girls, she ended up defending the right of girls to study this subject. Thus, on 18 July 1898, she co-signed a motion with several colleagues from the CSIP for the creation of a philosophy course for secondary school girls in their sixth year of study¹⁷⁴ or for Sevrier women during their first year at the ENS. The motion was rejected, the Permanent Section considering that it was

169 Minutes of the CSIP, meeting of 11 January 1897, F/17/12973.

170 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, January 1911.

171 The 1897 reform did not officially retain the two-period division of female secondary education, but it was in fact maintained.

172 Speech of 1882 reported by Odette Laguerre, "Portraits de femmes. Mme Desparmet-Ruello, doyenne des directrices de lycées", *La Fronde*, 26 December 1902.

173 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "École secondaire et supérieure des jeunes filles à Genève et l'enseignement secondaire en France", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, September 1884.

174 This sixth year is aimed at high school students preparing for the Sèvres competition.

too early to consider this kind of reform after the previous year's reshuffle¹⁷⁵. Camille Sée had nevertheless planned to include philosophy in his project for female secondary education.

Similarly, the curriculum set by the law does not include Greek or Latin¹⁷⁶. It is perhaps on this subject that Antoine Prost's question is the most relevant: is the absence of ancient languages in secondary schools for girls proof of their inferiority compared to boys' schools or an innovation to be defended? A close friend of Raoul Frary, who published *La question du latin* in 1885 in which he questioned the hegemony of this discipline, Mathilde Salomon ardently defended modern teaching for girls. In a conference in 1894, she considered it to be an improvement on male secondary education:

The omnipotence, you know on which side it resides¹⁷⁷ It has reserved for itself the monopoly of ancient languages and literature, but has been willing, not without some disdain, to admit women to the study of modern languages. Should we complain about this, should we claim against the male privilege of wasting years and energy not learning languages, the usefulness of which, moreover, has been disputed by some first-rate minds¹⁷⁸ ?

For Mathilde Salomon, modern education is sufficient to ensure a complete literary culture. If Latin once seemed indispensable for access to knowledge, this is no longer true:

Without a knowledge of Latin, one could not know [...] what was happening in the political, literary or religious world. [...] It was the language of diplomacy [...]. Everything [...] now takes place in modern languages. [...] Without doubt the great works of Greek and Roman genius are still what they were. But if their positive value is constant, their relative value, compared with the sum of the riches possessed by the human mind, has been constantly declining.

Mathilde Salomon often refers to Mme de Sévigné, who embodies the ideal of the accomplished woman, even though she did not know Latin seriously. She takes her as an example of the success of an education without Latin but organised around modern languages:

It is permissible to believe, however, by the example of Mme de Sévigné, that a woman's mind can acquire the most delicate culture [...] without Latin being involved. But if Mme de Sévigné's Latin was limited to the mass book, she had [...]

175 CSIP minutes, F/17/12974.

176 An optional introduction to the elements of the Latin language was introduced in 1881. It was abolished in 1897.

177 In his draft: "the omnipotence that resides on the side of the beard".

178 Mathilde Salomon, *De la part des femmes dans la propagation des langues vivantes*, conference organised by the Society for the Propagation of Foreign Languages in France at the Hôtel des Sociétés Savantes, Paris, 1894.

Italian completely. She knew how important a special knowledge of a foreign language and literature is for the mind¹⁷⁹.

However, while praising modern education, Mathilde Salomon feared that the absence of ancient languages would affect the career opportunities open to young girls. To solve this problem, she campaigned for the modern baccalauréat to be given the same recognition as the classical baccalauréat. The baccalauréat de l'enseignement spécial had in fact been replaced in 1891 by the baccalauréat de l'enseignement moderne, which did not require a mastery of the classical humanities, but which only allowed access to the faculties of science and medicine. In 1894, Mathilde Salomon joined the members of the CSIP in calling for equal penalties for all baccalaureates. Yves Verneuil, who studied Mathilde Salomon's interventions at the CSIP, emphasises the audacity of this wish, which was not in fact realised until 1902, when the reform of the baccalauréat put all four branches of education on an equal footing, including the D series (languages and sciences), without Latin¹⁸⁰.

Mathilde Salomon is therefore setting up an exemplary modern teaching system at the Collège Sévigné, particularly as regards the teaching of modern languages, which she wants to be inductive, playful and based on a method where the pupils are active:

No books at the beginning; they are replaced by surrounding objects, by pictures on which the lesson is given and which tell [...] familiar scenes. [...] One morning the pulpit is decorated with a breakfast set; coffee is made, served and taken in German. [Without even noticing, the child [...] learns words [...]. But it would be harmful [...] to let them believe for a long time that work does not require effort. Grammar therefore comes into play at the right time¹⁸¹.

In an undated draft in which she probably justifies a wish she submitted in January 1900 to the CSIP¹⁸² in January 1900, Mathilde Salomon wrote an essay on the success of the direct method of teaching foreign languages at Collège Sévigné. She describes a great success of Miss Williams¹⁸³ who performs Shakespeare in the original language:

Miss Williams' students performed *As You Like It* very well. [...] The applause of the audience was very sincere. It went in without

179 Mathilde Salomon, "L'éducation de Mme de Sévigné", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, January 1883.

180 Yves Verneuil, "Mathilde Salomon au Conseil supérieur de l'instruction publique (1892-1909). Son action et ses idées", in Jean-Pierre de Giorgio (ed.), *L'école des jeunes filles, Mathilde Salomon*, Rennes, PUR, 2017, p. 99-128.

181 Mathilde Salomon, "Baccalauréat de jeunes filles", *Revue de Paris*, 1^{er} July 1908.

182 Voeu of 10 January 1900 proposing a change in the curricula of female secondary education, CSIP minutes, F/17/12975.

183 Miss Williams is an Agrégée in English and a former professor at the ENS de Sèvres.

I am sure that it will be a pleasant surprise to see young French women manage to offer an English performance to a Parisian audience [...]. After that, let no one come and see the surprising but real progress we are making in the study of modern languages¹⁸⁴.

Very attached to modern education and innovative pedagogies in the field of language, and hostile to the place of classical culture in the male secondary school, Mathilde Salomon defended the female secondary school model, which she believed to be superior to the male secondary schools¹⁸⁵.

D) "To abolish classical languages is to prepare the inferiority of female education": Pauline Kergomard and Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben face the trap of modern education

While Mathilde Salomon wanted to prove that modern education for girls was ahead of the male model, Pauline Kergomard was more sceptical: she saw the ban on girls studying the classical humanities as a manoeuvre by men to reserve for themselves the prestigious studies. She wrote in 1898 in *La Fronde* :

[Defenders and detractors of Latin have] agreed on the necessity of *classical studies* for the future teachers of boys' lycées [...]. Why is this necessity not recognised for teachers of literature in girls' lycées and colleges? It is undisputed, however, that the study of Greek and Latin is particularly illuminating for the study of the French language [...]. To do away with them for the future teacher of a girls' high school is therefore to prepare the inferiority of her teaching¹⁸⁶.

Latin and Greek are excluded from all women's education, including in the curricula of the two ENS. For the Inspector General, this measure is in contradiction with the desire to promote truly secondary and even higher education for women.

A year after Pauline Kergomard, the young Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben - she was 29 at the time - published the first of a long series of contributions in the *Revue universitaire*. Her article is entitled "L'enseignement de l'Antiquité dans les lycées de jeunes filles¹⁸⁷". The author is one of the brilliant students who missed the teaching of Latin and Greek during their studies at Sèvres. She has a bachelor's degree in literature, and learned ancient languages through private lessons. She also asked that "a woman be excused for defending Latin and Greek with the faith of a neophyte". Indeed, she deplores the absence of

184 Personal papers of Mathilde Salomon (private archive).

185 See Chapter 6 for an account of how Mathilde Salomon integrated Latin into the curriculum of the Collège Sévigné when a preparation for the baccalauréat was created in 1905.

186 Pauline Kergomard, "Through education, the secondary education of young girls", *La Fronde* 25 September 1898.

187 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "L'enseignement de l'Antiquité dans les lycées de jeunes filles", *Revue universitaire*, June 1899.

Latin in secondary schools for women and in the training of female teachers. She considers that in the absence of classical training for female teachers, high school courses on antiquity are mediocre: "Let us admit it frankly, the knowledge we give of antiquity is not what [we] do most credit¹⁸⁸". It is necessary to be able to work on original texts, and not be satisfied with translations, which never render the true meaning of a text. For Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, language is the vehicle for a conception of the universe. As long as Latin and Greek are inaccessible to young girls, they will not understand Antiquity. Similarly, female teachers, ill-prepared for these lessons, 'grope their way through them when they are deprived of the light of the intelligence of the texts'. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben's feminist tendencies appear as early as this 1899 article: "one would say that, being intended for young girls, a purely literary commentary is '*sufficient*', without wondering whether they would not have the right to be astonished by this word that is always applied to them and its outrageous meaning". She concluded by explaining that she had always seen the most conscientious of her colleagues regretting the absence of the classical humanities as a gap in their education, and the most zealous of her pupils looking outside the lycée for ways to learn Greek and Latin.

While Mathilde Salomon sees in the secondary school for girls the proof of the superiority of modern education over classical education, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben refuses to "make our education another weapon against this unfortunate Greek and Latin, which are already so threatened": on the contrary, she shows how shaky any education is without the classical humanities. For her, the absence of Latin and Greek cannot be justified by the desire to prevent overwork among girls. Indeed, since these subjects are not included in the curriculum, high school girls are forced to study them elsewhere, as Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben did in her teens.

E) A look at women's secondary education from the point of view of women in the field and proposals for reform

In the 1880s, the almost *ex-nihilo* creation of a secondary school for girls allowed for innovations that were unthinkable in an old institution such as the boys' lycées. The fear of overwork, as it existed among high school students, explained, for example, why girls' classes lasted one hour, instead of the two-hour sequence for men. At Collège Sévigné, the girls only work in the morning, leaving the afternoon free for personal work or other activities. Mathilde Salomon wanted to make her school a model for public education and in 1897 she asked the CSIP to reform the girls' curriculum so as to free up the afternoon¹⁸⁹. The permanent section did not follow up her request. Mathilde Salomon was not the only one to advocate this type of arrangement. In an 1892 text, Marie Dugard also suggested that classes be concentrated in the morning, according to

188 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "L'enseignement de l'Antiquité dans les lycées de jeunes filles", *Revue universitaire*, June 1899.

189 Voeu co-signed by Mathilde Salomon and submitted on 11 January 1897, F/17/12973.

a reform already carried out at the Lycée Molière where she teaches. This would free up the afternoons for drawing, music theory and sewing classes, which would become optional. Marie Dugard is convinced that reducing the number of hours would not make teaching more superficial:

With more leisure time at their disposal, one could [...] demand more personality in their work and make them lose the fatal habit - inherent in the present system, where, as the number of hours of teaching exceeds the number of hours of study, there is no room for reflective thought - of learning only the summary of the lessons and passively reproducing the ideas of the teacher¹⁹⁰.

The similarity of his speech with that of Mathilde Salomon is striking. For the latter, the role of the secular school is to form personalities. She praised *self-government*, declaring that "by distributing days and regulating the work of children hour by hour, we are getting them used to not regulating anything by themselves¹⁹¹".

Like Marie Dugard, Mathilde Salomon considered that the pleasure arts, which were appropriate to the training of the bourgeoisie, should be rejected outside school time. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello is on the same line: as early as 1882, she spoke out "against the frivolous studies of music and drawing undertaken as a fashionable pastime and referred to under the usual name of '*pleasure arts*'¹⁹²". These disciplines encourage the reproduction of a model of bourgeois idleness that she detests.

But Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was not opposed to the introduction of home economics. True to her training as a woman of science, she saw this discipline as a set of "Theoretical courses based on the sciences [through which] domestic practices could be brought out of the routine and empiricism in which they are kept by uneducated housewives¹⁹³". In 1901, she proposed to the Lyon town hall that a course be organised in her high school which would be open to all housewives. She wanted to turn the bourgeois institution that was her high school into a space for popular education. Her proposal, undoubtedly too iconoclastic, did not succeed. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was not the only one to welcome the development of domestic education in girls' high schools. Marie Dugard was prepared to reduce the density of the curriculum in order to introduce the study of domestic tasks at the lycée, at the expense of the arts of pleasure¹⁹⁴.

But on the eve of the Great War, domestic education was not unanimously supported. The president of the Union of Associations of Former Girls' High School Pupils expressed her distrust of the institutionalisation of this discipline, which she suspected of being a brake on

190 Miss Dugard, "Education of girls: a few words on secondary education reform", *University magazine*, January 1892.

191 Undated text, probably written around 1900, personal papers of Mathilde Salomon.

192 Speech at the prize-giving ceremony in Lyon in 1882, reported by Odette Laguerre, "Portraits de femmes. Mme Desparmet-Ruello, doyenne des directrices de lycée", *La Fronde*, 26 December 1902.

193 Letter to Victor Augagneur, Mayor of Lyon, dated 16 October 1901 - Archives municipales de Lyon, 176WP051.

194 Miss Dugard, "Education of girls: a few words on secondary education reform",

University magazine, January 1892.

intellectual development of young girls: "A strong culture gives the spirit of method which then allows one to face all the problems posed by life [and to] learn quickly, logically and seriously the rearing of infants and cooking without the need to dress dolls in class and to make dinners with the dishes that one has made¹⁹⁵. " Is this new discipline, taught exclusively to girls, a sign of inferiority or an innovation to be valued? This dilemma permeates the debate on female secondary education from the 1880s onwards regarding other subjects: the place of science, philosophy, ancient languages, etc. Several female intellectuals took part in this debate as the first female teachers. Several female intellectuals took part in the debate as subject specialists, such as Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello who spoke as a woman of science. Others highlighted successful experiments, such as Mathilde Salomon who organised teaching at the Collège Sévigné around the direct method, but who also introduced the principle of morning instruction. Marie Dugard took advantage of her status as a specialist in women's secondary education on the editorial board of the *Revue Universitaire* to publish an assessment of the founding decade of women's lycées at the very beginning of the journal. À Like Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, she draws her legitimacy from her experience as a teacher¹⁹⁶.

Conclusion of the chapter 2

In the first chapter of this thesis, the upheaval that the 1880s represented in terms of the study and career prospects open to women was studied through the analysis of the careers of Sevrier and Fontenay women. This second chapter highlighted other personalities who took the floor in school debates in the name of their recently acquired status in public education (Marie Dugard was an agrégée, Pauline Kergomard a general inspector, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello a school principal, as was Mathilde Salomon¹⁹⁷).

The issue of girls' education is logically the one through which these women enter the debates on education, since it is the field closest to their competences. It is primarily in the name of their specific expertise that they speak out. Far from being passive subjects of the institutional innovations put in place by the regime, these professionals demanded the right to speak: according to them, girls' education could not be developed exclusively by men. They therefore took part in the debates. The comparison of their speeches with those of men on the subject of girls' education is often striking. Thus, all the female intellectuals in our sources propose a 'feminist' reading of history

195 Mlle Desprez, "Contribution pour l'enseignement secondaire féminin français", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, October 1913.

196 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "De l'étude des auteurs français dans la première période de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles", *Revue universitaire*, December 1896.

197 Mathilde Salomon did not belong to the Education Ministry, but her appointment as head of Sévigné was in the context of the school laws. Those who supported her also acted in favour of public secondary education.

of female education. They use examples from the past as arguments in their own pleas for more intellectual ambition for girls. In contrast, men who look at this historical heritage offer a much more

"The major milestones in the history of women's education provide reservoirs of examples in the often contradictory discursive strategies of men and women. The major milestones in the history of women's education are reservoirs of examples in the often contradictory discursive strategies of men and women. By examining the history of education, female intellectuals participate in a battle of representations in which they defend the right of girls to access the same level of education as boys.

Many of these debates focused on female secondary education: on the one hand, it was this level of education that promised further study with a view to a prestigious career; on the other hand, it was the girls' lycées that constituted the most radical innovation of the 1880s and which, not being paralysed by any tradition, constituted spaces conducive to innovation. Several intellectuals spoke out on this subject, drawing on their personal experience: Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello - a science graduate - and Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben - a literature graduate - who had both studied at the boys' school, complained, each in their own way, that the girls' school was not a place where they could learn to read and write.¹⁹⁸ both complain about the restrictions that affect girls in their respective disciplines. Mathilde Salomon describes her educational successes at the Collège Sévigné, while Marie Dugard draws on her American sojourn to rethink female education. The last two decades of the XIX^e century were only a sketch of the controversy that emerged during the Belle Époque, when girls began to prepare for the baccalauréat¹⁹⁹.

The intellectuals involved in these issues have in common a high degree of geographical mobility, which is surprising given their social and gender background. Their view of foreign countries is almost always focused on the female condition. These study visits generally produce a 'backlash': the women travellers are influenced by what they have observed in other school systems or, more broadly, in other societies. Moreover, for many of them, it is as if the construction of an international expertise preceded the acquisition of visibility at the national level, the best example being that of Marie Dugard.

These first two chapters have attempted to show, in the words of Marie-Christine Kok-Escalle, that being an intellectual "is a state and at the same time a doing"²⁰⁰. A 'state' made possible by easy access to scholarly culture and prestigious diplomas. A "doing", i.e. an action, a commitment, themselves conditioned by the acquisition of intellectual skills and a legitimacy to express themselves. Although this 'state' and this 'doing' initially concerned issues relating to women's education, the eruption of the Dreyfus affair into the public debate changed the situation and pushed a number of female intellectuals to take up a much broader struggle in the service of secular schools and the Republic.

198 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben studied at Sèvres, but also passed her baccalaureate and licence among boys.

199 See Chapter 6 of this thesis.

200 Marie-Christine Kok-Escalle, "Féminisme et sémiotique : les intellectuelles en France, un engagement spécifique

?", *Modern and Contemporary France*, n°1, 1994, p. 21-33.

PART TWO:

**INTELLECTUALS FACING THE CATAclySM OF THE
AFFAIR :**

**DEFENCE OF SECULAR SCHOOLS AND POPULAR
EDUCATION**

(1898 - 1905)

Chapter 3

The Dreyfus moment :

Rethinking the role of the secular school at a time of engagement

Introduction to Chapter 3

The first part of this thesis investigated the conditions for the emergence of a community of educated women as well as the birth of a female teaching force very much attached to the republican values of the rule of law, justice and tolerance, all draped in an ethic tinged with Protestantism. All these principles were undermined by the Dreyfus Affair, which revealed the pervasiveness of anti-Semitism in French society, as well as the flaws in a major institution such as the army, which was supported by political power. Inheriting a conception of education based on the pursuit of moral exemplarity, and raised in a spirit of free examination, several intellectuals saw the affair as an injunction to action.

For them, the fate of the Republic was identified with that of the school. The Affair was therefore proof of the failure of secular education: the neutrality of abstention imposed on teachers and the secularism of compromise had not trained citizens worthy of the regime. In 1899, Pauline Kergomard considered the neutrality of public education to be an abdication in the face of Catholic education: "Two adversaries are in the presence of each other, one of whom is armed and the other unarmed; [...] one of whom speaks and the other remains silent; the victory of the first [...] cannot be in doubt. It is only time to react [...]. We are dying of neutrality.¹." The Dreyfus Affair led to intense reflection on the "secular spirit" that should govern public schools. Several intellectuals encouraged teachers to defend the values of the Republic, which they felt should not constitute a breach of the principle of neutrality. This brought them into conflict with their superiors, as the Ministry of Public Education took a dim view of the entry of these subjects into the classroom, especially when they were defended by dissident officials.

Once the Affaire was over, combisme threatened that republican defence would turn into an anti-religious attack. As Dominique Gros reminds us, "it is worth emphasising the extent to which Catholicism and royalism were associated until the Ralliement; this explains the close link between republicanism and secularism² This explains the close link between republicanism and secularism", secularism referring to the anti-clerical drift of secularism. Did school secularism turn into secularism after the Affaire?

As Serge Berstein writes, for the Dreyfusards, the Affair was a founding moment: "It] will constitute an ideological and cultural marker that will henceforth determine their reaction to any event, which they will read through the prism of the categories of the Dreyfus Affair³". As far as Dreyfus intellectuals are concerned, it is easy to answer André Lanfrey's question, asking whether "the entry into the new century generated [...] a specific consciousness, capable of nourishing a shared sense of historicity among contemporaries⁴". Indeed, the overwhelming majority of women involved in educational issues mention, in one text or another, the

1 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 22 September 1899.

2 See Dominique Gros, "Principes juridiques fondateurs de laïcité scolaire", art. cit.

3 Serge Berstein, "Des Seconds rôles?", in Gilles Manceron and Emmanuel Naquet (eds.), *Être dreyfusard hier et aujourd'hui*, Rennes, PUR, 2009, p. 51-57.

4 André Lanfrey, (preface by Françoise Mayeur), *Les catholiques français et l'école (1902-1914)*, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

They felt that they had experienced a cataclysm at the time of the Affaire. Although they prefer synonyms for this term - "crisis" in which "our country was about to sink", "tragic hour", "dark days" during which "our poor France almost died"⁵ "All of them perceive the period as a complete upheaval: the Republic, which seemed to them to be perennial, is faltering. The Affair also revealed the anti-Semitic hatred of a part of the population and its distrust of institutions. The period between 1898 - when the Dreyfus Affair began to be mentioned in our sources - and 1905 - when the Separation concluded the Affair and signalled the end of combism - thus marked a change in the regime of historicity that was accompanied by an immense horizon of expectation⁶.

This chapter analyses the new way in which intellectuals looked at the secular school during the Affair, diagnosing its weaknesses and reexamining the principles of neutrality and secularism that govern it⁷. The aim will be to study three successive trajectories in the light of the Affair: that of Mathilde Salomon, director of the Collège Sévigné, herself a victim of anti-Semitism because of her Jewish roots, who became involved in the Dreyfus struggle at an early age; Marie Baertschi, a teacher at a teacher training college, who preferred to "compete for the honour of being dismissed" rather than give in on the values which, according to her, were the *raison d'être* of the secular school; and finally Albertine Eidenschenk, a teacher training college headmistress, who drew lessons from the Affair by proposing a new definition of school neutrality. Finally, the last section proposes a broader typology of intellectuals active in educational debates according to their reaction to combisme, ranging from support for the government's policy to distrust of what could be considered a secularist and intolerant drift towards Catholicism in particular.

I- Confronting anti-Semitism through Dreyfus commitment: Mathilde Salomon and her Jewish network in the Affair

Challenging a historiography that has long underestimated the importance of the fight against anti-Semitism as a driving force behind **t h e** Dreyfus commitment⁸ Vincent Duclert argues that "The advent of intellectuals is intimately linked to the question of antisemitism⁹". It is towards this interpretation that Mathilde Salomon, a non-practising Jew who directed the Collège Sévigné, inclines. Her long correspondence with Salomon Reinach, professor at Sévigné, archaeologist, active member of the Alliance Israélite Universelle and Dreyfusard of the day before¹⁰, reveals how much anti-Semitism haunts Mathilde Salomon. The personal diary she kept for years

5 Formulas respectively used by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Albertine Eidenschenk, Marie Baertschi.

6 François Hartog, *Régimes d'historicité, présentisme et expériences du temps*, Paris, Seuil, 2003.

7 The two terms are used interchangeably in our sources.

8 Madeleine Rebérioux states: "The denunciation of antisemitism was not at the heart of the reactions of the first Dreyfusards. [...] This is probably one of the reasons why historians [...] have hardly focused on the hatred of Jews", "Préface", in Agnès Rogeret (ed.), *Antisémitisme et sursaut républicain dans la presse pendant l'affaire Dreyfus*, Paris, Dossiers de la documentation, 1994, p. 6.

9 Vincent Duclert, "Les intellectuels, l'antisémitisme et l'affaire Dreyfus en France", *Revue des études juives*, tome 158, January-June 1999, fasc. 1-2, p. 155-211.

1880 to her death in 1909 confirms this. It also shows to what extent Mathilde Salomon's destiny is linked to that of her school, and vice versa, since the headmistress committed her school to the positions she took at the time of the Affaire. For Mathilde Salomon, the Affaire is a revelation of antisemitism. The events also made her question the relationship she had with her own roots, as an assimilated and patriotic person who perfectly embodied Israelism. Unlike Albertine Eidenschenk, Marie Baertschi or Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Mathilde Salomon's trajectory reveals the significance of the anti-Semitic scourge in the shift towards commitment. An overview of the career of Henriette Wurmser, a former student of the Collège Sévigné and a history professor in contact with Mathilde Salomon, allows us to read the mirror image of two Jewish intellectuals. The similarities are obvious, whether in their personal experience of antisemitism or in their interpretation of the Affaire, both of them being as passionate as they were distressed by contemporary events. In these two cases, perhaps even more than in others, the biographical approach reveals its relevance for understanding the motives and forms of an early Dreyfus commitment.

A) Experiencing antisemitism: Mathilde Salomon in the late 1890s

In 1883, Mathilde Salomon took over the Collège Sévigné. The establishment was in a bad position, as the same year saw the opening of the Lycée Fénelon, the first public secondary school for girls in the capital. Not only did this constitute competition for the Collège, but subsidies were scarce, as money was preferentially invested in a state establishment, despite the activism of Michel Bréal¹¹. Mathilde Salomon was therefore constantly obliged to advance money to the establishment from her personal funds¹². In 1887, when the College owed her 4,000 francs, she bought it back in her own name, to ensure financial security¹³. She also used her Jewish networks: Salomon Goldschmidt offered the Collège several scholarships, i.e. he financed the schooling of deserving but not very wealthy students. However, whereas when it opened in 1880, the Collège had 79 students enrolled, ten years later it had only 35. From one difficult start to the next, Mathilde Salomon realised that the cause of her difficulties was not only competition from the lycées. She wrote in her diary in 1897:

I have grasped the cause of the misery of this house; it is anti-Semitism. A very large number of people [...] came, took up my time for information and do not put their children here, although they like everything and find it suitable. This cause

10 Vincent Duclert counts him among the first four Dreyfus intellectuals in *L'affaire Dreyfus: quand la justice éclaire la République*, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

11 See the NA files on free schools, including the Collège Sévigné, F/17/14186 and F/17/14187.

12 All this practical information appears in Mathilde Salomon's diary.

13 The deed by which she acquired full ownership of the College was signed on 16 July 1887 (personal papers).

is more saddening than any other; it should end, there is nothing to hope for. [...] Life takes on the task of reconciling you with death¹⁴.

It was not until 1897 that Mathilde Salomon wrote that she was convinced that antisemitism was the cause of the decline in attendance at her establishment. Was this awareness directly linked to the Affair? In any case, it was at the same time that Mathilde Salomon became passionate about the event. She notes in her diary: "The great affair fascinates me and makes me hate those who see it calmly.

The year 1897 also coincided with Goldschmidt's death and the disappearance of the scholarships he offered to the institution. Out of gratitude to the benefactor, Mathilde Salomon wanted to publish an article in his honour. In a letter of 9 March 1898, she describes her intention to Salomon Reinach and asks for biographical information on the deceased. Twenty days later, she explained to her correspondent that no newspaper had accepted her article: the editors "find its publication inappropriate at this time when nothing should be awakened, everything being so calm and peaceful¹⁵". If his article posed a problem, it was because it mentioned a Jew, which could only awaken the wave of antisemitism that had broken out in January and February 1898. Indeed, Zola's *J'Accuse*, published on 13 January 1898, triggered numerous anti-Semitic disturbances in the months that followed. Rioters roamed the streets of Nantes, Nancy, Rennes and Bordeaux looting shops and synagogues while antisemitic gangs marched through Paris. In Algeria, the situation became uncontrollable, with the authorities only restoring order after several days¹⁶. It was in this context that Mathilde Salomon praised her Jewish patron. This tribute serves as a pretext for writing a committed text:

His concern was the same as that of the thinkers of his race: to make more justice reign here below. It was this thought that opened his heart and his hand so widely; it was also this thought that made him choose France, the native land of equality and justice, to live and die in. And, although he was not born on this soil, although he was not one of its children, France owes the cosmopolitan Salomon Goldschmidt gratitude¹⁷.

The audacity of such a statement, which completely reverses the antisemitic prejudice, must be underlined: the Jewish banker and president of the Alliance Israélite Universelle becomes, under the pen of Mathilde Salomon, a patron who makes the French spirit shine. Similarly, the term cosmopolitan, an anti-Semitic insult in the writings of Drumont, Rochefort and Barrès¹⁸ gives its title to Mathilde Salomon's article, which uses it to denounce nationalism: "In times of a

14 Personal papers of Mathilde Salomon, 1897.

15 Letter to Salomon Reinach, 28 March 1898, Salomon Reinach collection, Bibliothèque Méjanes, Aix-en-Provence.

16 Michael R. Marrus, *Les Juifs de France à l'époque de l'affaire Dreyfus*, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1972, p. 191.

17 M. Salomon, "Un cosmopolite", *Le Siècle*, 19 April 1898.

18 See Jean-Paul Honoré, "Le vocabulaire de l'antisémitisme en France pendant l'affaire Dreyfus", *Mots. Les langages*

du politique, n°2, 1981, pp. 73-92.

thirty years ago, one could have dreamt of a patriotism that was not above all a hatred of foreigners. [Today, one would not dare apply the name of cosmopolitan to a man whom one admires.¹⁹ " To top it all off, Mathilde Salomon demands that France show its gratitude towards this German-born Israelite, at a time when Jews are considered as the nation's intruders. On reading this text, one understands why Mathilde Salomon had so much trouble getting it accepted in newspapers, and why it was in *Le Siècle*, a Dreyfus supporter in which Salomon Reinach was well known, that she finally managed to publish it in April 1898.

A year later, she faced the same problem when she wrote a series of *Vies de femmes* for the *Revue des jeunes filles*. Mathilde Salomon noticed that her work on Coralie Cahen, a Jewish Lorraine heroine of the 1870 war, was not included in the review: "I was objected to the lack of euphony of this name and the disfavour it would cast on the series.²⁰ " The "lack of euphony of the name" is a euphemism for the fact that it is impossible to start this series of biographies with the life of a woman whose name betrays her membership of Judaism.

Mathilde Salomon reports on her misadventures to Salomon Reinach, who, like her, is aware of the power of anti-Semitism and the need to fight for Dreyfus. On 27 May 1898, she thanked him for the reports of the Zola trial that he had sent her. She was responsible for distributing them: she said she had given some to the Maison de la Légion d'honneur²¹ She said she had given them to the Legion of Honour, to a former colonel, and to two of her teachers, "readers of the Echo", an antidreyfusard daily. If it was through Salomon Reinach that Mathilde Salomon obtained these documents, it was because he covered the bulk of the costs of publishing the proceedings of the Zola trial, which took place from 7 to 23 February 1898²². Like his two brothers, he had a large fortune, inherited from his banker father²³. Mathilde Salomon did more than just distribute pamphlets: "I sent a piece of verse [written by] one of our former pupils, a devout Catholic, to the *Siècle*, and as such I would be very happy for it to be inserted; it is a tribute to Picquart which would not be out of place at this time²⁴ ". Colonel Picquart was in fact discharged for serious misconduct in February 1898 because of his revelations in the Affair. He was imprisoned from July onwards. On 24 August, Mathilde Salomon was shot:

I had been naive enough to believe in the seriousness of the proceedings against Esterhazy, and it was a dismissal of the case against Berthelot that discouraged me [sic]²⁵ It is also Colonel Picquart's long prison term that haunts me! [...] I am beginning to understand why hope has been made a virtue; hope is often courage; it should be kept; mine wavers a lot - without however being completely extinguished. I do not believe

19 M. Salomon, "Un cosmopolite", *Le Siècle*, 19 April 1898.

20 Letter to Salomon Reinach, 8 November 1899.

21 On these establishments for girls founded by Napoleon, see Rebecca Rogers, *Les demoiselles de la Légion d'honneur: les maisons d'éducation de la Légion d'honneur au XIX^e siècle*, Paris, Plon, 1992.

22 Vincent Duclert, *L'affaire Dreyfus: quand la justice éclaire la République*, op. cit. , p. 179.

23 See Sophie Basch, Michel Espagne and Jean Leclant (eds.), *Les frères Reinach, colloquium held on 22 and 23 June 2007 at the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, Paris, AIBL, 2008.

24 Letter to Salomon Reinach, 27 May 1898.

25 Esterhazy was acquitted by the Council of War on 11 January 1898.

I believe in a final and definitive defeat; I believe even less in a rapid success. The facts we are witnessing, everything we have seen [...] was enough to discourage - but the current of opinion of which M. Buisson speaks is even more sensitive. Buisson speaks of is even more sensitive. [...] In the meantime, looting and murder continue in Algiers [...]. As for the masses, what are they asking for? "Give us today our bread, etc., - the rest is of no importance."

Mathilde Salomon is disillusioned about the army and the justice system. She was dismayed by the lack of interest of the majority of the population in this crisis. However, she still has some hope in the Dreyfusian mobilisation that Ferdinand Buisson has just joined.

B) Mathilde Salomon and Ferdinand Buisson: the nostalgia of original republicanism

Unlike Salomon Reinach, Ferdinand Buisson was a late convert to Dreyfus. As Samuël Tomei writes, "he was expected to be in the vanguard, but he remained in the background²⁶". It was one of Félix Pécaut's sons, Élie, who convinced Buisson, asking him in particular whether he was still the author of *Castellion*²⁷. Buisson's two friends, Jules Steeg and Félix Pécaut, converted to Dreyfusism in the first half of 1898. They took him in their wake: as Patrick Cabanel writes, "on 3 August 1898, at the tomb of Félix Pécaut, [Buisson] ignored the warnings of the minister Bourgeois, to whom he was close, and of the Hachette bookshop, which threatened to renounce his services²⁸ "He proclaimed his Dreyfusism. His speech was entrusted by Élie Pécaut to Joseph Reinach and published in *Le Siècle* on 6 August, with great repercussions. The day after the publication, Pauline Kergomard wrote to Ferdinand Buisson:

My dear friend,

If there were a new "Night of August 4th" in our painful times, I would have a rare "privilege" [his Legion of Honour] to place on the altar of the Fatherland. But what would I have left after the sacrifice? [...] And now the newspapers bring me your words from Orthez. [...] I was both happy, to the point of tears, and also very sad, because I am even more humiliated by my silence and my inaction in these desolate circumstances. I had promised myself to return this red ribbon which I accepted only because of you, and at the moment of keeping my promise and following the example of Barbier, Pressensé, Bouchor, [...] I feared for my two young households, and nothing can describe my moral distress. I blame myself all the more for such an act,

26 Samuël Tomei, "Ferdinand Buisson, ou comment résister à la folie du sens propre", in Gilles Manceron and Emmanuel Naquet (eds.), *Être dreyfusard hier et aujourd'hui*, op. cit. , p. 75-77.

27 Ferdinand Buisson had written a thesis on Sébastien Castellion, a pioneer of liberal Protestantism who had opposed Calvin by reproaching him for the death of Servet: one cannot sacrifice an individual for the survival of the group.

accomplished by a woman, would have made one think. In short, I am sorry, diminished. Of all the sacrifices I have made so far, none is harder than this²⁹.

Pauline Kergomard, who considered honorary decorations to be an archaism in the Republic, was tempted to resign from the Order of the Legion of Honour to demonstrate her opposition to government policy. While Francis de Pressensé and Maurice Bouchor had done so, she feared reprisals that would directly or indirectly affect her "two young households": her sons Joseph (33) and Jean (28) who were married to two of Jules Steeg's daughters. Her last son, sharing her mother's convictions, signed one of the manifestos of the intellectuals as a graduate in literature on 22 January 1898 in *L'Aurore*.

Mathilde Salomon is much less admiring than Pauline Kergomard of Buisson's late conversion. She remembers having known a more militant man. In 1869, Buisson had indeed made an anti-militarist and anti-imperialist declaration at the congress of the Peace League in Lausanne: "The God of armies, the God of Napoleons, must be banished from the minds of children."³⁰ " But twenty years later, in the middle of the Affaire, when the Army was at the initiative of the State plot and the Church supported it, Buisson recused himself and apologised for his past words. This attitude displeased Mathilde Salomon, who remembered that before the defeat against Prussia, the Republicans had no shame in criticising these institutions, which were now placed on a pedestal:

[Buisson] does not realise the backward step imposed by the events of 1970.

71. I remember well the popularity before that date of the ideas of human fraternity, of horror of war, of justice and equality; one was then really republican; the republicans had not yet killed the republic and what astonishes me is that M. Buisson [...] did not more brazenly take full responsibility for what he thought at the time, for what it was natural to think, just as it has been natural to change one's feelings somewhat since. I do not believe that the monstrous affair D would then have been possible. [...] Who would have said that [Bréal and I] would regret the days of the empire³¹ !

While Ferdinand Buisson, fearing to appear too anti-militarist, refuted his 1869 declaration by recalling that it dated back to a time when the Army was compromised with the Empire, Mathilde Salomon considered that it betrayed republican culture. Wasn't the purest republicanism the one he demonstrated by opposing the Empire? Has his republicanism been diluted in the exercise of the high functions of the State? Mathilde Salomon is nostalgic for the last years of the Empire, like her friend Michel Bréal. A Jew from the "lost provinces" like her, an inspector general and early Dreyfus supporter, he was convinced from the beginning of his career that he had been a victim of

29 Letter of 7 August 1898, quoted in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.*, p. 101.

30 Patrick Cabanel, *Ferdinand Buisson, op. cit.*, p. 41.

31 Letter to Salomon Reinach, 24 August 1898.

first Dreyfus trial that an Alsatian Jew did not betray France³². Along with Bréal, Mathilde Salomon is convinced that if the Republicans had kept the values they held at the time of the Empire, the affair would not have happened. Thus, while the defence of the captain should have been unanimously supported by the republicans, it is clear that this was not the case.

Mathilde Salomon retained a deep distrust of the army and Catholicism from the years of the Empire, a distrust that was confirmed by the Affaire. For, as Patrick Cabanel writes, for many republicans, "Catholicism [was] assimilated, not without reason, to antidreyfusard clericalism³³". This did not prevent Mathilde Salomon from encouraging the action of the Dreyfus Catholics. Thus, she supported the Catholic historian Paul Viollet when he wrote an appeal to Catholics that earned him reprisals from his co-religionists, including Baroness Piérard³⁴. But Paul Viollet's Dreyfusism was rare in the Catholic ranks. Thus, after the policy of Ralliement which had brought certain Catholics closer to the Republic, the Affaire consecrated the fracture between the Church and the regime. In 1901, Mathilde Salomon was convinced of this. As usual, she distributed the texts sent to her by Salomon Reinach:

I am having as many people as possible read your instructive brochure [...]. The evil to be combated is the lie which our enemies use so freely and so widely; it is [an] essentially Catholic trait. [...] Through some of our pupils, who have left the convents and have become fervent in our midst about righteousness and liberty, I have had various useful pamphlets sent to convents. [...] But these people are so used to lies that they simply say: it is not true, and do not look for more³⁵.

The Affair increased the contempt for Catholicism on the part of a Jew who had believed that religious tolerance was consubstantial with the republican regime.

C) The director of Collège Sévigné at the committee of the League of Human Rights

After the loss of Alsace and Lorraine in 1871, Mathilde Salomon opted for French nationality because, as Michael R. Marrus writes, "the majority [of French Jews] had complete faith in the official, optimistic creed of the Third Republic. Marrus writes, "the majority [of French Jews] had complete faith in the official, optimistic creed of the Third Republic. It was commonly believed that France showed Europe and the world the way to a higher stage of civilisation³⁶". The French Revolution having first granted citizenship to Jews, Theodore Reinach even wrote that "every Jew of today with memory and heart has for

32 See Vincent Duclert, *L'affaire Dreyfus: quand la justice éclaire la République*, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

33 Patrick Cabanel, "Après l'Affaire: nostalgie de dreyfusards "désaffaires", in Gilles Manceron and Emmanuel Naquet (eds.), *Être dreyfusard hier et aujourd'hui*, *op. cit.* pp. 291-298.

34 See his letter to Salomon Reinach, 28 July 1899.

35 Letter to Salomon Reinach, 25 or 29 February 1901.

second homeland [...] the France of 1791³⁷ ". This was the case for Mathilde Salomon, who had faith in France and the Republic, but who went from disillusionment to disillusionment with the Affaire. In 1898, she even wrote in her diary: "Who would have told me that I would stop being a chauvinist. We are still floundering. If I were young, I would leave this rotten country³⁸. "

But, as she noted five years later, "action numbs suffering, it is the morphine of the soul³⁹ ". It was therefore through commitment that she reacted to the torments of the Affaire. In 1898, when the League of Human Rights was founded⁴⁰ Mathilde Salomon was elected to the executive committee. *Le Gaulois*, Arthur Meyer's antidreyfusard newspaper, was indignant on 7 June when it discovered her name on the list published by *L'Aurore*: "Are State officials, and especially those who are responsible, like Mlle Salomon, for the education of young people, qualified to vote for agendas in honour of Zola and Colonel Picquart⁴¹ ? " The next day, Mathilde Salomon had a correction inserted in *Le Gaulois*: "The Collège Sévigné is not a State establishment, and its director did not need anyone's authorization to accept the great honor she was given by being chosen as a member of the committee of the new association⁴². " On the same day, *L'Aurore* also replied to *Le Gaulois*:

The renegade Jew Arthur Meyer, who has become the persecutor of those of his race, points out to the administrative fury of Miss Salomon, the headmistress of the École Sévigné [...] in terms which amount to asking for her dismissal. Now that he no longer rinses the bowls of Blanche d'Antigny, this repugnant character is busy taking away the livelihood of honest women⁴³.

Arthur Meyer, targeted here by an *ad hominem* attack, is in fact the grandson of a rabbi who converted to Catholicism and antidreyfusism. He was the secretary of Blanche d'Antigny, an artist and half-worldly woman who inspired Zola to write *Nana*. *L'Aurore* contrasts this woman, presented as immoral, with the "honest woman" Mathilde Salomon. It is precisely because she is a woman that the director of Sévigné is targeted by *Le Gaulois*, as she explains to Marianne Vilain, who relates in *La Fronde* her meeting with Mathilde Salomon:

The good lady receives us with great kindness, she is a small white-haired woman, with a lively, intelligent look and a vibrant voice, who, indignantly, tells us

37 Quoted in Pierre Birnbaum, *Les fous de la République: histoire politique des Juifs d'État, de Gambetta à Vichy*, Paris, Fayard, 1992, p. 26.

38 Personal papers of Mathilde Salomon, 1898.

39 Personal papers of Mathilde Salomon, 1903.

40 See Emmanuel Naquet's thesis, *Affaire Dreyfus et intellectuels: aux origines de la Ligue des droits de l'homme, 1894-1898*, under the direction of Serge Berstein and Jean-François Sirinelli at the IEP de Paris, 1990.

41 Ch. Demailly, "À travers la presse", *Le Gaulois*, 7 June 1898.

42 M. Salomon, "Boîte aux lettres", *Le Gaulois*, 8 June 1898.

43 Ph. D., "Arthur denounces", *L'Aurore*, 8 June 1898.

explains that it does not understand the attacks against it. Her institution is not under the control of anyone, neither the city nor the state.

- I am headmistress of the Sévigné college, she tells me, at my own risk, I am at home here, and do not owe an account of my conduct to anyone. [...]

Combative, Miss Salomon stands up and, full of her indignation, cries out:

- And if that had been true, if I had been a civil servant paying, as they say, into the state budget? What would be the harm? Why have they attacked me when among the thousand members of the League [...], there are teachers of young people's high schools, civil servants too, among them M. Jiry [*sic*], Louis Havet, Paul Meyer, from the Ecole des Chartes and so many others [...]; it is therefore as a woman and not as a school principal that I do not have the right to have my opinion. Ah, when men get involved, they are not half intolerant.

And Miss Salomon explains to me that this famous League has, moreover, no denominational character, but that it was only founded with the aim of spreading by conferences and writings, the principles of 89, so much forgotten today.

The question is settled, Mr. Arthur has put a feather in the water and one might add - if the rumours of his conversion are true - in holy water⁴⁴.

By giving the floor to Mathilde Salomon, Marianne Vilain has conducted the only interview with the director of the Collège Sévigné that we have found in the press. As a good rebel, she highlights a female Dreyfus commitment, while regretting that this kind of audacity is so rare. Thus, on the subject of the steering committee of the Ligue des droits de l'homme, Marianne Vilain writes: "What astonishes me is that there are only three women: we should be claiming in favour of men's rights since they complain of seeing them restricted, perhaps then these gentlemen would think of reciprocating and claiming with us the rights of women. It is true that among the 34 members of the central committee, there are only three women: Mme Lucien Fontaine, who sits on it with her husband, the feminist Jeanne Schmahl, and Mathilde Salomon.

By presenting herself as "director of the Sévigné school" to the committee of the League of Human Rights⁴⁵ Mathilde Salomon used this epithet to establish her legitimacy alongside men like Buisson and Seignobos, professors at the Faculty of Letters, Clamageran and Trarieux, senators, Duclaux, director of the Pasteur Institute, and Guyot, director of *Le Siècle*. She could have signed as a member of the Conseil Supérieur de l'Instruction Publique, where she has been for six years. Perhaps she prefers to mention her free institution, independent of the State, rather than an advisory body of the Republic, which must respect a certain neutrality? In any case, while Ms Lucien Fontaine and Ms Schmahl do not add any epithet to their names, Mathilde Salomon signs 'as' director. As Christophe Charles writes when he studies the

44 Marianne Vilain, "Autour d'une dénonciation, interview de Mlle Salomon", *La Fronde*, 11 June 1898.

45 See *L'Aurore* of 6 June 1898.

The short list of members of the central committee of the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme published in *L'Aurore* is not impressive in terms of the number of people it mobilises but in terms of the social stature of the personalities it brings together. By designating itself as
As "headmistress of the Sévigné school", Mathilde Salomon complies here with a "commitment [which] is therefore made in its own right, not just as an interchangeable 'citizen'⁴⁶ ".

D) The translation of *Chad Gadya!* by Mathilde Salomon, a consequence of the Affaire?

Faced with the anti-Semitism of the Affaire, Mathilde Salomon relied on her important Jewish sociability. Thus, while Goldschmidt had financed scholarships at the Collège Sévigné, it was Mme de Hirsch, probably the philanthropist Clara de Hirsch, who in turn supported the Collège in 1898, one year before her death. The Hirsch scholarships continued until 1902, when Baron de Rothschild made a donation to the Collège. Mathilde Salomon thus benefited from the support of the elite of the Parisian Jewish community. But what was her relationship to Judaism as a religion? She wrote in her diary in 1892: "Very moved by the grandeur of Jewish ceremonies: this religion is beautiful, the most beautiful⁴⁷ ". This does not make her a believer or a practitioner. Indeed, ten years later, she declares: "Chatted with Mrs. L. L. She is a very lively Jewish soul too, but different from me, who is so indifferent to the infinite, so busy with here, with the horrors of here; there is no justice - there will be when man creates it⁴⁸. " Is Mathilde Salomon as detached from Jewish spirituality as she claims? A passionate Anglicist, she embarked at the beginning of the XX^e century on the translation from English of *Chad Gadya!* a text subsequently published in 1904 in Péguy's *Cahiers de la Quinzaine*⁴⁹. In this short story, the British Jewish and Zionist writer Israel Zangwill describes the journey of a non-practising Jew with his family to Venice to celebrate Passover. In contact with the ancestral rites of Pesach, the main character sees his Jewish identity revealed to him, and then commits suicide. Does the director of Collège Sévigné follow the same spiritual path at the dawn of the new century? It is difficult to answer in the absence of any convincing clues.

In any case, Mathilde Salomon's translation of *Chad Gadya!* reveals Zangwill to the French public. André Spire describes "the emotion in which [he] was immersed by this reading which revealed [his] Jewish soul in the process of dissolving⁵⁰ ". Similarly, *L'Univers israélite* considered in 1926 that *Chad Gadya!* spread in Mathilde Salomon's translation, had a considerable influence: "It acts as a return, a conversion. Young Jews began to study Jewish history⁵¹ ".

According to Catherine Nicault, Mathilde Salomon was not insensitive to Zionism, having among her friends followers of this movement, such as the lawyer Yehuda Tchernoff and the
agrégée

46 Christophe Charle, *Naissance des "intellectuels"*, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

47 Personal papers of Mathilde Salomon, 1892.

48 Personal papers of Mathilde Salomon, 1902.

49 *Chad Gadya*, *Cahiers de la quinzaine*, 6th series, 3rd book, 1904.

50 Catherine Nicault, "Mathilde Salomon, pédagogue et pionnière de l'éducation féminine", *Archives juives*, 2004/1, p. 129-134.

Myriam Schach - whose name appears in the list of one of the intellectuals' manifestos published on 28 January 1898 in *L'Aurore*. Let us distance ourselves from this hypothesis. Although Mathilde Salomon frequented Zionist militants, she also rubbed shoulders with men hostile to the movement, including Salomon Reinach, who in 1903 gave a conference on

"The three Reinach brothers, representatives of Franco-Judaism, were convinced that the place of the Jews was in the Republic. The three Reinach brothers, representatives of Franco-Judaism, were convinced that the place of Jews was in the Republic. However, although not practising, they organised a religious funeral for their father's death in 1899, which Pierre Birnbaum described as "courageous and almost provocative"⁵² ". Mathilde Salomon may have been present. In any case, it is likely that, like the Reinachs, she reconnected with her Jewish identity in the context of the Affaire, which did not make her a Zionist.

Although not a practising Jew, Salomon Reinach played a major role in the Alliance Israélite Universelle. He regularly helped Mathilde Salomon to place her students as teachers in the Alliance's schools in the colonies. When she spoke of these schools, Mathilde Salomon saw them less as Jewish schools than as centres of French influence:

I shall see Miss Pope today and I shall be [...] happy to see her go to Tunis for her and for the school; it is good that people with a Catholic education should see the Alliance schools at close quarters, which are all French in short and thus differ from the Protestant establishments, for example, which make great concessions to English⁵³.

Indeed, as Michael R. Marrus writes Marrus writes, the rabbis of the Alliance Israélite were often of Alsatian origin, "they were considered to be among those for whom patriotism was second nature"⁵⁴ ". The Alliance was thus the incarnation of France abroad. In her tribute to Goldschmidt, benefactor of the Alliance Israélite, Mathilde Salomon praised this association in the service of the French mission in terms that would have pleased Clarisse Coignet:

In keeping with the historical tradition which [...] gave supremacy in the East to the Frankish nation, the Alliance Israélite schools are, for the most part, run by staff trained in Paris. They are not exclusive either as regards the direction or the pupils⁵⁵ and are of great service to Western civilisation in the East. Many of these schools are professional [...]. To give Orientals, whether Jews or not, the habit and the means of useful work, is already to bring them closer to us, and [France has every interest] in seeing [these] establishments prosper [...] in her own colonies⁵⁶.

52 Pierre Birnbaum, *Les fous de la République*, *op. cit.* , p. 17.

53 Letter to Salomon Reinach, dated Tuesday 21 September, but the year is not specified - probably 1897.

54 Michael R. Marrus, *Les Juifs de France à l'époque de l'affaire Dreyfus*, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

55 It should be understood here that they are not exclusively addressed to Jews.

Mathilde Salomon is indeed a figure of Israelism defined by Theodore Reinach as the abandonment of any ethnic reference to Judaism in favour of a cult for post-revolutionary and republican France, at the risk of a weakening of the religious tradition and in favour of a national, secular or scientific conversion⁵⁷. As Michael R. Marrus notes that the success of Jews in the arts and sciences under the Third Republic created "a process of 'reverse selection', which caused Judaism to lose the most gifted of its sons⁵⁸ "Most of them abandoned the religious tradition for the "secular faith". Mathilde Salomon was part of this process, which did not prevent her from maintaining an important Jewish sociability. The Chief Rabbi Zadoc Kahn declared in 1885 that, although religious sentiment was weakening among many Parisian Jews, a feeling of "Jewish solidarity" was maintained, which manifested itself in philanthropic organisations.⁵⁹ "This was manifested in philanthropic organisations, particularly in the ranks of the Alliance universelle. But if Mathilde Salomon's Judaism persists only in her sociability, how can it be explained that it is *Chad Gadya!* that she translates at the end of the Affaire, i.e. the story of a man who has forgotten his Jewish roots? Doesn't the publication of this translation, in a journal born of Dreyfusism, testify to a return of the Jewish flame in Mathilde Salomon? Is it not proof that Judaism only asserts itself in reaction to anti-Semitism⁶⁰ ?

By translating *Chad Gadya!* Mathilde Salomon participates in the "reminder of past suffering" on which the Jewish community is based, and gives in to the need "to remember [...] the alienation of [her] own people": it is through the collective experience of persecution that the Jewish community is united, more than through the sharing of rituals.⁶¹ "It is through the collective experience of persecution that the Jewish community becomes one, more than through the sharing of rituals. It is thus possible to make Mathilde Salomon's translation of Zangwill one of the forms of her commitment to Dreyfus. For it is not insignificant for a woman who does not publish much to translate a short story in 1904 in the *Cahiers de la Quinzaine* that recounts a man's conversion to Judaism. It was a response to anti-Semitic assertions by asserting her own Jewishness. It is, in the same way that the Reinachs buried their father in the Jewish tradition, refusing to remain silent in the face of anti-Semitic attacks and forbidding themselves to consider Judaism as a flaw to be concealed. Mathilde Salomon acts both as a Jew and an atheist. Unlike the character of *Chad Gadya*, she is not tempted by religious conversion. Two years before her death, she writes in her diary: "One asks what to replace religion with - nothing - the lie cannot be replaced; it is suppressed.⁶² "

E) The revenge of the antidreyfusards: the Collège Sévigné against a nationalist municipality

The amnesty law of 24 December 1900, which was supposed to put an end to the Affair, did not put an end to the attacks on Mathilde Salomon. Indeed, while the nationalists became the majority in the

⁵⁷ Quoted by Patrick Cabanel, *Juifs et protestants en France, les affinités électives, XVI^e-XXI^e siècle, op. cit.*, p. 124.

⁵⁸ Michael R. Marrus, *Les Juifs de France à l'époque de l'affaire Dreyfus, op. cit.*, p. 73.

59 Quoted in *Ibid.* , p. 43.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 137.

61 Patrick Cabanel, *Jews and Protestants in France, elective affinities, XVI^e-XXI^e century, op. cit.*, p. 49.

62 Personal papers of Mathilde Salomon, 1907.

The consequences for the Collège Sévigné were immediate. The nationalists sought to abolish the sum of 5,000 francs allocated annually in the form of grants to the Collège Sévigné. Maria Vérone wrote ironically in *La Fronde*: "Just think, it's a question of helping young girls to learn, of opening the doors of a house where they could acquire a taste for science and truth, the habit of judging and reasoning, and the majority of the Council would never want to allow such a scandal⁶³." On 20 January 1901, Mathilde Salomon announced the abolition of scholarships to Salomon Reinach by sending him an extract from the municipal bulletin which reported the debates on this subject. The rapporteur of the project to abolish scholarships boasted that he was preventing a free school from competing with public schools. The director of primary education defended Mathilde Salomon's school:

Gentlemen, - the question is higher than a budgetary question. [...] The Collège Sévigné is the first secondary school for girls to have been founded in France; not only is it the first, but it was, in fact, the instigator of this education; it has rendered the greatest services in this respect; it still does so; the Council has supported it in order to continue this work; it seems to me that it could only withdraw this support if it had serious reasons⁶⁴.

He is supported by Mr Archain, another member of the city council, former rapporteur of the budget:

The majority of the children who attend the Collège Sévigné belong to families of teachers and especially of primary school teachers [...] who are happy to find, in order to give a higher education to their children, to form a new strain of servants of secular education, the modest subsidy of 300 fr. per year.

To abolish scholarships is to prevent our teachers from giving their children the secondary education for which they are especially gifted.

He further insinuated that the hostility of the municipal commission was tinged with antisemitism:

I do not want to see in the words of the rapporteur anything other than what he said. I do not want to concern myself with the name of the headmistress of the college and assume that a former academic [...] has concerned himself with the race to which this lady belongs; [...] it would be an unspeakable act to reduce the budget of an institution [...] on the pretext that this headmistress belongs to a religion other than the Catholic religion. [...] But we

63 Maria Vérone, "Les nationalistes de l'Enseignement", *La Fronde*, 15 December 1900. Maria Vérone also wrote in *La Fronde* under the pseudonym of Thémis. More on Maria Verona in Chapter 4.

64 *Bulletin municipal de la ville de Paris*, extract from the meeting of 3 January 1901, inserted in a letter from

Mathilde Salomon to Salomon Reinach, 20 January 1901.

We know too well that the new majority only knows how to fight secular education in favour of congregational education.

M. Labusquière, another supporter of the Collège, recalled that no criticism had ever been levelled at the establishment, and that the price of a scholarship at Sévigné was much lower than that of a scholarship in a lycée, which enabled the State to help a greater number of young girls to follow a secondary education. In spite of these oppositions from the Republican minority, the rapporteur maintained his conclusions, without responding to any objections. Despite the exclamations from the left, the conclusions of the committee were adopted and the abolition of the scholarships put on record.

Despite the difficulties associated with the presence of nationalists at the head of the Paris municipality for several years, the first decade of the XX^e century was prosperous at Sévigné. In 1901, the College reached 100 students. In 1903, Mathilde Salomon wrote in her diary, "This month [...] has brought me great satisfaction: the rather justified hope that the house will finally be self-sufficient, without help from outside. I do not yet dare to believe that this year's income will be at least equal to that of last year, when there were Hirsch's scholarships⁶⁵." During the Affair, Mathilde Salomon saw several Dreyfus supporters enrol their daughters in her school. This was the case of Paul Dupuy, secretary general of the ENS d'Ulm who taught geography at Sévigné, and whose daughter declared:

Our fathers were all, or almost all, "intellectuals", and personal friends of Mademoiselle Salomon, whom they admired for her intelligence and courage. [...] What we, the daughters of these fathers, knew was that they were "dreyfusards"! We don't realise it now; but it was something, then, to be called a Dreyfusard [...] it took courage to show it publicly⁶⁶.

As a result of the Affaire, Mathilde Salomon and her College gained notoriety in the Republican vanguard.

F) Henriette Wurmser: a former student of Sévigné facing antisemitism in high schools

Mathilde Salomon shares her Dreyfus struggle with some of her students. This was the case with Henriette Wurmser, a practising Jew who, like her, placed her trust in the Republic. She did not hesitate to say: "Public education has always been my goal⁶⁷". From 1888 onwards, she sought to study at the Collège Sévigné to prepare for the certificate of aptitude for teaching

65 Personal papers of Mathilde Salomon, 1903.

66 Thérèse Maurette-Dupuy, "Le collège Sévigné de Mademoiselle Salomon", *Collège Sévigné - Le Livre du Centenaire, 1880-1980*, Paris, Nathan, 1982, 191 pp.

67 Letter to Mme Eugène Manuel, 6 December 1886, Eugène Manuel fonds, Victor Cousin Library Manuscripts, archived at the Sorbonne Interuniversity Library.

secondary⁶⁸. She therefore approached Mathilde Salomon, after being recommended by two men of Jewish origin: Albert Lévy and Eugène Manuel. The latter was a general inspector of female secondary education and president of the jury for the agrégation. In her correspondence with him, Mathilde Salomon recalls one of her discussions with the young woman, who would like to take private lessons with the College's teachers: "I am happy to make all our lessons available to her, but I am afraid I cannot get anything better for her⁶⁹".

Henriette Wurmser was delighted with the teaching she was able to receive at the College in addition to her working days. Thanks to the seriousness of the preparation at Sévigné, she passed the competitive examination at the end of 1889. In the autumn, she was sent as a teacher to the public college of Lons-le-Saunier: "My new fellow citizens are very strange: I seem to them like some curious monstrosity: some escapee from the Colonial Exhibition, no doubt; they call me the Jewess, - with various epithets⁷⁰". She cannot find accommodation: her landlady gets rid of her, considering that the fires of hell await her if she lives under the same roof as a Jewess⁷¹. What Henriette Wurmser also discovered was that anti-Semitic prejudice was everywhere, including in her school: "It was not a state school, really, where I was sent. The following year, she was appointed to Le Havre, where these problems were repeated, then to Cambrai, "the narrowest and most archiepiscopal city one can dream of⁷² "He was advised not to call himself an Israelite so as not to damage the reputation of the college, which was already "not in the smell of sanctity".

In 1893, the Inspector General Foncin wrote: "Mlle Wurmser had a run-in with the former headmistress; she may have been provoked because she is Jewish and Mlle d'Origny is a bigot, but I do not believe her to be of a convenient character⁷³". Noting that in nine years of service, the young woman had changed residence eight times, Inspector General Dupuy considered that this was the result of her bad temper⁷⁴. His colleague Foncin saw the effect of her astonishing appearance, with her "ridiculously dishevelled hair⁷⁵". Finally, a few years later, the Inspector General noted that Henriette Wurmser was the target of hostility from part of the school's clientele, "for reasons that are very difficult to specify⁷⁶". The correspondence that the young woman maintained with the wife of Eugène Manuel, whom she had known during her years as a pupil at the Bischoffsheim school in Paris, revealed that antisemitism was the source of the rejection of which she was the victim. Are the inspectors blind to the situation? Do they refuse to admit that religious intolerance can reign in public high schools?

68 For Henriette Wurmser's educational background, see her career file F/17/24059.

69 Letter from Mathilde Salomon to Eugène Manuel, 4 October 1888.

70 Letter from Henriette to Mrs Eugène Manuel, 26 November 1889.

71 Letter to Mrs Eugène Manuel, 21 December 1889.

72 Letter to Mrs Eugène Manuel, 15 October 1890.

73 Document dated 10 April 1900, F/17/24059.

74 Document dated 19 April 1900.

75 Document dated 10 April 1900.

76 Report of the General Inspection, year 1903-1904.

In the midst of these questions, three things are certain about Henriette Wurmser. The first is that, unlike Mathilde Salomon, Henriette Wurmser is a churchgoer. Her surname, moreover, immediately attracts suspicion. All of this could, to some extent, explain the speed with which she is assigned as belonging to Judaism in each of the establishments where she is appointed. The second certainty is, as Henriette Wurmser's trajectory shows, that the Collège Sévigné is, more than the public lycées, at the forefront of republican secularism. Although many lycées were run by Protestant women, they had to compromise with Catholicism in order to attract bourgeois clients. Conversely, Mathilde Salomon refused to make any concessions on this issue. When Henriette Wurmser studied there in 1888-1889, she did not mention in her correspondence the slightest hostility linked to her faith. The religious diversity of the pupils was one of the hallmarks of the Collège Sévigné from the 1880s to the Great War. The third certainty is that while the manifestations of antisemitism that Henriette Wurmser describes existed in public high schools before the Dreyfus Affair, it is highly unlikely that they continued after that date. With the Affair, republicanism became incompatible with antisemitism. All traces of conflicts of antisemitic origin disappear from Henriette Wurmser's career record during the Belle Époque.

The latter was aware of the shift that the Affaire represented for the Jewish community and, more broadly, for the Republican regime. Like Mathilde Salomon, she comes to venerate Colonel Picquart, who is not, however, free of anti-Semitic prejudices: "This man is so great, so beautiful; what he did to remain true, transports me [with an] emotion such as I have never felt when remembering the greatest heroes, when reading Corneille himself⁷⁷ ! " When she learns of Henry's suicide, Henriette Wurmser feels that the Affair is taking a decisive turn. But, like Mathilde Salomon, the compromise of the republicans haunts her: "I, who can only see with my own minute judgement and my conscience, wonder how so many people, who are so superior to me, can not want to see. One remains confused. [...] But in spite of everything, the truth may not be the strongest and we live in this hope.⁷⁸ " She exclaims, however, that there are times when she would like "not to be a civil servant... to have the right to be an apostle⁷⁹ ! " The Affair raises serious questions about the political neutrality required in public schools. However, certain events recounted by Henriette Wurmser in the 1890s highlight the resistance to neutrality and secularism in girls' schools. This is demonstrated by an episode she experienced in Le Havre, when she and her headmistress gave the school-leaving certificate to the girls:

I asked a student to talk to me about tolerance. This is a subject which I feel cannot be stressed enough; and I do not fail to do so in all my lectures.

77 Letter to Mrs Eugène Manuel, 5 December 1898.

78 Letter to Mrs Eugène Manuel, 15 September 1898.

79 Letter to Mrs Eugène Manuel, 5 December 1898.

circumstances in classes where Catholics, Protestants and Israelites are mixed together. My pupil speaks of tolerance with warmth and conviction; blames intolerance and recalls its history with its disastrous results. Miss Bosq jumps up on her chair, her face becomes flushed and congested: "ah! You really are an advocate of tolerance, you; you belong to this degenerate century, to this effeminate society where there is only indifference, weakness and cowardice; where people no longer believe and where all religions are allowed to practice in peace. It is because we are no longer worth anything that we are tolerant; intolerance alone is logical, makes strong generations and well-tempered characters. Come on, if those who have the true religion would still burn the others, everything would be better. What does it matter if there are a few thousand fewer men and their sufferings on earth, when by this means they are granted eternal bliss; this is the only good that one should want for one's neighbour. The Inquisition was right, [...] and so were the wars of religion, and it is to be regretted that in our time no one is burned any more. [...] The poor girl was frightened [...] (she was a Protestant); and she sat down pale, unable to say another word. I was stunned and I still am. [...] My colleagues [...] applauded warmly the Director's tirade of high taste. Don't worry, dear Madam, I didn't make a fuss; I was content to observe... blissfully, and to think for a long time⁸⁰.

Although Henriette Wurmser was stunned by this flagrant violation of school neutrality by a school principal, she broke her silence ten years later, at the time of the Affaire. Driven by her Dreyfusism, Henriette Wurmser took part in the adventure of the "universités populaires". This got her into a lot of administrative trouble. For, as Vincent Duclert notes, while many professors in higher education became involved in the Affaire without being certain of being able to keep their posts, this fear was tenfold "for professors in primary and secondary education, who were more subject to administrative authority and did not benefit from 'academic freedom'".⁸¹ During the Affaire, the contrast between the reprisals suffered by Henriette Wurmser and the freedom of action of Mathilde Salomon is glaring. The headmistress of Collège Sévigné took advantage of not having the status of a civil servant to express herself without fear of administrative repression. The response came in another form, through the press or through the suppression of subsidies to the Collège Sévigné by a nationalist municipality. But few women enjoy such freedom of speech in education⁸². Marie Baertschi, for example, came up against the hostility of her hierarchy at the time of the Affair.

80 Letter to Mrs Eugène Manuel, 5 December 1898.

81 Vincent Duclert, *L'affaire Dreyfus: quand la justice éclaire la République*, op. cit, p. 268.

82 For a trajectory comparable to that of Mathilde Salomon, see our biography of one of her colleagues, Dick May. The daughter of a rabbi who became a freethinker, a fervent republican, a Dreyfus supporter, a correspondent of Salomon Reinach, she was the director of a free school in Paris and, like Mathilde Salomon, suffered the effects of the arrival of the nationalists at the head of the municipality. Mélanie Fabre, *Dick May, une femme à l'avant-garde d'un nouveau siècle : 1859-1925*, Rennes, PUR, 2019.

II- "I will seek the honour of being dismissed": Marie Baertschi, a conscience in the affair

In her study entitled "Feminist itineraries in the light of the Affaire"⁸³ Françoise Blum identifies 23 women among the signatories of the Manifesto of Intellectuals. They represent less than 2% of the 1,482 intellectuals counted by Christophe Charle, whose name appears in *L'Aurore* in January 1898⁸⁴. Among them, not a single female teacher. Where are the daughters of the Republic, trained in critical thinking and moral exemplarity at Sèvres and Fontenay by Félix Pécaut and Mme Jules Favre? Are we to believe, as Clemenceau wrote on 23 January, that "without the threats that have been spread in all the establishments of public education, [a number of male and female teachers] would have come who do not dare to show the disturbance of their conscience"⁸⁵ ? It is true that female teachers, both as civil servants and as women, would be exposed to potential reprisals from the hierarchy. Does this mean that among the intellectuals of the Affair, there was no female incarnation in the public education system?

Through the strength of her convictions and her determination, Marie Baertschi is one of the female faces of Dreyfusism in education. It is true that at the turn of the century, she evolved on the fringes of public education, since she was on leave of absence between 1897 and 1904 and from 1900 taught at the Collège Sévigné, which was closer to her values than the normal schools in which she had begun her career. A charismatic teacher, she put her ideals into practice and adopted a freedom of tone that challenged her superiors. She came into conflict with her superiors and struggled at the turn of the century to save the values that she believed should guide public education. The affair provided her with a framework for questioning the application of neutrality and secularism within the walls of schools. For her, contemporary events bluntly demonstrated the failure of primary education. She addressed the most important figures in education to make her arguments heard, from Ferdinand Buisson to Eugène Manuel. For Marie Baertschi, the secular spirit is above all an ethic. And the ethics of the civil servant cannot consist in keeping silent.

A) "The threat brings the word to our lips": Marie Baertschi among the protesters of *L'Aurore*

Although she did not appear in any of the three protests published in *L'Aurore* in January 1898, Marie Baertschi, who was about to turn 30, co-signed an "Open Letter to M. Zola" with ten young people on 17 January 1898. This text was a response to the *Lettre à la jeunesse* that Zola had published in a brochure on 14 December 1897, but it was also written in reaction to the "J'Accuse", published four days earlier in the same daily newspaper. For Marie Baertschi, writing and signing such a declaration

83 Françoise Blum, "Itinéraires féministes à la lumière de l'Affaire", art. cit.

84 Christophe Charle, *Naissance des "intellectuels"*, op. cit.

85 Quoted by Vincent Duclert, "La pensée de Spinoza et la naissance de l'intellectuel démocratique dans la France du tournant du siècle", *Archives juives*, 2003/2, p. 20-42.

is even more "engaging" than having one's name appear in one of the lists of petitioners published at the same time. Indeed, far from being drowned in a long list, her name appears among a dozen signatories. Marie Baertschi thus exposes herself in a letter without concession:

We too, deceived by error, discouraged by the turmoil of the present hour, might have denied the holy ideal of justice and truth to which we had devoted our hearts. [But] you have placed yourself, sir, by your powerful pleas in favour of outraged justice, at the head of these elite men, our guides and our teachers. [...] Such were the feelings that animated us after reading the admirable letter you addressed in *L'Aurore* to the President of the Republic. [...] But no sooner had we taken up our pen than we learned with astonishment of the imprisonment of Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart [...] then we were told of proceedings against you, and finally we could read in M. Méline's newspaper a threat against all those who would be tempted to protest against what they believed to be an iniquity! [...] They want to intimidate us? Far from reducing us to silence, the threat itself makes the words rise to our lips, because this threat is cowardly⁸⁶ !

The support of the eleven signatories of this open letter for Zola's "J'Accuse" is not common. For many of the intellectuals whose names appeared on the lists of *L'Aurore* in January 1898, Zola's text was too radical, scandalous, even defamatory. For, as Vincent Duclert writes, "contrary to what is often presented [...] the 'petitions of intellectuals' launched the day after and the day after [the "J'Accuse"] were not intended to support Zola's commitment⁸⁷ ". In their open letter, Marie Baertschi and her colleagues were, on the contrary, the first supporters of the writer. They compared him to Voltaire pleading for Calas and claimed the heritage of Pascal defending the Jansenists against the Church:

So there will no longer be a Pascal to scourge [...] the mob that defiles the Church and France? And it is this 'Jesuit' who still dares to speak in the name of the interests of France. [What is clear and indisputable is that the human person is inviolable and sacred; that no interest, not even the interest of the State, is superior to the right of the individual. And we do not know that this right is limited by any party or sectarian issue. In this respect, "Jew", "Catholic" or "Protestant" weigh equally in the scales of justice. [...] We laugh at threats and accept persecution wholeheartedly: when injustice reigns, it is glorious to be its victim⁸⁸ .

86 "Open letter to M. Zola", *L'Aurore*, 17 January 1898.

87 Vincent Duclert, *L'affaire Dreyfus: quand la justice éclaire la République*, op. cit, p. 144.

88 "Open letter to M. Zola", *L'Aurore*, 17 January 1898.

Do we not hear in these sentences some of the old exhortations of a Pécaut who has not yet manifested himself in the Affair? At this time, is Marie Baertschi not more Pécardian than Pécaut himself? If traces of Pécaut's teaching appear in certain passages of this text, Marie Baertschi is not the only one to sign it. Among others, Édouard-Gabriel Monod, the son of the historian Gabriel Monod, a Dreyfusard of the day before, but also Ary Renan, the son of the author of the *Life of Jesus*, appear at her side. In the same way as in the Manifesto of Intellectuals analysed by Christophe Charle, the signatories of this letter claimed three rights: the right to scandal (in this case, support for Zola's article); "the right to join forces to give more strength to the protest"; "the right to claim a symbolic power derived from the accumulation of titles that most of the signatories mention"⁸⁹ ". As three students and a graduate appear alongside her, Marie Baertschi declares herself to be a "teacher at a normal school".

When, ten months later, she signed the petition in support of Picquart, she did so again under this title⁹⁰. She therefore insisted on it, both as a means of legitimisation, but also because her status as a teacher committed her. If Pascal Ory considers commitment as "the act by which an individual displays his adherence to a collective initiative that is *a priori* foreign to his social specification"⁹¹ If Pascal Ory considers commitment to be "the act by which an individual displays his adherence to a collective initiative that is *a priori* alien to his or her social specificity", it is perhaps because Marie Baertschi is a teacher in a normal school, because she has given herself a "holy ideal of justice and truth" on entering professional life, that she feels a duty to protest against the deviation of the Republic.

In the petition in support of Picquart, which changed in scale compared to the protests by intellectuals in January 1898 - from 1,482 signatories to 30 or 40,000⁹² - There was a greater number of women's names. These signatures have a highly symbolic value: they allow a "designation of oneself as a member of a scientific, artistic or professional community that is no longer exclusively reserved for men"⁹³ ".

By publishing a letter in support of Zola in *L'Aurore* on 17 January 1898, and then by adding her name to the petition in support of Picquart, Marie Baertschi conformed to the attitude which, according to Marie Aynié, characterised Dreyfus's "unknown friends":

Ordinary' men and women assert a legitimacy [...] that the 'reason of State' would like to confiscate. [...] This desire to assert themselves as 'real Frenchmen', defenders of republican values, is particularly remarkable on the part of those whose legitimacy as citizens is not self-evident - such as women, minor citizens, who find in petitions a means of political expression⁹⁴.

89 Christophe Charle, *Naissance des 'intellectuels': 1880-1900*, *op. cit.* p. 8.

90 In fact, it reads 'Marie Baertschi, professor at the École normale', but this is probably a clumsy mistake on the part of the newspaper. Fifth list of protesters, *L'Aurore*, 30 November 1898.

91 Quoted in Marie Aynié, *Les amis inconnus: se mobiliser pour Dreyfus, 1897-1899*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

92 Christophe Charle, *Naissance des 'intellectuels': 1880-1900*, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

93 Marie Aynié, *Les amis inconnus: se mobiliser pour Dreyfus, 1897-1899*, *op. cit* , p. 98.

94 *Ibid.* p. 18 and p. 364.

But at a time when the Ministry of Public Education forbade any comment on the Affair in educational establishments, it is important to understand how much Marie Baertschi exposed herself to her hierarchy by supporting two polemical texts in *L'Aurore* in 1898, all the more so as she was signing as a teacher in a teacher training college.

B) "Every civil servant is a serf"? Marie Baertschi, a rebel teacher

At the time of writing in *L'Aurore*, Marie Baertschi was on leave without pay from the Department of Public Instruction. This temporary withdrawal was due to disputes with her hierarchy. However, when she began her career in 1889, Marie Baertschi was judged very favourably by her inspectors: she seemed to have "a gift for teaching"⁹⁵. More than that, she

is a teacher of uncommon distinction, of a very thorough education, and of a warm and communicative talent for speech. By her external qualities, her beauty, her whole personality, and also by the attractiveness of her teaching, she is set apart by her pupils on whom she exerts an almost prestigious influence⁹⁶.

But a teacher who is too charismatic can quickly become a danger, especially if her ideas are not in line with those of the Ministry. In 1897, for example, the Inspector General criticised her for adopting too much freedom of tone in religious matters:

Her teaching is not without danger from the point of view of the direction of the spirits entrusted to her. Having a strong sense of her own worth, she listens little to the advice of the headmistress. Very independent in her thinking and obviously hostile to the religious beliefs of her pupils, she gives her lessons a disturbing character [...].⁹⁷

It has to be said that the director of the Ecole Normale de Versailles, newly arrived at the head of this establishment where Marie Baertschi had been teaching French and German for a long time, took umbrage at her charisma and clearly did not share her conception of secularism. A note dated May 1897 reveals that Marie Baertschi was already the subject of a special report that was not included in her career file. It would appear that she was accused of 'hostility to Catholicism'. The author of the note tried to remove Marie Baertschi from the teacher training college as soon as possible. Was it as a result of this investigation that she took a leave of absence at the beginning of the 1897 academic year to prepare for the certificate of aptitude for teaching literature in women's high schools, and then, the following year, the agrégation in history? In any case, Marie Baertschi stopped working at the Ecole Normale de

⁹⁵ Report by the Inspector General on 24 June 1890, Marie Baertschi's career file, F/17/23692.

⁹⁶ Inspection report, 10 March 1895.

She was replaced by two other teachers, who soon attracted the hostility of the student teachers. She was replaced by two other teachers, who quickly attracted the hostility of the student teachers. Marie Baertschi, who remained in contact with her former pupils, deplored the attitude of her replacements, who questioned fundamental educational principles. Jeanne Pelletier, a third-year student, wrote on behalf of her classmates to complain to the Inspector General. She defended her younger classmates: "In French compositions where they say what they think, they are mocked, they are scorned, or they are told that they do not want to be told. [...] Another pupil is told ... that she is 'morally repugnant'.⁹⁸ ". The pupils declared that their consciences were being distorted, that the notion of justice was being torn from their hearts, and that the holy cause of education was being degraded. There is a total incompatibility between the values instilled in her pupils by Marie Baertschi and the methods and principles of her replacements.

The administration was stymied by the impudence of the pupils, and in particular that of Jeanne Pelletier. The girls' manoeuvre was quickly blamed on Marie Baertschi. At the beginning of May 1898, her situation worsened, as the school principal had the pupils' belongings searched and discovered a letter from their former teacher, which testified to the latter's involvement in the revolt movement. The document reveals that Marie Baertschi had written the letter sent by Jeanne Pelletier to the Inspector General, without knowing that only she would sign it. Marie Baertschi was sorry that she had taken such an ill-considered risk, but said that she had sought political support to come to Jeanne Pelletier's aid. She also wrote: "I have never committed anyone to this project if they did not want to do so themselves: I know the thing, I am following it, I have contributed to it to the extent that suits my character, i.e. I drafted the request so that it was neither violent nor insulting⁹⁹. " Marie Baertschi also states: "All forms of intolerance are abhorrent to me, everyone should keep their freedom intact without even needing to justify themselves. Marie Baertschi's letter ends with the following statement: "One discovers such horrible miseries around oneself that one really does not dare to complain any more. Sometimes when I let myself go, I think of that unfortunate Dreyfus, and his wife - then I am ashamed of myself.

This letter is a sign of Marie Baertschi's administrative disfavour. Firstly, it reveals the support of a civil servant for the rebellion of a group of pupils. Secondly, it reveals that Marie Baertschi discussed the Dreyfus Affair with her former pupils, while the administration was keen to keep the Affair outside the school walls. But the letter also shows that, contrary to the accusations made by her administration, Marie Baertschi is deeply respectful of the opinions of others. Inspector Jacoulet nevertheless reproached her for violating the conscience of the pupils, the rights of their families and the neutrality of the school¹⁰⁰. Louis Liard, Director of Primary Education, passed Marie Baertschi's letter on to the Minister and asked Jacoulet to carry out a new investigation into this civil servant on leave¹⁰¹.

98 Document dated 7 April 1898.

99 Copy of Marie Baertschi's letter to Miss Roulinat found by the headmistress of the normal school, May 1898.

100 Letter from Jacoulet to the Minister, 19 May 1898.

101 Letter from Liard to the Minister, 9 May 1898.

Meanwhile, Jeanne Pelletier, author of the letter of protest to the Inspector General, was the subject of a disciplinary council. On 12 May 1898, her dismissal from the Ecole Normale was decided. As she told one of her former pupils, Marie Baertschi had nevertheless mobilised political support to help her. On 22 April she had written to Ferdinand Buisson, the former director of primary education, to obtain his support in a case which she presented in a way that was quite different from that which appeared in her career file:

I must first tell you [...] that the teacher training college in Versailles is at present an odious prison. It is a question of extirpating, by the most vile means, the spirit of liberty which had once been introduced into the house by [...] the previous headmistress, and which had been maintained by a few teachers left over from the old regime, notably by me. Now the staff [has been] completely renewed [...]. [The older pupils, witnesses of the old regime, are the object of real persecution: the crushing of all thought and conscience is the principle, terror and insult are the means. [At the last moment, I don't know why, they lacked courage: only one of them signed the jointly written letter and sent it. The Inspector General in question received it. His conscience as a civil servant was shocked that "subordinates" dared to demand against their "superiors"; but his conscience as a man was not moved by betraying a defenceless girl who confided in him [and,] with immediate effect, as befits any good barracks regime, [the student] was ordered to be dismissed. In any court, however serious a crime may be, the background and motives of the accused are inquired into and considered; and when an accusation is made against someone, it is inquired into whether it is true. Thank God, the administration is above all this procedure. Every civil servant is a serf, and, morally speaking, subject to taillage and corvée à merci, if he raises his head, he is a rebel and must be crushed without mercy. [...]

You may shrug your shoulders and say that it is none of your business. However, justice is everyone's business, and it seems to me that the very high level of education that you are giving commits you a little. When you speak of duty, justice and solidarity, I do not believe that these are empty words for you, and that is why I hope that you will take an interest in this cause. [I am well aware that it is a principle not to go back on a judgement, and that the pupil expelled from her school will not return, but [...] let her at least be given back her rank as a teacher [...] she is more worthy than any other to teach, because she has a conscience. [...]

And the effect on all the pupils in the school! At the moment they are exasperated and would like to revolt, but when the initial indignation has passed, what will be left is a lesson in cowardice. They can see anyone being crushed in the future,

that they will not lift a finger to defend him. And this is how we prepare the teachers who will have to teach morality? [...] If you tell me that there is nothing to be done, that the principles of military discipline must reign in teaching, that this is what is claimed to form souls, then the work of our [...] teacher training colleges is a work of lies and demoralisation, and as I do not want to be an accomplice to this lie any longer, I will seek the honour of being dismissed¹⁰².

This letter by Marie Baertschi says a lot about her personality, her vision of her profession and even her commitment to Dreyfus. Some of her sentences have a particular resonance in the context of the Affair, notably when she states that it is customary not to go back on *what has been judged*, but that one cannot refuse someone a *fair trial*, that *justice is everyone's business* and that Ferdinand Buisson, holder of the chair of Science of Education at the Sorbonne, delivers a teaching *that involves her to some extent*. Marie Baertschi acts not only as a teacher in a teacher training college, but also as an intellectual: her letter shows all the reflexivity she is capable of about her own profession. She deplores the contempt her colleagues show towards the pupils, while she herself is a proponent of a pedagogy based on trust. Marie Baertschi does not want to compromise with her conscience, and declares that she is not afraid of being dismissed, as she finds no sense in teaching in a ministry that is so far removed from her convictions.

Realising that she had no chance of returning to the Versailles teacher training college, Marie Baertschi, who had already volunteered in February 1898 for a post as a teacher-repeater in Fontenay, declared herself a candidate for other posts, including the direction of the teacher training college in Milianah, Algeria. She received the support of Gabriel Monod. He did not understand the intimidation of which Marie Baertschi was a victim. In a letter to the administration, he spoke of "our good friend Miss Baertschi" and declared: "her relations [...] with children have always made us see in her a nature so morally and intellectually superior to the average of our civil servants that it seems to me very regrettable to discourage her¹⁰³". Gabriel Monod's interpretation is at odds with that of Édouard Jacoulet, who writes: "without doubt, she deserves to be dismissed, and if it were only a question of her and even her friends, there would not be much history¹⁰⁴". But the inspector feared that her dismissal would "set fire to the convent" at the Versailles teacher training college. He therefore decided to summon her and asked her to leave Versailles, to join her family in Switzerland and to stop all correspondence with her former pupils. He wrote to the Director of Primary Education: "You will read her letter and judge whether it is appropriate to accept her act of submission¹⁰⁵".

102 Letter from Marie Baertschi to Ferdinand Buisson, 22 April 1898, Fonds Ferdinand Buisson, Bibliothèque de la Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français, 022Y/2-3.

103 Letter from Gabriel Monod, 9 May 1898.

104 Letter from Jacoulet to the Director of Primary Education, 24 May 1898.

105 Marie Baertschi's letter is dated 31 May 1898.

C) *"I would never agree to serve another regime": a time of disillusionment*

From this date onwards, Marie Baertschi remained on leave from the Ministry of Education until 1904. After having brilliantly passed the agrégation in history in 1899 - she was awarded first place, even though she had taken the Sévigné exam and not the one at Sèvres, which often placed its students in the top ranks - she was asked by Buisson to found a secondary school for young girls in Coulommiers. She appreciated the consideration Buisson showed her, but refused his proposal. She was in no way prepared to be under the authority of Charles Bayet, the director of secondary education, and had already obtained a livelihood outside of public education. She undertook to bring together young girls - are they her former pupils? - as early as October 1899 to prepare them for the teacher's examination at the teacher's colleges. Perhaps at that time she also came into contact with Mathilde Salomon, who hired her as a teacher at the Collège Sévigné from 1900, a position she held until the death of the principal in 1909. The political circumstances are an additional argument for refusing Buisson's proposal:

Events themselves oblige me to hold to these private lessons: you yourself fear for the Republic, and the verdict of the council of war, the news of which has just reached me by dispatch, is not done, no doubt, to reassure you. Now I do not need to tell you that for nothing in the world would I consent to serve another regime. I may therefore find myself from one day to the next in need of resigning, and since I have to live [...] I would be forced to return to private teaching. In any event, I must ensure my independence¹⁰⁶.

When she studied the letters sent to the leading Dreyfus supporters, Marie Aynié noted that the danger that the Affair represented for the regime did not appear in the foreground¹⁰⁷. Few of the letter-writers feared the overthrow of the Republic: "It seems more threatened in its values, truth and justice, human rights, than in its institutions.¹⁰⁸ " Marie Baertschi is convinced that it is the republican principles that make the institutions valuable. If the regime were to fall into the hands of the nationalists, the consequences for public education would be radical: it would be inconceivable for her to put herself at the service of political ideals that were not her own.

Another argument used in her refusal was that Marie Baertschi did not want to give up her primary vocation to start a career in secondary education, even though she had just passed the agrégation. Secondary education is of little interest to her. Pécaut's former pupil did not want to teach middle-class girls. She wanted to teach girls of the people, those girls towards whom the leaders were so

106 Letter from Marie Baertschi to Ferdinand Buisson, undated, probably autumn 1899.

107 Marie Aynié, *Les amis inconnus*, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

108 *Ibid*, p. 162.

condescending, considering that they "are of a mediocre nature, come from a mediocre background and that one must be content with mediocre work with them¹⁰⁹". Marie Baertschi could not organise a girls' course in any other way than with a primary mindset. According to her, the mayor of Coulommiers would no doubt be satisfied with this, but not the administration, "the sacrosanct administration which does not forgive anyone who strays from its paths! The teacher settles her accounts with her superiors. She despises a ministry where the chiefs have all the power, and control the civil servants with a formula worthy of the Valois: "For such is our pleasure".

From 1900 onwards, Marie Baertschi - who became Mrs Fuster in 1901 - worked at the Collège Sévigné, an establishment independent of the Ministry and more in tune with her convictions. One of her former pupils recalled years later this exceptional teacher:

Madame Fuster, who was our history teacher from the third year onwards, [...] marked us as much by her beauty as by her enthusiasm for teaching us this subject. We looked forward to her class every week with emotion, especially when the subject was the French Revolution. She made us live it - perhaps too sentimentally - but with great realism. And it seems to me that we felt, in a confused way, that she wanted us to make the link with our present time. Did Miss Salomon hire her for this purpose¹¹⁰ ?

It is quite likely that Mathilde Salomon hired Marie Baertschi because of her commitment to Dreyfus as much as for her brilliant intelligence and teaching skills. At Sévigné, the Fontenaysian could teach her subject in complete freedom and use the events of the past to awaken the civic conscience of her young pupils.

D) "Everything our poor France almost died of, we are partly responsible for": the consequences of a misinterpretation of school secularism

On the side of public education, Marie Baertschi was always accused by her superiors of having contravened the principle of secularism by showing hostility to the beliefs of her pupils, i.e. antipathy towards Catholicism. However, she considered secularism to be the primary value of public education. At the beginning of 1898, she published in Buisson's *Manuel général de l'instruction primaire* a survey of a school for girls in China in which she addressed this issue¹¹¹. In this school, which was founded, directed and administered by women, the pupils were welcomed without distinction of class. The very varied programme allows them to prepare for

109 Remarks reported by Marie Baertschi in her letter to Ferdinand Buisson.

110 Thérèse Maurette-Dupuy, "Le collège Sévigné de Mademoiselle Salomon", *Collège Sévigné - Le Livre du Centenaire, 1880-1980*, Paris, Nathan, 1982, 191 pp.

111 Marie Baertschi, "Une école supérieure de jeunes filles en Chine", *Revue municipale*, 2 April 1898 - text borrowed from *Manuel général de l'instruction primaire*.

The inauguration of this pioneering school was an opportunity for Marie Baertschi to call for a truly liberal and higher education for girls, but also to set out her conception of secularism. The inauguration of this pioneering school was an opportunity for Marie Baertschi to call for a truly liberal and higher education for girls, but also to explain her conception of secularism. The diversions via China avoids addressing the question head-on as it is posed in France. The Chinese argument is highly effective, since it shows the Far East's lead over France, which nevertheless prides itself on having "invented" secularism. Thus, on discovering that the school's official statutes based instruction on Confucianism, two Chinese teachers, hostile to this idea, made their entry into service conditional on the recognition of true religious neutrality in the establishment. Marie Baertschi reported their protest: "Veneration for the best of human beings is not without danger if it tends to create an idol [...]; we do not think that this is the sentiment that will make female education fruitful or even healthy". The teachers wanted the school to renounce the doctrine of Confucius in favour of a confessional neutrality. Marie Baertschi concludes with the following sentence: "I only wonder: How many French women would dare to think like these Chinese women?"

This article opens a period in which Marie Baertschi militates in favour of a new conception of secularism. In 1899, while preparing for the agrégation after the affair at the Ecole Normale de Versailles, she wrote to Eugène Manuel, president of the jury, to tell him about her experience in the field:

We have a false concept of tolerance in primary education, and this is due to a misinterpretation of the word "neutrality" in the law. In vain did the commentators of the law try to prove that it was only a question of denominational neutrality: the question in practice was delicate, it was necessary on the one hand not to infringe the law, and on the other hand to avoid falling into the excesses of those who, under the guise of free thought, declared war in the very name of God. [This] caught many teachers off guard, and even more so the teachers who, having been accustomed until then to leave philosophical and religious questions to the priest, had neglected to form a personal, independent opinion on these matters. [...] The only thing that was thought of was to avoid opportunities for conflict and all discussion was strictly forbidden [...] on all questions which, closely or remotely, touched on religion¹¹².

Marie Baertschi uses the example of teacher training colleges, which she knows well:

I know a [...] teacher at a teacher training college, who, when dealing with the study of the Reformation in her history class, clearly states to her pupils: 'You know, I won't tell you anything about that subject, you'll learn what's in your books', another who, in response to a pupil's question about Luther and Calvin, replies: 'oh! All

112 Marie Baertschi, letter to Eugène Manuel of 18 April 1899, Eugène Manuel collection, Bibliothèque Victor Cousin, Bibliothèque interuniversitaire de la Sorbonne.

These doctrinal issues are none of my business, I don't want to get involved. Could this be tolerance? I confess that I cannot believe it. Closing one's eyes so as not to see, closing one's ears so as not to hear, imposing silence on any desire to know and understand that our pupils show, and seeking refuge in indifference, is called, it seems to me, depending on the case, laziness of mind or cowardice, but never tolerance. To tolerate, in my opinion, is to respect, and to respect is to understand.

In response to these patterns of coldness, she gives the example of another teacher whom she says she knows, which sounds like a device to disguise the autobiographical nature of the anecdote. She tells how this teacher protested to a student that Luther was a charlatan, and how she advocated Luther's principle of free examination against Loyola's principle of blind obedience. She was then accused of failing in her duty of tolerance. But for Marie Baertschi, respecting consciences does not mean making night around them:

On the contrary, I had believed that any serious and sincere discussion, any loyal effort to shed light on oneself and on others, was a proof - the best proof - of respect for conscience. And I told myself that if, in the course of this work of thought, some blind, superstitious belief were to crumble, we should rejoice, because this belief, in going away, left room for a reasoned opinion, and that the human conscience has a right, not to superstition, but to truth.

But this was not to the liking of her hierarchy. Thus, when the teacher recommended a few books at the end of the year, including the New Testament, which was placed on the same level as the Apology of Socrates, she was accused of making protestant propaganda¹¹³. Marie Baertschi concludes that primary education has reaped what it has sown by refusing to consider philosophical and religious issues as its own domain:

When one has no ideas of one's own, when one does not even have the desire to acquire any, one adopts that of the *Petit Journal* or the *Libre Parole*. The fanatical respect for what has been judged, the reason of State, the secret files, the honour of the army, the ferocious bias against seeing, all that our poor France has almost died of, [...] we in primary education, [are] somewhat responsible for it. For it is we who, for ten or fifteen years, have been teaching the people that there are reserved areas, where the spirit of examination, reason, and conscience have no place (witness the teacher training college where the case of Dreyfus was likened to that of Socrates, and where the words of the Crito were contrasted with Zola's letter: one must respect the laws, even if they are unjust) I taught for seven years in the normal schools and [I am] convinced [that] what our schools lack in sum

113 This is indeed an accusation made against Marie Baertschi in her career file, F/17/23692.

secularism is the secular spirit, i.e. the habit of thinking for oneself, believing for oneself, wanting for oneself, on all questions [...] everywhere and always¹¹⁴.

In this letter to a senior Jewish official, Marie Baertschi makes the link between the popular antisemitism revealed by the Dreyfus affair and the reluctance of primary school teachers to accept secularism. It is part of the heritage of secularism as conceived by Pécaut, but also by Buisson, notably in his *Dictionnaire de pédagogie* of 1887: "If by secularism in primary education one should understand the reduction of this teaching to the study of reading and [...] arithmetic, [...] any reference to moral, philosophical and religious ideas being forbidden as an infringement of strict neutrality, we do not hesitate to say that our national education would be done¹¹⁵."

E) An original contribution to the definition of secularism in the early XX^e century

While the debates on schooling focused on the concept of secularism understood in different ways, Marie Baertschi published a text in *Pages libres* in 1901 entitled "L'Esprit laïque", which proposed a clarification¹¹⁶. This article is the edited version of a lecture given at the UP of the XV^e arrondissement, *L'Émancipation*. Let us recall that after having contributed with Charles Guieysse and Albert Kahn to *L'Écho de la semaine*, Marie Baertschi founded with them the weekly *Pages libres* with the aim of prolonging in the editorial world the work of the UPs, in which all three were invested¹¹⁷. She thus appears among the twelve signatories of the declaration of the magazine's launch in January 1901, alongside a certain Édouard Fuster...

In the article she offered to the journal a month later, her definition of secularism was original: she reproduced neither the arguments of Buisson, who was attached to the idea of secularism as a guardian of the aspiration to transcendence, nor those of Lavissee, who saw secularism as a bulwark against civil war and as the promise of equitable treatment of children of all denominations by the patrie¹¹⁸. Nor does it borrow its definition from what one can read in some of the pens of *La Fronde*, which associate secularism with militant freethought, socialism and feminism¹¹⁹.

In her text, Marie Baertschi begins by noting that the word 'secular' is on everyone's lips, without anyone really knowing what it means¹²⁰. The definition most often encountered is based on the noun "lay", which designates those who live outside the Church, as opposed to the clergy. Would the true layman be the one who has broken with the Church or

114 Marie Baertschi, letter to Eugène Manuel of 18 April 1899.

115 Quoted by Pierre Ognier, *Une école sans Dieu?*, p. 129.

116 Marie Édouard Fuster, "L'esprit laïque", *Pages libres*, 2 February 1901.

117 Sébastien Laurent, (preface by Serge Berstein), *Daniel Halévy, du libéralisme au traditionalisme*, Paris, Grasset, 2001, p. 148. Guieysse was the political director of *L'Écho de la semaine*, an illustrated supplement of *L'Écho de Paris*.

118 Ernest Lavissee, "L'école laïque", *Revue pédagogique*, September 1903.

119 See for example Odette Laguerre, 'Œuvres laïques', *La Fronde*, 15 February 1903.

120 Marie Édouard Fuster, "L'esprit laïque", *Pages libres*, 2 February 1901.

who has freed himself from all religious beliefs? Marie Baertschi is opposed to this definition: "I know many people who are atheists, who prove it, and yet who are not true secularists; on the contrary, I have known a man who realised in all its perfection the type of secularist: and this man was profoundly religious. The man behind this "religious layman" is obviously Félix Pécaut. For Marie Baertschi, he was "the very type of layman" because of his respect for the conscience of others, unlike many atheists, who practice a form of dictatorship of thought. The speaker proposed her definition of secularism:

To be secular is, in my opinion, neither a matter of costume nor even a matter of religious opinion, it is much more: it is to have a certain independent way of thinking about *all things*, it is to have a personal conception of life based on reason, it is to work courageously for all the works that one recognises as *true* and *just*; in a word, it is to have a serious and free spirit, a firm and upright character.

Several elements can be retained from this definition, which comes straight from Fontenay. On the one hand, secularism goes beyond purely religious issues: it is a *method* based on free inquiry in all areas. On the other hand, it goes hand in hand with a confidence in *reason*: secularism is based not on beliefs or intuitions but on rational *reasoning*. Finally, the secular spirit demands that one's actions be in line with one's *conscience*: the true secularist applies in daily life the principles he or she has recognised as right.

While many texts make the difference between cleric and layman the basis of the concept of secularism, Marie Baertschi prefers to return to the dichotomy between regular and *lay* monks. The former pronounces his vows and is subject to the rule. The *lay* brother, on the other hand, does not swear obedience to this rule. He is free in his thoughts and actions. For Marie Baertschi, the difference between a lay person and a non-lay person is the same as that between the regular monk and the *lay* monk: the lay people are those who are free and obey their own rule. The other way around,

those who are not, are those who knowingly or unknowingly obey an external rule, who wait for their word of command from someone or something, in a word, those who, instead of thinking or wanting for themselves, adopt without control the will of others, [...] those who passionately obey their director of conscience, up to those who blindly swear by their newspaper or by their deputy.

One can therefore be an atheist without being secular. The very content of the belief - be it philosophical, political or religious - is of little importance. Those who blindly obey a rule, or those who seek to impose their way of thinking on others, are anti-secular. But, if

how to be a layman in all his freedom, how to think independently without going wrong? The teacher answers:

Thought does not come from nothing, we do not think in a vacuum, we need materials, and these materials are provided by life, observation, conversation, free discussion, reading, etc., after which, by comparing, reflecting, choosing, our mind makes an original thought of its own from these materials.

The lay mind, in any case, should not fear error. For the layman, aware that he can make mistakes, open to discussion and to the refutation of his ideas, "only asks to be enlightened and to correct his errors". But isn't this layman, individualist and independent, a potential anarchist, a ferment of social disintegration? Marie Baertschi replies that a solid society is based on strong individuals and that the layman has no reason to betray the fatherland:

"Far from being a troublemaker, he is the one who can be counted on [...] because his 'yes' is yes, his 'no' is no, as the Gospel says, and when he commits himself to something, it is with full knowledge of the facts, with the firm will to see it through.

Marie Baertschi's presentation was so strong and simple that Charles Guieysse invited her to speak again on this issue in the following months. The latter accepted, declaring: "[I make it] my duty to defend ideas which, no doubt, do not belong exclusively to me, but which [one] has attached to my name.¹²¹."

Whatever the texts written by Marie Baertschi on secularism, she considers that there is only one way for secularists to defend themselves in this "war of the two Franks", and that is to bring light to all minds: "the essential work of a secular society, the one that should come before all others, is the work of education¹²²." This does not mean, however, that we should blindly rely on the public school. For, as she had already written to Eugène Manuel in 1899, Marie Baertschi was convinced that "what is most lacking in our secular education is the secular spirit". She personally paid the price as a civil servant and came out of the Affair with a great deal of lucidity about the educational institution, without losing hope of reforming it. Her career path was similar to that of Albertine Eidenschenk, with whom she shared Fontenay's legacy.

III- Should public schools be neutral? Albertine Eidenschenk, Dreyfus supporter and dissident

When she was invited to speak at the tribute paid by the former students of the Ecole Normale de Douai to their late headmistress, Jeanne Mauchausat-Eidenschenk, the daughter of the former headmistress, she was asked to give a speech.

¹²¹ Marie Édouard Fuster, "Le droit à la religion", *Pages libres*, 10 August 1901.

122 Marie Édouard Fuster, "L'esprit laïque", *Pages libres*, 2 February 1901.

of Albertine Eidenschenk, delves into her memories: "Needless to say, first my mother, then my father were passionately Dreyfusards¹²³". If it is "useless to say it", it is because the Affair constitutes for Albertine Eidenschenk an identity reference as important as her years spent in Fontenay. What particularly appealed to her in the Affair were the inadequacies of education, and in particular the failure of the teacher training colleges. Beyond the fight for an unjustly condemned individual, Dreyfusism constitutes for Albertine Eidenschenk a global commitment to tolerance, secularism, justice and free criticism.

In this period of crisis, Albertine Eidenschenk is particularly concerned about school neutrality. Should public schools be *neutral* between the Republic and its opponents? Albertine Eidenschenk played a major role in the Fontenay alumni association - she joined the board in March 1899 and chaired the association on several occasions after the Great War - and acted as a guide for her colleagues. She theorised a

"This posture did not fail to cause her problems with her superiors, particularly when she was appointed to Brittany, in a very Catholic environment. This stance did not fail to cause her problems with her hierarchy, particularly when she was appointed to Brittany, in a very Catholic environment. The years following the Affair were nevertheless those of a consecration for Albertine Eidenschenk: her public visibility grew strongly from 1904-1905. She spoke out in widely read publications, was elected to the CSIP and appointed head of the largest girls' teacher training college in Douai. She became the patented representative of the girls' normal schools and of the secular spirit inherited from Fontenay.

A) The "present duty" of the Fontenaysians: an update of Pécaut's legacy at the time of the Affaire

One of Albertine Eidenschenk's first dreyfusard texts is dated 20 April 1899 and published in the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes* in July of the same year¹²⁴. Albertine Eidenschenk was then 35 years old and had just returned to professional life after her two pregnancies. She declared that she wanted to give a new impulse to the association:

The time seems to me to have come for each of us to *dare to be what we are*, and for our Association to make a strong claim to the moral principles which have been and remain the *raison d'être* of Fontenay, of the normal schools and of the secular primary schools. [...] These are the sentiments which must be the bond of our Association, and it is in these sentiments that the bulletin which is its organ must sustain and strengthen us.

¹²³ Amicale des anciennes élèves de l'École normale d'institutrices du Nord, *Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, op. cit.*

124 A. Eidschenk, "Le devoir présent", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1899.

If Albertine Eidenschenk dared to give direction to the Fontenay women's association and its newsletter, *it was* because she was the living memory of Fontenay. A former student of the school, who later became a tutor, she knew several classes of students who passed through the ENS between 1884 and 1892. Between her own years of study and her teaching as a repétiteur, Albertine Eidenschenk worked with seven classes of Fontenay students.

The article she published in July 1899 was based on notes taken during the morning lectures in Fontenay. In order to encourage her colleagues to play a full role in a period of political crisis, Albertine Eidenschenk repeated Pécaut's lessons and emphasised their relevance. In particular, she emphasised his talks in 1889, given during the centenary of the French Revolution, a period which also corresponded to the height of Boulangisme. The advice she gave to future teachers and headmistresses of teacher training colleges was strongly echoed ten years later: "[We must not] shut ourselves up in indifference: far from it, we must be people and stand up for the people from whom we come, and for freedom. It is to the principles of 1789 that we owe everything; it would be cowardice [...] not to say so in all circumstances, and not to take a clear stand.

For Albertine Eidenschenk, the events of 1889 were the precursors of the crisis at the turn of the century. For, as Bertrand Joly writes, we can "consider the Dreyfus affair to be the founding event of nationalism, or more precisely [as] the baptismal act of a family whose birth certificate was boulangisme¹²⁵". Albertine Eidenschenk asks her colleagues to show the same clear-sightedness as Pécaut in the Boulangiste crisis: one cannot "persuade oneself that everything is for the best, and that it is enough to let the questions lie dormant or to deny them in order to resolve them¹²⁶". Like Marie Baertschi, Albertine Eidenschenk condemned the abstentionist attitude of many female teachers on sensitive issues. Pécaut himself had predicted to the Fontenays women that they would be forced to take sides in the course of their lives: "In a country that has the misfortune to be as divided as ours, it is an illusion to believe that we can keep completely out of social and political unrest". Since "those who bring up the young are the masters of the future", it is necessary to continue to form free beings, "who place above all else freedom in all its forms, inner moral freedom, political freedom, religious freedom, freedom of thought". We must train teachers who are aware of their mission, as Pécaut stated:

Where will your students get these thoughts if you do not give them them? It is not so much a question of teaching more science or history, and better than before, as of forming characters ready to fulfil all their duties in the hour of peril, and capable of governing themselves!

125 Bertrand Joly, "Le nationalisme", in Vincent Duclert, Perrine Simon-Nahum (eds.), *L'Affaire Dreyfus, les événements fondateurs*, op. cit.

126 A. Eidenschenk, "Le devoir présent", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1899.

Albertine Eidenschenk concludes her plea by appealing directly to Fontenay women of all classes: "Are we all resolved to stand up to open or hypocritical reaction, as respectful and faithful servants of the spirit of the Revolution?¹²⁷ ? " The staff of the teacher training colleges cannot allow themselves to be led by "the unthinking crowd, which obeys blind instincts without reflection". The intellectual training that the teachers received at Fontenay committed them, as Félix Pécaut had already said in 1885: "What would remain of Fontenay if you did not apply yourselves every day to questioning your intelligence and your conscience. [...] When you are tempted to soften, [...] *To live as one lives, to think as one thinks*, remember that it is not only Fontenay that you are betraying: it is the whole country. By pleading for her colleagues to propagate critical thought in the service of the Republic, is Albertine Eidenschenk not encouraging them to contravene the duty of neutrality to which they are subject?

B) Neutrality, "abdication, betrayal, fool's bargain"?

Five months after her first article, Albertine Eidenschenk published a second text in the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, just as committed as the first, this time focusing on school neutrality¹²⁸. The political context had not really changed: the verdict of the Rennes trial in September 1899, while satisfying no one, had not put an end to the Affair. This time, Albertine Eidenschenk wrote a more personal article: she was not content to relay Félix Pécaut's convictions by playing the role of "repeater" between the master and his disciples. Unlike her previous text, Albertine Eidenschenk testifies as a headmistress and teacher in a teacher training college: she draws on her personal experience to address some of the daily dilemmas faced by women teachers.

Firstly, she goes back to the origins of the concept of neutrality as defined in Ferdinand Buisson's *Dictionnaire de pédagogie*: the school is neutral because it welcomes children of all faiths in complete equality¹²⁹. For Albertine Eidenschenk, the injunction to neutrality does not go any further. She quotes a speech by Jules Ferry in the Senate: "We have promised [...] neither philosophical nor political neutrality... A school that would have the right to defame the French Revolution or to denigrate the Republic, we have never promised to tolerate it. Ferdinand Buisson, Félix Pécaut, Jules Ferry: the personalities summoned by Albertine Eidenschenk are all supporters of a school that assumes its republicanism, whose discourse contrasts with that of the opportunists converted to the "new spirit", and ready to make accommodations with the Catholics in the 1890s.

127 A. Eidenschenk, "Le devoir présent", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1899.

128 Mrs. A. Eidenschenk, "La neutralité", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, December 1899.

129 Quoted by A. Eidenschenk, "La neutralité", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, December 1899. On this subject, see Laurence Loeffel, "La construction spiritualiste de la morale laïque ou le projet de fondation de l'autonomie du sujet", in Anne-Claire Husser, Bruno Barthelmé and Nicolas Piqué (eds), *Les sources de la morale laïque, héritages croisés*, Lyon, ENS éditions, 2009, p. 112.

Albertine Eidenschenk recognises that the definition of neutrality that appears in the *Dictionnaire de pédagogie* or in the legal texts of the 1880s is unsatisfactory: if the neutrality of education means its independence from religion, it must be recognised that there are many areas of friction between the disciplines on the curriculum and religious issues:

History obliges us to judge, at least in the past, the role of religion, the acts of ecclesiastical power, the influence of the Church and the clergy; [...] moral instruction necessarily leads to problems of metaphysics, that is to say, to those which religion claims to resolve; [...] civic education consists precisely in inculcating in the younger generations respect for the constitutional principles which make the State neutral, which establish freedom of worship, which remove from the Churches the privileges they have enjoyed or still enjoy elsewhere¹³⁰.

In all these matters, absolute neutrality could only exist if female teachers adopted an attitude of abstention, which Albertine Eidenschenk refuses to do¹³¹. She considered that female teachers owed future teachers the truth on all issues. They owe it to them in history: Mohammed did not preach a *false* religion, the Reformation was not the revolt of a debauched monk, the Inquisition did not honour Spain, any more than the revocation of the Edict of Nantes honoured France, the Revolution was not a godless revolt, nor was Bonaparte a great servant of the French. Fontenaysian women must also be servants of the truth in morality, teaching their pupils that the human conscience is sacred, that intolerance leads to St Bartholomew's Day, that justice is superior to considerations of race, religion, family and country. In the political sphere, teachers must convince their students that the regime of freedom is the only honourable one for a people, and that this freedom must be defended.

The Constitution and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen are the primary guardians of political freedom. However, they are regularly flouted without the teaching world being able to defend them. Albertine Eidenschenk reports that at the 1899 Congress of Secondary Education, a history teacher who proposed displaying the Declaration in classrooms was turned down by the majority, who considered that this proposal was contrary to neutrality. Albertine Eidenschenk took exception to this:

What! State teachers [...] refuse to display in their classrooms the immortal document which has laid down the very principles of the modern State! They admit that it is their duty to be *neutral* between those who consider the Declaration of the Rights of Man as their creed [...] and those who have anathematised it? They accept

130 A. Eidenschenk, "La neutralité", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, December 1899.

131 Yves Verneuil discusses the secularism of 'abstention' versus that of 'understanding' in 'École et religion: enjeux du passé, enjeux dépassés, enjeux déplacés?', *Histoire, monde et cultures religieuses*, 2014/4, n°32, p. 13-27.

not to decide between those who say: "*No one should be bothered for his opinions, even religious ones*", and those who would like to reject free thinkers, Protestants and Jews from the French homeland! If this is how neutrality is now understood in the University, it is the moral ruin of this ancient refuge of liberal ideas. I have the firm hope that this shameful and hypocritical neutrality is not ours, we primaries of all degrees. It is a lie and a hypocrisy¹³².

Albertine Eidenschenk's astonishment at the Congress' decision was shared by Pauline Kergomard, who had attended. She sided with the minority who called for neutrality not to be confused with renunciation. She supported a speaker who pleaded for education in the lycées to assume its difference from that given in Catholic schools: "[parents,] when they send their children to state lycées, must be well aware that [...] the history teacher will not urge them to mourn Charles X¹³³". If there can be no absolute neutrality in history, there is none in civics either. It was therefore a mistake to refuse to display the Declaration of Human Rights in the Republic's high schools. Pauline Kergomard develops a personal anecdote:

I know a rector [...] who, following intolerant and brutal demonstrations, had to send a circular to all his collaborators [...] to urge them to ensure that the Jews were respected; I imagine that if the children had had Article X of the *Declaration* in front of them since they reached school age, the circular would only have been exceptionally useful [...]: "*No one shall be disturbed for his opinions, even religious, provided that their manifestation does not disturb public order.*"

Like Albertine Eidenschenk and Pauline Kergomard, Mathilde Salomon was probably disappointed that the Declaration of Human Rights had been rejected by the Secondary Congress. Indeed, a few months earlier, in January 1899, she had written a vow for the CSIP concerning the place of this democratic charter in public education:

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen constitutes in itself an almost complete civic education. Its admirable preamble makes its importance clear with a simplicity that does not exclude greatness. It is to be hoped that every Frenchman will be imbued [...] forever with the ideas of justice, human dignity, fraternity and responsibility that emerge from this noble page of our national history. Consequently, the members of the Council [...] have the honour to request: That the

132 A. Eidenschenk, "La neutralité", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, December 1899.

133 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement, le congrès des professeurs de l'enseignement secondaire", *La Fronde*, 29 April 1899.

Declaration [...] be part of the moral and civic education of our public schools. That pupils of both sexes should have to learn it by heart¹³⁴.

Mathilde Salomon probably agrees with what Albertine Eidenschenk wrote a few months later:

A lay teacher has no reason to exist if he does not prepare his pupils, in a different spirit from the Jesuits and Dominicans, to take part in the life of the city. If he does not want to be an *emancipator*, let him disappear; others will always be better qualified than he is to numb consciences and prepare subjects instead of citizens¹³⁵.

For Albertine Eidenschenk, practising an abstentionist neutrality, refraining from any intrusion into the political, civic or moral domain, would be to allow oneself to be fooled:

Do you think our opponents practice it? [...] This party still raises half of French youth. It nourishes them with prejudices, it moulds them to servitude, it makes them love their abasement. And while it throws into the political fray generations armoured with ferocious prejudices, we would throw in generations without guiding principles, without unshakeable liberal convictions, helpless before the battle [...]? Who does not see that this neutrality is an abdication, I dare say even a betrayal?

According to the former Fontenaysian, neutral teaching is neither possible nor desirable. It is not possible because the teacher can only transmit a truth, based on facts in history, on the principle of tolerance in morality and on the supremacy of the Republic in the political order. Neutral teaching is also not desirable in a context where the Catholic school does not respect this neutrality. Albertine Eidenschenk asks her readers for the right to end on a personal note. For the first time she uses an "I" which implies her directly and puts her in contradiction with the duty of reserve to which she is bound as a civil servant:

I am not neutral, I do not want to be, I would find it dishonourable. If, when my pupils hear clamours for death against a class of citizens in the street, they could think for a second that I approve of them; if, when they read appalling excitements to hatred and persecution, calls for the "liberating sword", they could doubt for a moment that I condemn them, I would be deeply humiliated: I would have the very clear feeling that I had failed in one of my essential duties as an educator.

134 This wish appears in Mathilde Salomon's papers, undated. The reception given to her proposal has disappeared from the CSIP archives. See file F/17/12975.

135 Mrs. A. Eidenschenk, "La neutralité", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, December 1899.

C) "It is the primary school that will liberate this retarded people": Albertine Eidenschenk and the free-thinking intellectuals in rural France

Albertine Eidenschenk's career file contains no trace of potential sanctions by her hierarchy concerning her unorthodox positions within the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*. It must be said that, as far as we know, Albertine Eidenschenk did not express herself in the general public press during the Affair: she primarily addressed her restricted readership of peers. It was in the years following the Affair that she came up against the hostility of her hierarchy, when she was transferred to the teacher training college in Saint-Brieuc in 1902. Although she was born in Seine-et-Marne, had lived in Oran and had just left Savoie, it seemed to her that she had never seen a region as archaic as Brittany. Still shaken by the Affaire, Albertine Eidenschenk discovers a territory that seems to her to embody reactionary France, hostile to the Enlightenment, raised in intolerance by a traditionalist Catholicism. This is where popular education is necessary. This is also where neutrality in this "War of the Two Franks" seems most like an abdication. It is here, finally, that the personality of the director is most disturbing.

Albertine Eidenschenk transcribed one of her first excursions to the peninsula in an article published in various forms in several periodicals¹³⁶. In the first version from 1903, she is appalled at the discovery of "religious Brittany"¹³⁷. The tone is one of irony. Thus, after visiting a chapel, she declares: "There are so many Notre-Dame in Brittany that one wonders how the pious Breton people manage to still have diseases". While she was struck by the poverty of the country, Albertine Eidenschenk, on the contrary, emphasised the opulence of the Church: when she left the basilica of Sainte-Anne-d'Auray, she said that she felt "no other feeling than regret at knowing that so much unproductive wealth was piled up there". She condemns the Church, which she accuses of maintaining the ignorance of the inhabitants:

It is the same blind credulity, the same inability to understand a thought other than one's own, the same [...] ferocious hatred of 'dissidents' [...]. Souls who call themselves Christians are indignant that a Protestant family is allowed to bury its child in broad daylight [...] "We should throw *this away*". Some priests demand that children who have died without baptism should be buried at midnight in the corner of the reprobate, like those who have committed suicide.

Albertine Eidenschenk is part of a republican narrative that has its roots in the French Revolution and presents the Bretons as a people that must urgently be converted to the Republic. Moreover, in Chouan country, she considers that the heroes "are not ours". Brittany did not share the same history as France, nor the same language, nor the same customs.

136 A. Eidenschenk, "En Bretagne", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, October 1903; "En cheminant - En Bretagne", *La Femme nouvelle*, September 1904; "La religieuse Bretagne", *Annuaire de l'enseignement primaire*, 1906.

137 A. Eidschenk, "En Bretagne", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, October 1903.

But Albertine Eidenschenk did not stop there: the text she published three years later went even further than the one she wrote on her arrival in the region. In it, she describes '*the Breton*' as a particular anthropological type, that of the human being subjected to a dumbing-down religion:

"If we have not found a virtue to which the Breton is indebted to religion, it is not difficult to find vices which he owes to his long intellectual and moral subjugation¹³⁸." For her, the acculturation of the Breton people to the Republic was above all a matter of secularisation. The teacher training college played a major role in this: it was both a local institution, recruiting future teachers from the region, and a centralised public service seeking to spread the ideology of the Enlightenment everywhere. Jean-François Chanet devoted his thesis to this tension between the school as a symbol of a unitary nation and the concrete application of the school ideology as close as possible to the "small countries"¹³⁹. The public school must transmit to pupils the universal values of progress and democracy without cutting them off from their original environment.

But while the Republican discourse emphasises the virtues of the peasants - work, foresight - Albertine Eidenschenk finds the Breton lazy, incapable of governing himself and a liar. Her discourse is similar to that of Clarisse Coignet on the Arabs of Algeria, who must be 'civilised':

All this is an unflattering portrait of the Breton people, whom I believe to be morally inferior to the French people as a whole. [They] are beginning to get out of the rut in which their Catholic and monarchical past has led them [...]. With the Breton, everything is still to be done. [But] the light [...] is irresistibly gaining. [...] It is the primary school that will liberate this people who have been left behind with dreams of another age¹⁴⁰.

In Albertine Eidenschenk's texts, the contempt of a bourgeois woman towards peasants, the contempt of an urban woman towards rural people, the contempt of a laywoman towards religious believers, the contempt of an intellectual woman towards ignorant people, the contempt of a woman towards a rustic world where patriarchy is particularly prevalent, are superimposed. This overhanging and moralising view is part of a wider discourse that links rurality, inculture and lack of politicisation. This is the line taken by Pauline Kergomard, for example, who was used to great geographical mobility because of her job. At a time when the "end of the terroir" was beginning¹⁴¹ "This high-ranking civil servant participated in the "slow process of internal colonisation"¹⁴² "that the Republic was undertaking. She was the mediator between the rural world and the national political game. Like those of Albertine Eidenschenk, her accounts give the image of a France divided in two between the enlightened classes and the "natives" with archaic customs¹⁴³."

138 A. Eidenschenk, "La religieuse Bretagne", *Annuaire de l'enseignement primaire*, 1906, pp. 439-458.

139 Jean-François Chanet (preface by Mona Ozouf), *L'école républicaine et les petites patries*, Paris, Aubier, 1996.

140 A. Eidenschenk, "La religieuse Bretagne", *Annuaire de l'enseignement primaire*, 1906, pp. 439-458.

141 Eugen Weber (translation by Antoine Berman and Bernard Génies, preface by Mona Ozouf), *La fin des terroirs : la modernisation de la France rurale : 1870-1914*, Paris, Fayard, Pluriel, 2011 [1976].

142 According to Marc Abélès, "Compte-rendu d'E. Weber, *La fin des terroirs*", *Homme*, 1985, n° 24/1, p. 120-122.

Nowhere is this archaism more obvious than in the area of hygiene, which is recurrent in all these texts. Albertine Eidenschenk and Pauline Kergomard pay particular attention to children, the first victims of insalubrity in the rural world. Pauline Kergomard, for example, repeats to the nursery school teachers in Montauban the harmful preconceptions that affect the treatment of infants in certain regions. Often, the sincipital filth of the newborn is considered to be a residue of the Holy Chrism of baptism: mothers therefore refuse to clean the skulls of children. Pauline Kergomard remembers how, as a young mother in Brittany in 1871, she soaped her second son's head every morning, unlike the peasant women:

I did not want my stay to be useless to the inhabitants of the village, and I set about doing, not medicine, I had neither the knowledge nor the right to do so, but at least hygiene, and I undertook to clean the heads of the entire child population. I gave each mother a small sponge, and every morning I made the rounds. My baby was so pink, so chubby, so alive, that one could not really believe that my procedure was dangerous. Unfortunately I left, and ignorance and indolence took over again. But you remain! Your influence is therefore lasting¹⁴⁴.

Like Albertine Eidenschenk, Pauline Kergomard was convinced of the exemplary role of teachers in remote areas. The teacher training colleges were to be the pioneers of the republicanisation of Brittany, which was a work of instruction as much as of hygienisation. But this type of discourse was often badly received locally. Thus, when in Clermont-Ferrand, Pauline Kergomard advised nursery school teachers to regularly wash their children's whole bodies, she was considered by the Auvergne newspapers as a pornographer¹⁴⁵.

The experiences of Pauline Kergomard and Albertine Eidenschenk are similar to the one that Madeleine Vernet transcribed in *Pages libres* in 1903, where she combined her observations into a terrible portrait of the Norman peasant. Hygiene is once again central: 'About children, do you want another Cauchois superstition? Lice are a sign of good health.¹⁴⁶ " Babies are never washed with water: there is no reason to do so since they do not get dirty. Adults themselves only wash on Sundays, and even then only their faces and hands, since the clothes on the rest of the body prevent the dirt from getting through. One should not think of washing the covered parts, since one should not "look at one's body". According to the local adage, "despite their dirtiness and lack of hygiene, [the babies] will still grow up to be strong. Don't they raise pigs on manure? Madeleine Vernet laments: "How do you respond to this indifference? And which school will overcome it?

144 Pauline Kergomard, *Quelques mots d'hygiène scolaire*, brochure of a conference held on 25 May 1881, *op. cit.*

145 See Pauline Kergomard's career file, F/17/23588/B.

146 Madeleine Vernet, 'Letter from a Cauchoise to a Parisian', *Pages libres*, 31 October 1903.

According to her, most public primary schools in the Pays de Caux are not up to the task. In this rural fabric, there are two types of teachers. The first is the independent teacher, an exception, who wants the school to be attended assiduously: he is subject to collective malice. The other is the one who insists on his own peace and quiet, makes friends with the mayor and the priest, plays music in church and teaches catechism in class. He then attracts goodwill. In any case, in these communes, in general, "the real teacher [...] is the priest¹⁴⁷".

When a well-meaning stranger arrives in the village, he is not welcomed: 'in every man he does not know, our peasant suspects an enemy'. This rejection of the stranger is inescapable, especially when the stranger is a foreigner, and when she arrives with new ideas. Thus, despite her humanist principles, Madeleine Vernet's mother, who settled in the Pays de Caux without going to church, became a target: her free-thinking was enough to make her what Albertine Eidenschenk called a dissident, and no dissidence is possible in the Pays de Caux¹⁴⁸.

Albertine Eidenschenk finds herself in this same position of dissident when she arrives in Saint-Brieuc. She was directly confronted with Breton customs within the walls of her teacher training school, where many young girls continued to show unreasonable fears linked to the most widespread superstitions in the country. The headmistress was not disarmed: unlike Madeleine Vernet, she had confidence in the educational work of the Republic and declared that it was for her "a profound joy to work in our peaceful and studious houses to hasten the advent of the new times, the precursory signs of which are multiplying every day¹⁴⁹". To use Alain's formula, in Albertine Eidenschenk's eyes, the teacher - and *a fortiori* the schoolteacher - is an "ambassador and negotiator between the parent people and the child people¹⁵⁰". To do this, Albertine Eidenschenk stuck to her secular convictions: in Brittany as elsewhere, "there is only one way to respect consciences, and that is to set them free¹⁵¹".

D) The "Eidenschenk incident" in Saint-Brieuc: the administration facing a "sectarian" director

But this did not please M. Mouet, the school inspector, especially when, in April 1903, the names of Albertine and Laurent Eidenschenk appeared in a subscription for the organisation of a banquet on Good Friday in the free-thinking daily *La Raison*, accompanied by a caricature in which a butcher stands between an abbot and a pig, both very fat, and asks which one is the pig. Albertine Eidenschenk was immediately summoned by the inspector and reminded 'to

147 Madeleine Vernet, 'Letter from a Cauchoise to a Parisian', *Pages libres*, 31 October 1903.

148 For a more general view of Madeleine Vernet's relationship with the peasant world, see her articles in *Pages libres*: 'Lettre d'une Cauchoise à un Parisien', 31 October 1903; 'Les bureautins', 2 April 1904; 'Une femme dans un village', 29 April 1905; 'Les Bureautins, faits nouveaux', 11 November 1905.

149 A. Eidenschenk, "En Bretagne", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, October 1903.

150 Quoted by Jean-François Chanet, "Les instituteurs entre État-pédagogue et État-patron, des lois républicaines aux lendemains de la Grande Guerre", in Marc-Olivier Baruch and Vincent Duclert, *Serviteurs de l'État: une histoire politique de l'administration française: 1875-1945*, Paris, La Découverte, 2000, p. 359-372.

151 Quoted in Odette Laguerre, 'Portrait de femme: Mme Eidenschenk', *La Fronde*, 1^{er} July 1904.

a more accurate sense of the reserve that school neutrality imposes on him¹⁵² ". The headmistress replied that she was entitled to affirm her faith by giving her name to a freethinkers' association. She also confided that the donation of one franc fifty that she had made to the association had nothing to do with her banquet, in which she had no intention of being involved. The inspector questions her sincerity. He knew that the director had already been to a banquet of the Republican Action League the previous year, which had been held in Saint-Brieuc itself¹⁵³.

The Rector, alerted, informed the Minister of Public Instruction of the case against Albertine Eidenschenk. The latter replied: "I share your views on this incident, and I believe with you that the Director of the Ecole Normale de Saint-Brieuc, where the great majority of girls belong to the Catholic religion, should not have forgotten the reserve and discretion required by her position.¹⁵⁴ " However, the Minister disapproved of any warning against Albertine Eidenschenk, in case she had the idea of publishing this letter in the press and thus creating a controversy.

The accusations against Albertine Eidenschenk may seem more serious than those against Marie Baertschi at the Ecole Normale de Versailles, but they took place in a completely different political context, more to the advantage of the civil servant. Whereas Marie Baertschi was seen as hostile to the religious beliefs of her pupils in the context of the 'esprit nouveau', which called for appeasement of Catholics, and then in that of the Dreyfus affair, where the administration sought to contain any controversy, Albertine Eidenschenk's administrative troubles were set against the backdrop of combism and the triumph of the anticlerical Republic. Since the local newspapers had not reported the Eidenschenk couple's membership of the National Association of Free Thought in Brittany, the administration confined itself to an oral reprimand issued by the inspector: the matter should not be allowed to escalate and public education accused by the most anticlerical Republicans of persecuting one of its lay teachers.

But the 'Eidenschenk incident'¹⁵⁵ incident" did not end there. Whereas with the previous headmistress, all the teacher-pupils of the Saint-Brieuc teacher training college went to mass, the education inspector noted that only twenty or so of the 88 had continued to attend church since Albertine Eidenschenk's arrival. He complained to the rector: "I am very much afraid that in Mrs Eidenschenk we have not a tolerant and circumspect Headmistress, which would be so necessary in Brittany, but a completely sectarian Headmistress [...] coupled [...] with an 'upstart'¹⁵⁶ ". In the face of the inspector's recriminations, Albertine Eidenschenk took the necessary steps by sending a letter to the parents at the end of May 1903: they could ask that their daughter attend services, that she not attend, or that she be left free to choose. Of the 84 replies received, 76 parents gave their daughter a free choice, 6 refused to allow her to go to Mass and 4 requested that she attend

152 Letter from the Rector of the Academy of Rennes to the Minister, 8 May 1903, Albertine Eidenschenk file, F/17/23836/B.

153 Letter from the Inspector of the Côtes du Nord Academy to the Rector, 21 May 1903.

154 Letter from the Minister to the Rector, 14 May 1903.

155 According to the formula of the inspector of the academy in his confidential letter to the rector, 11 July 1903.

156 Letter from the Inspector of Education to the Rector, 21 May 1903.

be accompanied every Sunday. A pupil who has no father, mother or guardian is allowed by Albertine Eidenschenk to act as she pleases. The headmistress writes to the school inspector:

A very strong sense of dignity was expressed by the student teachers about this consultation. Most of them were keen, whether they went to Mass or abstained, to make it clear that they were acting in complete freedom and not under compulsion. We have, in my opinion, nothing but praise for this sense of personal dignity. If, as I hope, the education of the Normal School has helped to bring it about, I think it is a happy result. If, on the other hand, our pupils have learnt at the *École Normale* that in matters of faith coercion, in whatever sense it is exercised, is immorality; if they have succeeded in making their families adopt this idea, I consider that we have made a very happy advance in a part of the public mind, in a country such as this one, where there is so little tolerance, where it is so difficult to admit that dissenters have a right to respect¹⁵⁷.

In the meantime, and in view of the alarmed nature of the school inspector, an inspector general went to Saint-Brieuc to investigate the accusation of violation of neutrality made against Albertine Eidenschenk. The education inspector accused the headmistress of pressuring the student teachers to abandon their religion. He considered that the girls were being manipulated. Furthermore, he deplored the fact that Albertine Eidenschenk had dictated the letter to the pupils: 'I had indeed advised the Headmistress to consult the parents, but I thought I should add [...] that it was appropriate to leave her young pupil-teachers out of this particularly delicate matter¹⁵⁸. ' Nowhere is the gap between M. Mouet and Albertine Eidenschenk more obvious than in this sentence. While the former asserts that the decision to attend church is exclusively a parental decision - the famous 'freedom of the father of the family' - the latter considers the pupils to be the first to take an interest in their own moral and religious life.

When he went to the teacher training college in Saint-Brieuc, the Inspector General quickly decided on the conflict between the headmistress and the Inspector of Education. He considered that, before the families, it was first and foremost the inspector who was bothered by the absence of young girls at mass in the parish he attended: "Mr Mouet, who above all likes his peace and quiet [...] must have regretted such a change in the religious habits of the normal girls¹⁵⁹ ". The Inspector General also suspects that his subordinate is not as 'secular' as Albertine Eidenschenk. Thus, when he decided to distribute the national circular calling for the removal of religious symbols from public schools, Mr Mouet insisted, in the departmental bulletin, on the means by which one could dispense with these removals without going against the law. For the Inspector General, it is clear that

157 Letter from Albertine Eidenschenk to the Inspector of Education, 27 June 1903.

158 Letter from the Inspector of the Academy to the Rector on 17 July 1903.

159 Letter from the Inspector General to the Minister of Public Education, 17 June 1903.

Mme Eidenschenk has a clearer, more determined, more secular conception of neutrality than Mr Mouet; what I have here in the pupils' notebooks, what I have heard in lessons, reassures me completely: the headmistress of St Brieuç has too high an idea of her duties, too great a respect for the conscience of her pupils for us to fear any pressure that might affect their religious convictions. [The moral atmosphere of the school [...] is the healthiest; the pupils are constantly asked to reflect on their own ideas, to criticize their feelings, to be absolutely sincere. Moral education is in no way aggressive, but the revelation of scientifically established truths, the great hypotheses on the organisation of the universe, etc., do not fail to move these young souls and lead them to the idea that all truth is relative, perfectible. It is on this idea that Mrs. Eidenschenk [...] bases true tolerance, respect for the thoughts of others [...]. The intolerant, the fanatics may not find it to their liking, but what can we do about it¹⁶⁰ ?

The Inspector General also shows great insight into the gendered nature of this issue. In his letter to the Minister, he explains that a case similar to the 'Eidenschenk incident' took place in Troyes: on the occasion of a change of management, the majority of pupils, who, according to him, were only waiting for this, stopped practising Catholicism, which triggered suspicion towards a loyal headmistress. Faced with the mistrust surrounding these religious emancipations, the Inspector General concluded: "For the girls, the fact seems scandalous. During his investigation in Saint-Brieuc, the Inspector General questioned the headmaster of the boys' normal school, who was unaware of the number of pupil-teachers going to Mass, since he left them free to follow their own convictions, without anyone being bothered.

If there is a difference in the assessment of the religious behaviour of male and female student teachers, there is also a great disparity in the assessment of the political behaviour of male and female civil servants. The Eidenschenk couple is exemplary in this respect. While Albertine Eidenschenk's name can be found in the newspaper *La Raison and can be traced back to the minister*, there is no mention of her in the career file of her husband, a teacher at the lycée in Saint-Brieuc. Certainly, in April 1903, the education inspector expressed regret that "M. Eidenschenk has a tendency to lend his name too much to certain demonstrations from which a secondary school teacher should refrain¹⁶¹ ". But this remark did not lead to an administrative investigation. The following year, the inspector specified that Laurent Eidenschenk was the president of the local section of the League of Human Rights and that he was running in the municipal elections on the socialist list¹⁶². After explaining Laurent Eidenschenk's political activities, the school inspector did not comment. Similarly, when this teacher did, the same year,

160 Letter from the Inspector General to the Minister of Public Education, 17 June 1903.

161 Document dated 13 April 1903, Laurent Eidenschenk's career file, F/17/22193/A.

162 Document dated 18 April 1904.

a conference on the effects of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which appears in his career file without his superiors questioning the duty of reserve¹⁶³.

Conversely, Albertine Eidenschenk's superiors constantly expressed their astonishment at this "active neutrality" which she had first theorised in the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes* in 1899 and which she applied throughout her career. When, in 1903, the Inspector General's investigation found in favour of Albertine Eidenschenk against M. Mouet, the latter sought the support of the Rector. He refused to accept the Inspector General's opinion:

I remain fully convinced that the work being done here is evil and will soon bear bitter fruit¹⁶⁴. [...] May the work she is doing without the slightest remorse not one day turn against her and against the secular school... ! As for me, I decline, from now on, any responsibility for what may happen tomorrow¹⁶⁵.

The Rector obviously listened very carefully to the Inspector of Education and reproduced in his own comments his reservations about 'active neutrality'. In 1904, he wrote that Albertine Eidenschenk "practises, in political and religious matters, what she herself recently called 'active neutrality'. [One] may wonder whether this is her duty and her right, and whether active neutrality is true neutrality¹⁶⁶". In the same year, Albertine Eidenschenk's election to the CSIP established her legitimacy in the eyes of her superiors. In 1905, she was described as "vigorously secular¹⁶⁷". In 1905, she was described as "vigorously secular", but the inspector was content to note that she was developing her "rational ideal" on a daily basis, without reproaching her. The reprimands she had received in 1903 because of her adherence to free thought did not dissuade her, two years later, from assuming her convictions once again. Indeed, she and her husband were among the members of the International Congress held in Paris in 1905, which discussed freethought, pacifism and internationalist socialism¹⁶⁸. This did not prevent Albertine Eidenschenk from being appointed director of the Ecole Normale de Douai, the largest teacher training college in France, in the same year. This appointment can be interpreted, at the time of the Separation, as a recognition by the administration of the relevance of the 'active neutrality' it claimed to have. The judgement that the departmental director made on his arrival in Douai is significant: "Spirit with positive tendencies, very clear thinking, firm judgement. Great self-control. Underneath her calm and somewhat cold exterior, one can see an energetic and persevering will. She knows what she wants, and she wants it strongly¹⁶⁹". "

163 Document dated 25 March 1904.

164 Confidential letter from M. Mouet to the Rector, 11 July 1903, Albertine Eidenschenk's file, F/17/23836/B.

165 Letter from the Inspector of Education to the Rector, 17 July 1903.

166 Letter from the Rector to the Minister of Public Education, 29 February 1904.

167 Inspection report signed by the academy inspector, 14 February 1905.

168 *Congrès universelle de la libre-pensée*, 1905, Paris, Imprimerie Jean Allemane, 47 p., p. 35.

169 Report by the departmental director, 8 April 1906, Albertine Eidenschenk's career file, F/17/23836/B.

The separation of church and state politically validates the 'active neutrality' advocated by Albertine Eidenschenk. Eidenschenk considered that the new law should have a direct impact on public schools. Together with the six elected members of the CSIP from the primary sector, she therefore submitted the following motion on 12 October 1906:

Considering that, since the vote of the law on the separation of Church and State, there can be no question in school regulations of sending pupils to church for catechism and religious exercises, Express the wish that the prescriptions relating to catechism and religious exercises be deleted from article 5¹⁷⁰.

The Permanent Section refused this proposal: the teachers continued to accompany the pupils to catechism. Albertine Eidenschenk was part of a secular avant-garde that remained in the minority in the Public Education authorities. This did not prevent her from benefiting from broad support in her new position in Douai: on the eve of the Great War, her superiors considered that "she was a laywoman, but by no means a sectarian"¹⁷¹ "They even planned to give her a greater role by considering appointing her inspector general of the écoles normales de jeunes filles, which would be a first for a woman."¹⁷².

E) Little and big secrets of happiness, praise for dissent

Elected in 1904 to the CSIP, and appointed the following year as head of the largest girls' teacher training college, Albertine Eidenschenk also sat on the committee of the *Bulletin de l'Union pour l'action morale*, which brought together many intellectuals, including Émile Duclaux, Maurice Bouchor, Léon Brunschvicg, Georges Deherme, Paul Desjardins, Charles Gide, Daniel Halévy, Gabriel Monod, Gabriel Séailles and Charles Wagner. Albertine Eidenschenk was the only woman on the editorial board at the time, but was not a member of the board of directors¹⁷³.

While most of the texts signed by women appeared in the small bulletin *Pour nos enfants*, an appendix to the *Bulletin de l'Union pour l'action morale*, it was in the official journal that Albertine Eidenschenk signed a text at the beginning of 1904 on her conception of school neutrality¹⁷⁴. The content was reminiscent of the text published in 1899 in the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, but it was addressed to a much wider public. It was no longer a Fontenaysienne speaking to her colleagues, but an intellectual making her opinion known on a question of interest to all French people.

170 Voeu tabled on 12 October 1906 by Murgier, Eidenschenk, Toutey, Boitel, Laugier, Devinat and discussed on 28 December 1906, CSIP Minutes, F/17/13643.

171 Inspection report of 8 August 1911, F/17/23836/B.

172 File of Albertine Eidenschenk, 2 T 265, AD du Nord, Lille. See chapter 8.

173 There are 5 women on the Board of Directors, but they are not members of the editorial board: Ms Emma Wust, Ms Jeanne Scherer, Ms Amélie Allégret, Ms Mary Duclaux and Ms Louise Compain.

174 The issues of the *Bulletin de l'Union pour l'action morale* from the beginning of 1904 are inaccessible at the BnF. But Odette Laguerre mentions A. Eidenschenk's text in an article in *La Fronde* of 1^{er} July 1904.

It was during this period that Albertine Eidenschenk wrote for *L'École nouvelle*. Although she had already written several articles for this weekly, they were anonymous until then, as they were signed "a director". From autumn 1904, Albertine Eidenschenk became a regular contributor to *L'École nouvelle*: every fortnight she published advice for teachers under the title "Petits et grands secrets du bonheur". These texts were then grouped together and published in 1907 by Delagrave¹⁷⁵. Here again, Albertine Eidenschenk broadened her readership: whereas the "Little and Great Secrets of Happiness" were initially morning lectures given by a headmistress to her pupil-teachers, in 1904 they became articles in a pedagogical magazine and then in 1907 chapters in a work published by a major publisher. In this, her first book, Albertine Eidenschenk addressed not only the pupils of teacher training colleges, but also any woman interested in educational matters. According to her, the only merit of her book, "if one is willing to acknowledge it, is that it was lived before it was written".¹⁷⁶ "

In 1907, Albertine Eidenschenk published in a book for the general public the statements that had led to an administrative enquiry four years earlier. She did not deny her conception of secularism: the layman is the one who seeks and propagates the truth. Truth is *what is* in the physical order, but it is also *what is* in the moral order, i.e. the aspiration of the human soul to justice. For her, truth is "the slow effort of humanity to conquer itself over its ancestor, the anthropoid of the first ages, and to build a world where man is kinder to man"¹⁷⁷ ". In this march of progress, educational action is fundamental and the teaching profession is like no other: it is a profession, with its techniques, but it is also a commitment, which requires that one's life be in line with one's values. For Albertine Eidenschenk, "it is an invaluable advantage for happiness to have a profession in which one can put all one's intelligence and all one's heart"¹⁷⁸ ".

According to the author, the new teachers must understand the requirements of the epithet "secular" that characterises them: "The secular teacher, whose essential mission - I use this word deliberately, which some find too ambitious - is to teach the children of democracy to live according to reason, must set an example to all of them of a life that reason leads"¹⁷⁹ ". For it is not enough to *know* the truth, it is also necessary to *apply it*:

A scientific or historical truth, admitted by our intelligence, should radically modify our religious conceptions; it happens that it leaves them intact, in spite of this rational axiom: "any contradictory judgement is false". [...] In our world, those who want to bring their conduct into line with their principles are exceptions

175 Albertine Eidenschenk-Patin, *Variétés morales et pédagogiques. Petits et grands secrets du bonheur*, Paris, Delagrave, 1907.

176 *Ibid*, preface.

177 *Ibid*, p. 24.

178 *Ibid*, p. 42.

179 *Ibid*, p. 58.

which is viewed in a negative light. It is well to bring up your children in a religion where you do not accept the dogmas, out of interest or weakness. If, on the other hand, you want to give your children an example of [true] sincerity; if you want inflexible loyalty to be the law of their lives as well as yours, [...] then you lose something of public consideration¹⁸⁰.

In her book, Albertine Eidenschenk looks back on her own intellectual journey. Fontenay was her first moral revelation. The Dreyfus Affair was the second stage. As with Marie Baertschi and Mathilde Salomon, the name Dreyfus is absent from the argument, but the reference is obvious:

For us, since a resounding affair, which has shaken the conscience of France and shaken the world, has forced us to go deeper into ourselves and to revise all our ideas, all our beliefs, "[...] any virtue that cannot stand the clear and fixed gaze of justice is full of tricks and evil..." (Maeterlinck). (Maeterlinck)¹⁸¹.

Although Albertine Eidenschenk quotes Maeterlinck here, it is Emerson who comes up most frequently in her writing, and in particular this sentence: "To be a man [...] one must be a dissident."

Let us not be afraid to be dissidents whenever truth, justice and dignity are at stake.¹⁸² " Albertine

Eidenschenk learned to be a dissident during the Affair. Is it not Wasn't this the moment par excellence when a minority, seeking to bring its actions into line with its convictions, proved that it was necessary to dare to assert itself, even in the face of adversity? In Emerson's words, dissent should not be the prerogative of an elite: "to be a *man*, one must be a dissenter". It is human life as such that only has meaning if the individual makes the freedom he has inherited bear fruit. For Albertine Eidenschenk, while social life is a constant hindrance to dissent and pushes towards conformity, education must develop the capacity to secede. It must be admitted that such thinking, applied in girls' teacher training colleges, has the potential to frighten a number of observers.

IV- What secularism for the xx^e century? Intellectual women in the face of the combist earthquake

The controversies that emerged at the turn of the XX^e century about secularism marked, according to Pierre Ognier, the disappearance of a 'religious secularism' spawned by the school laws, which, in

180 *Ibid*, pp. 31-32.

181 *Ibid*, pp. 34-35.

182 *Ibid*, p. 32.

preserving an aspiration to transcendence, would have played only a transitional role towards a more anticlerical model¹⁸³. The Affair was a turning point in this respect. As Jean-Paul Honoré shows, the period during which it took place was "marked by new words¹⁸⁴ "which testify to a radicalisation of the debate. The terms "laïciser", "laïcisation" and "laïcisateur" appeared. Similarly, the noun "combisme" became widespread from 1904 onwards. This new political line was imposed when Emile Combes succeeded Pierre Waldeck-Rousseau as President of the Council in the spring of 1902. For Christian Sorrel, combisme was a "new figure in the battle of the two FRENCHES that had been constantly replayed since 1789, [...] at a time when the Ferry generation's dream of religious secularism seemed to have reached an impasse¹⁸⁵ ". There is no longer any question of the secularism theorised by Protestants in the 1880s, nor of the 'new spirit' of the mid-1890s.

The aim here is to draw up a typology of the conceptions of secularism defended in the wake of the Affair by the women most active in the debates on the school. After having studied the Dreyfusard path of Mathilde Salomon, Marie Baertschi and Albertine Eidenschenk, it is appropriate to broaden the spectrum of analysis by including Pauline Kergomard, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Marie Dugard and Clarisse Coignet in order to study the way in which they conceived of the relationship between school and religion in the aftermath of the Affair. In doing so, the aim is to ask whether the anti-religious tilt that historians observe at the beginning of the XX^e century is perceptible in women's discourses. On the contrary, do female intellectuals continue to defend this "This is because, according to Françoise Mayeur, the 20 years following the school laws appear in women's education "as a period when the Protestant spirit reigns in some way¹⁸⁶ " ? Or are they tempted, like their male counterparts, by an anti-religious radicalisation, moving from secularism to secularism?

A) Pauline Kergomard, 'old Huguenot' and anti-Catholic Dreyfusard

When analysing the debate on the relationship between Church and State in the aftermath of the Affaire, Julien Bouchet proposes to divide intellectuals into four categories¹⁸⁷ First, there is a "political anticlericalism", hostile to the political and social influence of Catholicism but which does not attack religion; second, there is a freethinking anticlericalism which attacks Catholicism in its dogmas; third, there is a freethinking and fundamentally anti-religious anticlericalism, which despises all deists. The fourth and final group are the most radical 'fanatical' anticlericals, who attack all forms of spirituality.

183 See Pierre Ognier, *Une école sans Dieu? op. cit.*, p. 9.

184 Jean-Paul Honoré, "Le vocabulaire de l'anticléricalisme en France de l'Affaire à la Séparation (1898-1905)", *Mots. Les langages du politique*, n°5, October 1982, p. 69-84.

185 Christian Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations: histoire d'une passion française (1899-1914)*, Paris, éditions du Cerf, 2003, p. 119.

186 Françoise Mayeur, *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles sous la Troisième République, op. cit.*, p. 365.

187 Julien Bouchet, 'The impossible future: the crisis of the secular project at the end of the XIX^e century' in Claire Barel-Moisan, Aude Déruelle, José-Luis Diaz (eds.), *Le XIX^e siècle face au futur. Penser, représenter, rêver l'avenir au XIX^e siècle, Actes du VII^e congrès de la SERD*, 2018, online: <https://serd.hypotheses.org/1837>.

Where does Pauline Kergomard fit into this picture? The Inspector General was one of the most anti-clerical female voices in public education. For a long time, she had harboured great hostility towards Catholicism, which embodied a dogmatism that she, as a free-thinker, disapproved of. When the Affair broke out, Pauline Kergomard became convinced of Dreyfus's innocence quite early on. The letter of congratulations she sent to Ferdinand Buisson in August 1898 reveals that she had already rallied the Dreyfus camp for a long time. However, the Inspector General was slow to make a public statement among the Dreyfusards. While Mathilde Salomon, Marie Baertschi and Albertine Eidenschenk had long since entered the battle, Pauline Kergomard's first Dreyfusard article appeared, to our knowledge, in *La Fronde* of 4 December 1898¹⁸⁸. It is true that her participation in this dreyfusard daily from its foundation in December 1897 was already a form of commitment to the Affair. But it was not until December 1898 that Pauline Kergomard mentioned the burning issue in an article she wrote about a Dreyfus demonstration she had witnessed. On her way to the Sorbonne to attend a lecture by Ferdinand Buisson, a hundred students invaded the lecture hall before the professor arrived, shouting : Long live Picquart! Long live Buisson! They then left the room to meet their teacher, who was prevented from entering by a gang of anti-Semites. Pauline Kergomard exclaims: "Brave youth, go! The lecturer finally reached the amphitheatre. His lecture took on a Dreyfus-like quality when he declared: "Today, because one man, just one man, presumed innocent, is in prison, the whole nation is up in arms; none of us can sleep anymore!

Very critical of the Army¹⁸⁹ Pauline Kergomard also accuses Catholics to maintain this crisis. According to Julien Bouchet's classification, the Inspector General is a freethinking, anti-Catholic anti-clerical. She even had anti-religious overtones. On 3 June 1899, she devoted an article to "morality without God", two months after Louis Lescœur had declared in the *Bulletin de la SGEE* that "between the Church and the School, it is moral teaching that serves as a battlefield and [that] it is as a teacher of morals that the teacher, in the name of the secular State, defies theocracy¹⁹⁰". In this context, Pauline Kergomard defends the public school: by leaving God out of the school, she declares that "these awful republican miscreants have respectfully put him back in his true place: in the Church¹⁹¹". She did not see how the secular school could be held responsible for the upsurge in juvenile delinquency of which the press accused it: "I ask anyone who has not been led astray by passion whether teaching based on scientific research [...] can in any way be subversive of morality. For Pauline Kergomard, it is poverty that is the enemy of moral education and the cause of delinquency. The Church is interested in maintaining poverty, which is the breeding ground for its influence.

188 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement. M. Buisson et les étudiants", *La Fronde*, 4 December 1898.

189 See Pauline Kergomard in *La Fronde*, "Choses de l'enseignement", 10 June 1899; "À travers l'éducation, la coéducation", 15 January 1898.

190 L. Lescœur, "La morale à l'école primaire officielle", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, April 1899.

191 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 3 June 1899.

The Affair was a point of no return as far as Pauline Kergomard's anti-Catholicism was concerned. In 1905, she insisted that her son Joseph read *L'Église et la République*, published a year earlier by Anatole France. It is a pamphlet against Catholicism in which the author justifies the combist policy. Anatole France resolutely sided with the government after having prefaced Combes' book entitled *Une Campagne laïque (A Secular Campaign)* in 1904. Pauline Kergomard, when she read *L'Église et la République*, wrote to her son: "It is luminous¹⁹²".

A few years later, when a modernist current was asserting itself in the Church, Dick May invited Antonio Fogazzaro to give a lecture at the *École des hautes études sociales*¹⁹³. The latter was the author of *The Saint*, a novel published during the modernist crisis in 1905 and put on the Index in 1906. The author, while submitting to the pontifical decision, was convinced of the Church's capacity to evolve. While a number of former Dreyfusards were gathered around Dick May, Pauline Kergomard lamented the permeability of these minds to Fogazzaro's "liberal Catholicism":

He tried to make up for the progressive Catholics. [...] What amazement for me to see people whose intelligence I have hitherto respected swooning [...]. Thus, the Papacy is a rickety old castle, crumbling and collapsing, and its stones, as they fall, claim victims, but we will continue to venerate and support the Papacy, while disobeying it when it proves too stubborn. One will continue to respect science and scientists, to bless them for their discoveries [...] because if their work goes against the biblical texts, they are nevertheless a ferment for faith, in the impossibility where they are to determine their share and that of the divine in their discoveries. So... God, like all poor human beings, began by being as ignorant as a carp; he allowed things to be taught in his name that were contrary to reality; then, little by little, he learned, allowed Galileo [...] to destroy what had been believed until then about the evolution of the sun! No! Never! Never¹⁹⁴ !

In the eyes of some, the modernist movement in the Church proves the compatibility between Catholicism and scientific thought. Pauline Kergomard, on the other hand, saw in the Pope's repression of this movement the proof of the unbreakable contradiction between the Church and critical reason. A few years later, when the war led many intellectuals towards Catholicism¹⁹⁵ Pauline Kergomard remained as suspicious as ever of the Church. In 1917, she attends the Protestant funeral of Louis Liard, one of the founders of the public school, and states:

192 Letter to Joseph Kergomard, February 1905, in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.*, p. 133.

193 Mélanie Fabre, *Dick May, une femme à l'avant-garde d'un nouveau siècle: 1859-1925, op. cit.*, p. 179 and p. 292.

194 Letter to Jean Kergomard, 27 February 1910, in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.* p. 178.

195 Frédéric Gugelot, *La conversion des intellectuels au catholicisme en France, 1885-1935*, Paris, CNRS éd, 2007.

I often think that if, instead of deciding by decree that from the next day France would be freethinking, we had made it go through Protestantism, at the end of a period shorter than the century, all individuals of good faith would have become freethinkers, which would have made our country something other than what it is today¹⁹⁶.

In this very Quinetian statement, Pauline Kergomard depicts the transitional role that Protestantism should have played between Catholicism and freethought, between monarchy and Republic. A militant of secularism from the time of the Ferry laws, radical in her anti-Catholicism at the time of the Affaire, a supporter of combism around 1905, and reluctant to see modernism as a possible salvation for the Church, Pauline Kergomard sided with the intellectuals hostile to Catholicism. The latter almost inevitably had a link with *La Fronde*. From its foundation, the daily adopted a very anti-clerical line. This can be explained by the strategy of the founders. According to Mary Louise Roberts, "Séverine and [Marguerite] Durand insisted that *La Fronde's* resources be used primarily for the Dreyfus struggle rather than for the feminist struggle. This demonstrates their desire to legitimise themselves within the Republican elite¹⁹⁷". The Frondeuses first asserted themselves as allies of the regime so that they could then denounce its masculinist foundations. Anticlericalism was at the root of republican political culture. *It is* therefore through criticism of Catholicism that the slingers "participate in a secular and positivist republican culture¹⁹⁸". It should be remembered that in 1905, when *La Fronde* was no longer able to overcome its financial difficulties, it was in the free-thinking daily *La Raison* that it merged.

It is easy to detect this anti-clerical imprint in Pauline Kergomard, but also in Clémence Royer, a woman of science¹⁹⁹Blanche Edwards-Pilliet, the first woman intern at the Paris hospitals²⁰⁰Louise Napias, the first female pharmacist²⁰¹ and Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, headmistress of the Lyons high school and a graduate in science. Among the other rebel women who tackled the links between Church and State or Church and school with the anticlericalism of rigour, we should mention Odette Laguerre²⁰²Ida R. Sée²⁰³Harlor²⁰⁴Louise Debor²⁰⁵ and Maria Verona²⁰⁶. An important name would of course be missing from this list if we did not mention Andrée Téry²⁰⁷, Gustave Téry's wife.

196 Letter of 30 September 1917 to his son Jean, in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.* pp. 249-250.

197 Mary Louise Roberts, *Disruptive Acts, op. cit.* p. 145 - 'Séverine and Durand's insistence on using the resources of *La Fronde* to argue primarily pro-Dreyfusard views rather than feminist ones demonstrates their desire to gain authority within the republican elite.

198 *Ibid.* - *In the same way, it is a "positivist, secular republican culture"*.

199 For example, "L'enseignement neutre", 25 March 1901; "L'enseignement colonial laïque", 30 March 1901.

200 Under the pseudonym of Maximilienne Blais, see "Popular Education in England", 4 November 1900.

201 See "L'Affaire Jeanne d'Arc", 1^{er} February 1905.

202 See 'Necessary Acts', 9 June 1902; 'The Conflict', 6 September 1902; 'The Protected of the Mission', 31 January 1903.

203 See "Freedom of Conscience", 30 November 1901.

204 See "L'enseignement laïque et son œuvre religieuse", 28 August 1901.

205 See "La Libre-Pensée et les "honnêtes gens", 9 November 1902.

206 See "La société Condorcet", 2 April 1902 and "L'abrogation de la loi Falloux", 30 June 1902.

Most of the contributions published in *La Fronde* on the subject of secularism were fuelled by current political events. The Frondeuses addressed the 1901 law on associations through the question of the status of congregations, but also the plans to repeal the Falloux law in 1902 and the law on the separation of Church and State in 1905. The articles devoted to these issues frequently make the link with the school issue, which was approached from a feminist perspective: it was particularly necessary to secularise girls' schools, as their education, more than that of boys, was subject to clerical influence. The question of the congregations is thus almost exclusively dealt with through their influence on the education of girls. To sum up the general trend in the daily newspaper, the frondeuses considered Catholicism - if not all religion in general - to be an oppressive force against women, before being a subjugation of the whole human race. Feminism and anti-clericalism thus feed each other in the pages of *La Fronde*.

B) *Accentuated atheism*": Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, an organic intellectual of combism

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello did not wait to collaborate with *La Fronde* to express a secularism that attacked all religious beliefs. After founding the Université populaire lyonnaise in December 1899, she was invited to speak at the annual congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement in Lyon in 1902. On this occasion, she demanded, along with Édouard Herriot, that the UPs should only be administered by people who were free from any religious preoccupation. She did not so much target Catholics, who were not involved in the movement, as Protestants. Herriot thus asserted that if the UPs had partly failed, it was because they were based on the Protestant idea. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello formulated a vow to "de-religionise" the UP by excluding Protestants. It was adopted by a large majority²⁰⁸.

While Protestants had previously appeared to be natural allies of the Third Republic's educational and post-school work, the most irreligious fringe of the freethinkers now tended to reject them. The rector of the Lyon Academy expressed his concern in a report on Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello. He wrote in May 1901 that she "forgets her duties as director to devote herself to a role of 'Revolution' [at] the so-called popular university of Lyon, which Pastor Fulliquet recently characterised in these terms: 'a school that takes on the accentuated allure of atheism'²⁰⁹". In a rhetorical question, the rector wondered whether the role of a school principal was to advocate a political revolution alongside the "advanced republicans", a religious revolution alongside the freethinkers, and a social revolution in speeches with socialist overtones. If Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's attitude was not to Gabriel's taste

207 She is better known as Andrée Viollis after her second marriage in 1905. See "Ce que doit être une loi sur les congregations", 30 November 1900; "Enquête sur les congregations de femmes", 8 January 1901.

208 See the account in *Le Rappel*, "Le Congrès de l'enseignement", 29 September 1902.

209 Document dated 29 May 1901, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's career file, F/17/22067.

Compayré, the latter confined himself mainly to criticising her actions outside her school and did not remark on the secularist orientation she was imposing on the Lyons high school.

The daily *L'Aurore* welcomes the action of this headmistress in her school:

"Under the leadership of this valiant republican, it is not school neutrality, favourable to the survivals of the clerical spirit, but true secularism that is put into practice [...]. No religious instruction is given. No religious exercise is carried out²¹⁰. " There is therefore a "true secularism" as opposed to a false secularism. As Éric Thiers notes, "the word [secularism] is no longer sufficient in itself²¹¹ ". The Affair legitimised the appearance and dissemination of a much more anti-religious version of secularism than the one that had been commonly accepted in public education since the 1880s. It was in the wake of the Affair that the French Secular Mission was founded in 1902, which bears witness to this development. This new association contradicted Gambetta's statement that anticlericalism "is not an export item". It wished to apply the model of metropolitan secularism in the colonies, considering that these territories should not be a place for the revival of congregations. It is not surprising to find Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello as vice-president of the Lyon committee of the Mission Laïque, chaired by Édouard Herriot, at its foundation in 1906.

Although the headmistress of the Lycée de Lyon assumed her materialistic tendencies during the Affaire, it cannot be said that they were absent from her conception of secularism from the 1880s onwards. Thus, when she addressed the mothers of the pupils at the prize-giving ceremony in the summer of 1883, she declared:

It is you alone who direct their religious education, who teach them to serve the God you serve, to give him the worship that your Church gives him. We intervene only in the teaching of morals, for moral laws are not the prerogative of a religion, [...] they are superior to them: every being can feel, at a given time, his religious beliefs waver, see doubt invade his mind; it is necessary that the love of the good, of what is right, deeply rooted in his heart, thanks to a secular teaching, remain sheltered from all the fluctuations of human thought. [...] Science, in a word, is the most perfect expression of truth²¹².

Is it possible to realise how revolutionary such a discourse was within the walls of a girls' high school in the early 1880s? Not only was religion excluded from the school, not only was it presented as a possibly fluctuating opinion, but moral education was considered superior to religious laws.

To use Jacqueline Lalouette's distinction, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello does not confine herself to a marked indifference to religion, but rather approaches

210 "L'Université laïque", *L'Aurore*, 2 September 1903.

211 Éric Thiers, 'Guerre impossible, paix improbable', *Mil neuf cent, revue d'histoire intellectuelle*, 2016/1, n°34, p. 17-35.

212 Prize distribution speech, 1883, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's career file, F/17/22067.

Theoretical atheism, which consists of the "will, based on intelligence and reflection, to reject all belief in God²¹³". If this dimension of his thought is not evident in his 1883 speech, it appears more clearly in the articles that Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello contributed to *La Fronde* under the pseudonym of Paule Branzac from November 1902. Her most anti-clerical article was published in 1903, when the combative politics reached its peak²¹⁴:

[The new law] does not require religious to go into exile - it is not, as people would have us believe, a law of proscription - but it does require all these parasitic beings, living in the artificial life of cloisters, to return to ordinary life, [...] and to be purely and simply citizens. [...]

Faced with the claims of the civil authority, they had only one course of action to take, to bow down, to obey the law, even if they considered it unjust, because it was *the law*, the will superior to individual wills. But simple duty, civic duty especially, is a good notion for civilians. [...]

One must read the letters of the bishops to be edified on the overweening nature of these representatives of the Church with regard to the representatives of civil power. [...] What civil servant, apart from the bishops, would dare to write to his hierarchical superior: 'I will not submit to the orders you give me [...], and, much better, I do not recognise your right to give me any.' [The ordinary civil servant would be] dismissed, because one could just as easily think of locking him up as a madman or an anarchist.

I am not afraid to say that these letters from bishops are letters from anarchists, - who recognise no master except that of Rome. [But] not one of these heroic bishops wrote to M. Combes: 'I consider your orders unjust, I cannot submit to them; I give my resignation as bishop in order to avoid a duty which my conscience disapproves of. [...] Crying out for martyrdom! To call the ignorant and fanatical populations to the aid of the monks and nuns, to preach religious war, that is their business²¹⁵.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello comments on Emile Combes' application of the law on associations initiated by Pierre Waldeck-Rousseau in 1901. Christian Sorrel has shown that although the issue of regulating associations has been a sea serpent since the 1880s, the Dreyfus affair precipitated the adoption of an exceptional law: until then, all bills had stalled

In this regard, the Commission's report "on the seemingly insurmountable contradiction between the refusal to treat congregations as ordinary associations and the difficulty of envisaging for them a derogatory regime opposed to the

213 Jacqueline Lalouette, 'De quelques aspects de l'athéisme en France au XIX^e siècle', *Cahiers d'histoire. Revue d'histoire critique* [Online], 87 | 2002, online April 01, 2005, accessed May 02, 2019, <https://journals.openedition.org/chrhc/1661>.

214 According to André Lanfrey, (preface by Françoise Mayeur), *Les catholiques français et l'école*, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

215 Paule Branzac, "Orgueil épiscopal", *La Fronde*, 5 May 1903.

the principle of generality of the law which is held by a significant part of the political staff²¹⁶ ". It was the threat that the "clerical party" posed to the Republic at the time of the Affaire that explained why the parliamentarians resigned themselves to this law. But while the new legislation created an exceptional regime for congregations, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's argument was based precisely on the fact that religious should submit to the common regime. Similarly, while the headmistress of the Lycée de Lyon considers that the first mission of a civil servant is to be loyal to the State, she incites, in other articles, the women teachers to rebel against a parliament which denies them equal treatment, because the law, although it is the law, is unjust.

To take up Patrick Cabanel's analysis of Protestant intellectuals, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello acts here as an organic intellectual of combist politics²¹⁷. She took advantage of her undeniable rhetorical mastery to legitimise the exceptional measures taken against religious congregations. She is one of those intellectuals whose Patrick Cabanel notes that they "provided arguments intended to justify philosophically, which is not insignificant, decisions imposed by the force of the decree, the gendarmerie, or the troops²¹⁸ ". Like Ferdinand Buisson, who put "his intellectual skill and his concern for ethics at the service of a regime then engaged in an enterprise of authentic constraint against religious congregations²¹⁹ "Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello defended the authoritarian tendencies of the regime. Is there, then, in Renouvier's words, a 'duty of intolerance' towards those who have been proven to be intolerant? Given the violence of her anti-clericalism, it is not surprising that, unlike Pauline Kergomard, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello decided to use a pseudonym to sign her articles in a context where her hierarchy was already complaining about her influence on the side of the "advanced republicans" in the city of Lyon.

C) Marie Baertschi and Albertine Eidenschenk, the heritage of protestant secularism in two freethinkers

Although Albertine Eidenschenk encouraged her student teachers to act in accordance with their conscience, and in particular to have the courage not to bring up their own children in Catholicism if they had broken with this dogma, she did not adopt an anti-religious attitude. Her adherence to freethought reflects more a rejection of the Church as an institution than a contempt for all spirituality. Thus, Miss Larivière, one of her former pupils, declares in a tribute: "[her aim was to] open our eyes to the world, and [to] form in us the human being in his strongest spirituality²²⁰ ". Similarly, Maurice Niveau, rector of

216 Christian Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations*, *op. cit.* , p. 46.

217 Patrick Cabanel, "Les intellectuels protestants, des intellectuels organiques de la Troisième République?" *Bulletin de la société d'histoire du protestantisme français*, 2003, n°149/3, p. 401-417.

218 *Ibid.*

219 *Ibid.*

220 Mlle Larivière, " Mme Eidenschenk à Douai ", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, January 1947, quoted in l'Amicale des anciennes élèves de l'école normale d'institutrices du Nord, *Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin*, *op. cit.* , p. 65.

the Academy of Lille, states that "Madame Eidschenk translated well in her mission as a teacher and educator this 'moral spiritualism' which marked the secular philosophy of the public school under the Third Republic²²¹ ".

Albertine Eidschenk's post-war submission to the CSIP reflects her refusal to see schools confine themselves to providing scientific knowledge. In 1923, she asked for moral education to be reinstated in boys' secondary schools. She noted that secondary education denigrated moral instruction and declared: "We are sick of a purely intellectual view of human nature; we have almost completely lost the sense of the deep life of the soul²²² ". To those who believe that it is the family's responsibility to educate their children morally, Albertine Eidschenk replies pragmatically that too many families are unable to assume this responsibility. Many "tacitly recognise that they are incapable of this arduous task, and leave it either to the school [...] or to the Church. If we allow the school [...] to shirk the responsibility, the Church remains²²³ ". For Albertine Eidschenk, it is not by inculcating an atheistic free thought that public education will reduce the influence of the Church. On the contrary, the field of spirituality should not be left to the men of religion:

We are too [...] accustomed to leaving the handling of sacred things, things of the soul and of life, to those who claim a monopoly on them. It is to such an extent that a layman who [...] shows concern for moral questions [...] is regarded as infected with "moralism", he is seen as a "preacher", a "Huguenot", a "primitive"; it is ill-favoured, inelegant, even ridiculous, or rather sadly ridiculed²²⁴.

Albertine Eidschenk defends the 'secular spirit' as conceived by In the words of Patrick Cabanel, who includes Ferdinand Buisson, Jules Steeg, Félix Pécaut, Charles Renouvier, Élie Rabier and Louis Liard, "the staff of Protestant secularism".²²⁵ If teachers who apply this model are called 'preachers' or 'Huguenots', it is precisely because this secularism was carried in the wake of the school laws by former ultra-liberal Protestant pastors, such as Pécaut, Steeg and Buisson²²⁶. Moreover, this secularism would be the prerogative of the 'primaries', since Buisson, director of this order of education for 17 years, left his mark on it, notably through his *Dictionnaire de pédagogie*. These "primaries" accused of moralism are also the Fontenaysians. Indeed, when Albertine Eidschenk considers that teachers have a duty to take an interest in spirituality, she reproduces almost word for word the words of Félix Pécaut, who declared in 1897: "it would not be too much of a teaching

221 Maurice Niveau, "Preface", in *Ibid*, p. 6.

222 Argument accompanying Albertine Eidschenk's vow, dated 10 February 1923, reproduced in *Ibid*, p. 69.

223 *Ibid*, p. 72.

224 *Ibid*, p. 73.

225 Patrick Cabanel, "Félix Pécaut, laïcité protestante et dreyfusisme", art. cit.

226 Buisson was not a pastor in the strict sense, but he was similar to this figure, particularly in his desire to found a new Church. See his biography by Patrick Cabanel, *Ferdinand Buisson, op. cit.*

direct moral support, given from time to time by the unsuspecting voice of the laity²²⁷ ". For Albertine Eidenschenk, it is not because school and religion are separate that teachers should disregard moral and spiritual questions, which are central to the construction of the individual. The headmistress of the Ecole Normale de Douai was sorry that her approach to secularism seemed outdated in 1923. But was this approach not already outdated at the dawn of the XX^e century for the most anticlerical intellectuals, who tended towards irreligion?

Like Albertine Eidenschenk, Marie Baertschi defended the model of secularism that had been inculcated in her at Fontenay. She did so at a time when the Dreyfus affair was creating an intellectual world that was beginning to slide towards combism. As early as February 1901, when she defined the "secular spirit", Marie Baertschi considered that it was incompatible with any authoritarian tendencies:

Everyone knows the words of the Robespierriest Jacobins who, at the time of the Terror, replied to the opponents of the guillotine: "We are founding liberty despotically". This word has a first character which is to be absurd, because despotism is just the opposite of liberty, and it is my opinion that by putting despotism at the base of life it is difficult to find liberty at the top [...]. Basically, in all sincerity, what difference is there between a party that says: we want to establish freedom despotically and for that reason we will cut off all the heads that get in the way, and one that says: we want to establish our religion at all costs and for that reason we will burn all those who stand in our way? For my part, I see no such thing²²⁸.

In condemning the Revolutionary Terror, Marie Baertschi is no doubt referring to the debate that had taken place in the Chamber of Deputies ten years earlier. The playwright Victorien Sardou had *Thermidor* performed at the Comédie française, a play in which he defended Danton who had been crushed by the terrorist machine. Clemenceau spoke out in the Chamber on 29 January 1891, considering that "the Revolution is a block" and that it must be accepted or rejected in its entirety. Only Joseph Reinach, among the republicans, opposed the radical leader by refusing to tolerate the "excesses" of the revolutionary process. A decade later, on 15 January 1901, Waldeck-Rousseau justified his law on congregations with an argument similar to that of Clemenceau: "One must choose: to be with the Revolution and its spirit or with the counter-revolution against public order. This statement contains the seeds of combism. The President of the Council considered that there was no possible nuance in the claim to the heritage of the Revolution. For him, the Church was the enemy of the Republic, so anticlericalism was an integral part of republican culture.

Yet Marie Baertschi claims the heritage of the Revolution while considering the Terror as a reversed Inquisition. Her proximity to Péguy is evident here. Similarly, she

²²⁷ Félix Pécaut, "Letter to the president of the Association of teachers of the Seine for the patronage of youth", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, December 1897.

228 Marie Édouard Fuster, "L'esprit laïque", *Pages libres*, 2 February 1901.

proclaims the right to be republican without approving the form that anticlericalism is taking at the beginning of the XX^e century. She refuses to be trapped in a Manichean way of thinking. For her, a section of the republicans is in the process of embarking on the slippery slope of authoritarianism to apply, in the name of secularism, an "anti-secular" policy²²⁹ :

This fault of the Jacobins, we all commit it [...]. Driven by the struggle, exasperated by resistance [...], we almost always end up appealing to authority, in a form less brutal, fortunately, than the guillotine of our revolutionary ancestors, but [...] just as unsecular. [...] Now when our opponents rely on the principle of authority, when they impose a rule that must be blindly obeyed, they are in their role [...], because their whole conception of life is based on this principle of authority. But we, who can only exist in the name of free examination, [...] deny ourselves [...] as soon as we appeal to authority. Should we then be eaten alive? [No. But first of all let us be convinced - and experience has shown this: I need only cite the Terror leading to Napoleon's despotism as proof of this - [...] that the use of authoritarian measures is, in our hands, a treacherous weapon, which, far from serving us, always turns against us²³⁰.

Albertine Eidenschenk would no doubt have approved of such a speech. Pécaut's two former pupils, both members of free-thinking associations²³¹ Both were suspected of sectarianism by their superiors, and both were equally committed to liberal beliefs.

The second text that Marie Baertschi wrote for the journal *Pages libres* in August 1901 on the "right to religion"²³² The "right to religion" is part of a particular context. The journal *Pages libres* has just published a book by Jean-Paul Milliet entitled *La Dégénérescence bachique et la névrose religieuse dans l'Antiquité*. The book triggers a controversy. Charles Guieysse called on Marie Baertschi to review the book. She takes up the challenge and begins by recalling what liberalism consists of: "We have committed ourselves, in *Pages libres*, to being *liberal*, that is to say to *always respect*, except to discuss them after examination, *all manifestations of sincere and serious thought*. Mr. J.-P. Milliet is in full violation of this principle. Marie Baertschi spoke both as a specialist in secularism and as a historian, having been awarded first place two years earlier in the agrégation in history. Jean-Paul Milliet's thesis is to show that "from time immemorial", religion has been a factor of debauchery and stupidity for man.

229 On this subject, let us recall the words of Patrick Cabanel: "The main failure of the republican state, in its tenacious anti-Catholicism, [is an] intellectual failure, perhaps, insofar as the Republic is striving to build a secular society that should, in theory, be no more anti-Catholic than Catholic." ("La République contre les catholiques?", in Marc-Olivier Baruch and Vincent Duclert, *Serviteurs de l'État, op. cit.*, p. 169-182.)

230 Marie Édouard Fuster, "L'esprit laïque", *Pages libres*, 2 February 1901.

231 In 1900, Marie Baertschi belonged to the Union of Freethinkers of the fourteenth arrondissement of Paris.

Albertine Eidenschenk joins the National Union of Freethinkers.

232 Marie Édouard Fuster, "Le droit à la religion", *Pages libres*, 10 August 1901.

Marie Baertschi saw nothing but anachronism. When Milliet discusses Greek antiquity, she accuses him of having 'no historical sense whatsoever' and advises him to read Fustel de Coulanges' work, *La Cité antique*. According to her, Jean-Paul Milliet is not a historian, but is looking for arguments to support his thesis. Marie Baertschi summarises:

M. Milliet, who finds it easier to condemn than to understand (this is exactly the procedure of the Church), [...] considers that it is necessary, willingly or by force, to extirpate from souls all religious notions. God is, for him, a mortal enemy who must be destroyed at all costs. [...] Everything in his volume tends to affirm that religion equals alcoholism. [...] We have come to the point in France where a man no longer has the right to confess a religious conception without being considered, in certain circles, as an imbecile or a scoundrel. This does not prevent people in these circles from believing themselves to be very tolerant²³³.

Marie Baertschi, on the other hand, claims a right to religion. Faith and its impulse towards the ideal respond to a legitimate aspiration of the human soul. Contrary to the combative discourse, she does not believe that history is moving towards the 'death of God'. The idea of God emanates, according to her, from a perfectly normal function of the human mind: "religion proceeds, in short, from exactly the same need as science: from man's need, which is his glory, to reach the Truth. Without asserting that religion is the truth, Marie Baertschi considers that as it is a quest for truth, the religious spirit cannot be the object of any contempt.

But Marie Baertschi is not, for her part, a deist. She seems to be convinced that the concept of God is a human creation: since everything in humanity has a cause, the believer, in search of the causes he cannot reach, synthesises them in a personality that resembles himself, that of an all-powerful God. He attributes to his God a reason similar to his own, as well as other human qualities such as justice and goodness. But this is not, for the author of the article, a sign of alienation: there is nothing there 'that is not in accordance with the normal exercise [...] of the faculties of the mind, nothing that cannot be reconciled with a very upright conscience and a very firm reason'.

If the believer is free to believe, the unbeliever is free to doubt, but neither of them is free to condemn those who do not think like them. Marie Baertschi's conclusion is clearly anti-combist, in line with the philosophy of her master Pécaut:

What arguments can those who do not believe put up against those who do? [That nothing exists apart from what we see and touch? [...] What proof can they give of this? [...] The religious soul can say nothing else but "*I believe* that there is a God", the atheist can answer nothing else but "*I believe* that there is no God". Both proceed in exactly the same way: in the absence of any certain truth, they simply adhere to an *a priori* conception which does not exist.

233 Marie Édouard Fuster, "Le droit à la religion", *Pages libres*, 10 August 1901.

cannot be demonstrated [...]. The atheist therefore has no right to reproach religious assertions with being anti-scientific: its denial is anti-scientific in the same way [...]. There is only one attitude that is truly rational [...]: it is that of doubt and expectation; that which consists in saying "I do not know, I am waiting, ready to follow any certain truth that may come to me [...]". Any man who goes beyond this ranks, whether he likes it or not, among the believers; believers in a Supreme Being or believers in Nothingness, in the eyes of reason it is all one. [...] We respect equally the religious and the atheist [...] because we believe that, if each of them draws from his opinion a little strength, justice and love, this opinion is for him the best²³⁴.

Although it is presented as a critique of a historical work, Marie Baertschi's text is in fact a manifesto in favour of the right to religion. It complements "L'esprit laïque", published six months earlier, to theorise the ideal secularism in a republican and liberal society. It provoked numerous comments in the following issues. The philosopher Gabriel Séailles even added "A word in the discussion"²³⁵ "by supporting Marie Baertschi's argument. The latter is in the wake of some dreyfusards. One obviously thinks of Charles Péguy, but also of other intellectuals: "Neither Gabriel Monod, nor Raoul Allier, nor Bernard Lazare [...] wanted to get involved in what could resemble a curse, that of the blows struck"²³⁶ ". Similarly, Marie Baertschi refused to allow the Dreyfus struggle to be transformed into an anti-religious struggle.

If Marie Baertschi and Albertine Eidenschenk interpreted the Pécauldian heritage in the aftermath of the Affaire in the same way, insisting on its liberal dimension, neither of them presented themselves as believers at that time. Unlike Buisson, Pécaut and Steeg, we cannot apply to Marie Baertschi and Albertine Eidenschenk the formula of "religious secularism": their ideal is not to turn the republican citizen into a secularised Christian²³⁷. Their definition of secularism was This is not to say that it has become "de-religious", but that it has not become "atheistic".

D) "Preserving the Intuition of the Divine": Marie Dugard, a lay teacher and director of conscience

But 'Protestant secularism' is not definitively dead, crushed under the rubble of the Affair. It should be remembered that there are a large number of Protestant teachers who continue to consider that secularism should be able to be what Jean Baubérot has called a "deconfessionalized opening towards transcendence"²³⁸ ". This is the case of Marie Dugard. Converted to

234 Marie Édouard Fuster, "Le droit à la religion", *Pages libres*, 10 August 1901.

235 Gabriel Séailles, "Un mot dans la discussion", *Pages libres*, 28 September 1901.

236 Patrick Cabanel, "Après l'Affaire: nostalgie de dreyfusards "désaffaires"", art. cit.

237 See Anne-Claire Husser, "Le Sébastien Castellion de Ferdinand Buisson : un individualisme théologique aux sources de la morale laïque", art. cit.

238 Quoted by Bruno Barthelmé, "L'influence de la philosophie des Lumières sur la morale laïque", in Anne-Claire Husser, Bruno Barthelmé and Nicolas Piqué (eds), *Les sources de la morale laïque, héritages croisés, op. cit.*, p. 30.

Protestantism for about seven years at the time of her trip across the Atlantic, she expressed her admiration for the American school, which the Constitution enjoins to be '*unsectarian*', i.e. non-denominational, but not irreligious. The American school therefore remains fundamentally Christian. In most schools, lessons begin with a prayer and the reading of the Bible. Catholics and freethinkers succeeded in having these practices, which they felt were contrary to their own faith, removed from some schools, but "the teaching remains religious, and this ambient Christianity, which penetrates education and enlivens it, completes the task of making the school a true moral environment²³⁹". It seems that, like most Americans she met, Marie Dugard was convinced that "without religion there is no true honesty".

On the strength of her American experience, her spiritualist convictions and the esteem in which she was held by her hierarchy, Marie Dugard took part in the great debate on secularism that began in the aftermath of the Affaire by publishing *De l'éducation moderne des jeunes filles* in 1900.²⁴⁰ For her, it was not because the public school banned all denominational teaching that moral instruction had to "abdicate before religious sentiment or lose interest in it²⁴¹". The Affair proved that religious feeling is susceptible to being used for bad purposes. Therefore, the school cannot get rid of the problem by practising neutrality

"The first is that our beliefs should never be in conflict with morality. Young girls must be taught two guiding principles at school: "The first [...] is that our convictions must never be in opposition to morality. It is, to quote an example, one of its precepts [...] that 'no one should be disturbed for his opinions, even religious, provided that their manifestation does not disturb public order'.²⁴² "

The Declaration of the Rights of Man is definitely an essential part of the discourse on secularism, whether those who profess it are anticlerical, deist or materialist, from Pauline Kergomard to Albertine Eidenschenk, via Mathilde Salomon, Marie Baertschi and Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello²⁴³. Article 10 has the advantage of resonating directly with current events at a time of anti-Semitic outbursts. Moreover, the text is unanimously accepted by all republicans: it is linked to a founding and consensual moment of the French Revolution. But this article does not play the same role in the arguments of all these intellectuals. While Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello legitimises a materialistic conception of secularism, Marie Dugard uses it to preserve a right to religion: "If, therefore, in the name of a belief calling itself religious, one arrogated to oneself the right to forbid others the freedom to honour God according to their conscience, this belief would be condemnable²⁴⁴".

After freedom of belief, the second principle that the school should teach to young girls, according to Marie Dugard, "is that those who profess a doctrine must not ignore what they

239 Marie Dugard, *American Society*, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

240 Marie Dugard, *Questions du temps présent. De l'éducation moderne des jeunes filles*, Paris, Colin, 1900, 88 p.

241 *Ibid*, p. 18.

242 *Ibid*, p. 19.

243 On Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, see her letter to the members of the amicales scolaires as president of the UPL, dated 6 December 1900: *Annales de l'Université populaire lyonnaise*, n°2, February 1901, Lyon, A. Storck et Cie.

244 Marie Dugard, *De l'éducation moderne des jeunes filles*, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

believe and their reasons for believing²⁴⁵ ". A belief is only worthy if it has been critically reflected upon by the person professing it. Marie Dugard knows that religion is not a system that can only be grasped by the intellect, but this is not a sufficient argument to turn the believer away from the 'salt of the contradiction'²⁴⁶ "If your reasons for believing are so weak that they cannot stand up to the reasons for not believing, why do you believe? And if they are so strong, why do you fear to compete with your opponents?

It is the Catholics that Marie Dugard targets here without naming them. While she does not want to blame the Church, she shows her circumspection with regard to believers who are docile to the authority that directs them, especially when this authority has declared that it cannot be in harmony with progress, liberalism and modern civilisation. Marie Dugard exposes the ideas of the *Syllabus* of 1864 and considers that it is impossible for the secular school to tolerate them as such. Teachers could not accept the idea that science was a failure, the university an enemy, protests in favour of the humble and the instruction of girls dangerous novelties.²⁴⁷ She deplored the contradiction between the mission of women's secondary schools, which consisted of educating young bourgeois women, and the propensity of part of the bourgeoisie to follow the doctrines of the *Syllabus*.

In *De l'éducation moderne des jeunes filles*, Marie Dugard is cautious in defining secularism. Her Protestant convictions can only be detected by the informed reader. They are more obvious to her pupils, if we are to believe the memories of Louise Weiss, who remembers that for years she would reread the notes taken during Marie Dugard's classes whenever she was faced with an important decision: "I was not the only one to conform to the demands of the secular casuistry, tinged with deism, on which she had based her discipline²⁴⁸ ". Louise Weiss was one of the 'Dugard girls' concerned about 'the search for inner perfection' promoted by the agrégée de lettres. She remembers reproaching her parents, who did not always act in accordance with morality: "we often exasperated them to such an extent that they cursed the Lycée Molière and the ascetics in skirts who fanaticized us there²⁴⁹ ".

Marie Dugard's Protestant convictions are no secret at the Lycée Molière. Neither was her aversion to combism. Louise Weiss overheard a conversation between Marie Dugard and her colleague Marguerite Scott about the drift of the state school. Marie Dugard declared:

The evils of narrow-mindedness are boundless. It must be said that the absolutism of certain faithful has as its counterpart the sectarianism of certain unbelievers who intend to save secularism [...]. Like you, my dear, I admit that the role of secular teachers is only to develop moral awareness, but they should also have the

245 *Ibid*, p. 20.

246 *Ibid*, p. 21.

247 *Ibid*, p. 67.

248 Louise Weiss, *Souvenirs d'une enfance républicaine*, *op. cit.* , p. 72.

249 *Ibid*, p. 73.

wisdom to remain neutral in reality, that is to say that they do not close in advance to any intuition of the divine the spirits whose guardianship they are entrusted with²⁵⁰.

Marie Dugard herself applied this neutrality only in the strictly academic context. Thus, when Louise Weiss took classes with her former teacher after completing her studies, she understood that Marie Dugard's hidden agenda was to convert her to Protestantism. Dugard even seems convinced of the vanity of morality without God:

Do you know why our university education is not sufficient to form men and women worthy of their mission and why the rules of life that we explain to our students in our philosophy classes do not succeed in providing them with the essentials of life, namely a conscience haunted by the need to surpass itself? It is because we do not talk to them about sin²⁵¹.

Marie Dugard's career record does not reveal any evidence of a breach of school neutrality²⁵². Her Protestantism is not mentioned. Only her professional conscience, her dedication to her work, the austerity of her life and the coldness of her temperament give a clue to the life of this 'ascetic in petticoats'. However, the obituary published in the *Revue Universitaire* in 1932 paints a picture of Marie Dugard very similar to that of Louise Weiss: the Protestant faith is at the heart of her life. The author of the obituary quotes an anonymous former student:

We were [...] also thirsty for a broad belief: the secular ideal was not enough for us, dogmas put us off. The moral course, whose name alone frightened us, became for us, thanks to Miss Dugard, a blessed hour. [...] Our souls [...] drank in these human words, so unscholastic... [...] After class, we surrounded our teacher's pulpit, eager to hear more. Miss Dugard had guessed the questions that were pressing inside us, all those "whys" in front of the problems of life. [...] A kind of modesty prevented us from telling our parents about them. [...] She was the director of conscience [...] of a great many²⁵³.

The intensity of this relationship between adolescent girls and their teacher, which is beyond parental control, is not exceptional. It can be found in the trajectories of several female teachers. Thus, at the end of the 1890s, Marie Baertschi's inspectors were suspicious of the influence she had on her pupils. The inspector complained that there was "a real rivalry in the classroom for

250 *Ibid*, p. 114.

251 *Ibid*, p. 121.

252 Career file of Marie Dugard, F/17/23835.

253 J. de Mestral-Combremont, 'Marie Dugard', obituary, *Revue universitaire*, February 1932.

to get his good graces, a word, a look²⁵⁴... ". It was precisely because of the hold she had over her pupils that she was the subject of an administrative investigation in the 1890s. Although she denied acting as a "director of conscience", this was the accusation levelled at her in 1916, when she had converted to Catholicism and the parents of the pupil-teachers complained about the spiritual motherhood that her pupils recognised in her: "The imprint that Mrs Fuster's spirit makes on the pupils' minds is so powerful²⁵⁵ "that it would be capable of destroying parental education. Albertine Eidenschenk is not far from this model²⁵⁶. As headmistress of a teacher training college, she decided to teach only pedagogy, psychology and morals, assuming an overarching status above the particular disciplines. She sees her role as the moral support of the pupil-mistresses. In 1909, the inspector noted:

She placed above all influences the action she exerted on the moral training of the pupil teachers through her courses, her lectures and her individual directions. She has absolute confidence in the effectiveness of this education and the fortunately rare faults of her pupils or former pupils are particularly painful for her because she sees in them the failures of her work of moral education²⁵⁷.

In her tribute to Albertine Eidenschenk, Miss Larivière considers her a lay director of conscience:

Generations of teachers remember those minutes at the end of the year when Madame would bring before her, one by one, those who were preparing to leave the school. Using her own observations with the greatest benevolence, [...] Madame presented each pupil with an image of herself. This image sometimes hurt pride or vanity a little, but it provided a solid basis for her own education²⁵⁸.

Mathilde Salomon also feels that as a director she has an educational role to play. While she has a particular passion for languages and history²⁵⁹ Like Albertine Eidenschenk, she considered that her status as headmistress placed her above particular disciplines. She was therefore primarily responsible for moral instruction and condensed her lessons into a manual entitled *Lectures et leçons familières de morale*²⁶⁰. As a single woman, Mathilde Salomon maintained

254 Inspection report dated 10 March 1895, F/17/23692.

255 Document dated 28 September 1916.

256 It seems that this 'spiritual motherhood' may have become an 'adoptive motherhood': Albertine Eidenschenk seems to have adopted a former pupil of her school. See the book by the Amicale des anciennes élèves de l'école normale d'institutrices du Nord, *Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, op. cit.*, p. 19.

257 Inspection report dated 1909, Albertine Eidenschenk's career file, F/17/23836/B.

258 Extract from the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, January 1947, quoted in the book by the Amicale des anciennes élèves de l'école normale d'institutrices du Nord, *Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, op. cit.*, p. 65.

259 Mathilde Salomon, *Premières leçons d'histoire de France*, Paris, L. Cerf, 1884, 224 p.

260 Mathilde Salomon, *Lectures et leçons familières de morale*, Paris, L. Cerf, 1896, [1893].

with his students. Her correspondence with Salomon Reinach shows her constant efforts to 'fit them in' - as she put it - and to provide them with a means of subsistence. On 31 July 1909, shortly before her death, she was on holiday in Isère, but was dependent on letters from her pupils who were taking competitive exams: "Ten of my daughters are still between fear and hope and keep me informed of their troubles, which is to say: I have been below everything; I had forgotten the existence of Louis XIV of his century [...]. The Dauphinois Alps will seem more beautiful to me when I have some peace about the fate of these poor little²⁶¹ ".

Marie Dugard, Marie Baertschi, Albertine Eidenschenk and Mathilde Salomon are not isolated examples. Henriette Wurmser's correspondence demonstrates the importance of her relationship with her pupils²⁶². Marguerite Aron tells us in her *Journal d'une sévrienne* that she received letters during the holidays from her former pupils who wanted to maintain a link with her²⁶³. Two early childhood specialists, Madeleine Vernet and Marguerite Bodin, were real adoptive mothers for the children in their care. In short, of the teachers studied in this thesis, only Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello escaped this model by her distance from her pupils. With this exception, the female teachers analysed here seem to be the product of an educational thought process at the turn of the century that places moral instruction at the centre of young girls' education. The importance given to this discipline was exacerbated in the écoles normales and the lycées de jeunes filles: at that time, it was impossible

"to envisage a women's competition without morals, a morality that men probably don't need²⁶⁴ ". The centrality of this subject in the women's curriculum is explained by the desire to show that the secular school is capable of educating girls as well as nuns and of ensuring that these future women conform to social rules. Many female teachers therefore became convinced that they had to exercise moral leadership over their pupils. It is significant that in 1923 it was a headmistress of a teacher training college, Albertine Eidenschenk, who campaigned for the reintroduction of a moral education course in boys' high schools. For their part, the inspectors made numerous comments on the moral exemplarity of female teachers, which was considered a professional obligation. The central role of the school in the moral and religious construction of young girls explains why the combative wave aroused mistrust among many of them.

E) Clarisse Coignet or the disillusion of an old lady of secularism

It was Clarisse Coignet who spoke out most violently, at the dawn of the XX^e century, against combism. In 1903, she published a pamphlet entitled "Where are we going?²⁶⁵ ? ". She was alarmed by what she saw as the anti-religious drift of republicanism. But her observation did not

261 Letter to Salomon Reinach, 31 July 1909, Salomon Reinach fonds.

262 See his correspondence in the Eugène Manuel collection, Victor Cousin Library Manuscripts, BIS.

263 Marguerite Aron, *Journal d'une sévrienne*, *op. cit.* pp. 175-178.

264 Loukia Efthymiou, "Le genre des concours", *art. cit.*

265 Clarisse Coignet, *Where are we going?* Paris, H. Paulin, 1903, 68 p.

does not date from the new century. As early as 1894, she was concerned about this "morality without God" which she had theorised under the Empire. She expressed her concern in the correspondence of the *Manuel général d'instruction primaire* directed by Ferdinand Buisson. Fourteen years after the Ferry laws, she considered that "the secular school had not produced all the results expected of it²⁶⁶". Those who hoped that it would be an instrument of moral renewal have been disappointed. Clarisse Coignet attributes this failure to the fact that the relationship between religion and politics in France became a war, as Catholic institutions refused to allow their religion to be relegated to the private sphere. As a result, the struggle for the secularisation of schools took the form of an anti-religious struggle.

Frightened by the idea of irreligion becoming the flag of the public school, the moralist considered, contrary to what she had written 30 years earlier, that the school could not do without the support of religion for morality. She therefore suggested "opening the school, outside of school hours, to optional and diverse religious teaching²⁶⁷". While she was opposed to the existence of boarding schools in women's high schools in order to avoid having to authorise the intrusion of the clergy into the walls of the school with the boarders, Clarisse Coignet now called for Catholics, Jews and Protestants to carry out the necessary work of moralising society in conjunction with teachers. Aware of the risks of religious education in public schools, Clarisse Coignet envisaged that these courses would be given exclusively by lay people, regardless of their faith. These courses would only be given at the request of parents. The moralist saw this proposal as an opportunity to calm the conflict between the Republic and the Catholic Church.

She did not stop there: she organised a meeting at her home with several intellectuals on 20 December 1894. The aim was to reinvent secular morality, which in her opinion was in the process of being led astray towards irreligion. Among those present were Georges Fonsegrive, a liberal Catholic who a few years later became a supporter of Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur, Jules Steeg, Paul Sabatier and Ferdinand Buisson, all representatives of liberal Protestantism. This colloquium was described by Ferdinand Brunetière in the very Catholic *Revue des Deux Mondes* :

They were thus reduced to finding a subterfuge to bring religion into the classroom without the teachers, the children and the radical deputies noticing, and one of them [...] pointed out the pitfall on which all combinations would sink, by declaring that it was necessary at all costs to avoid the name of God being pronounced. They looked for what could be used instead: our Father... the divine... the beyond... [...] They separated without having reached any practical conclusion²⁶⁸.

This is how Clarisse Coignet, who was ahead of the law in her 1874 and 1881 textbooks because she did not mention 'duties towards God', came to consider that morality without God has

²⁶⁶ Quoted by Pierre Ognier, *Une école sans Dieu?*, p. 210. We take up his analysis here.

²⁶⁷ Quoted in *Ibid.*

268 Quoted by Patrick Cabanel, *Ferdinand Buisson, op. cit.* , p. 265.

failed. If we may attempt a political metaphor, let us say that Clarisse Coignet appeared in the 1870s and 1880s on the extreme left of the secularist spectrum, since she considered that morality should not only be non-denominational, but also non-religious. In the 1890s, she was rather in the centre-right of the secular landscape, considering that the idea of God - a deconfessionalized God - was necessary for the moralization of youth. Unlike many intellectuals, the Affair marked an even stronger tendency for Clarisse Coignet to become right-wing.

Thus, while Buisson received more than 200 letters of thanks after his Dreyfus speech on Pécaut's grave, the only hostile message came from Clarisse Coignet: for her, Protestants had too much of a tendency to exalt the individual, even if it meant sacrificing social peace. In a country of universal suffrage, the personal conscience cannot believe itself entitled to decide everything²⁶⁹. Five years later, in her text "Where are we going?"

While I am careful not to return to a question which no one has answered and will not answer definitively, until the day when death, untying all commitments, those who *know* will be able to speak freely, at least I can say that if there have been great blunders here, [...] no one [...] has ever wanted the condemnation of an innocent person²⁷⁰.

For Clarisse Coignet, it was the weakness of political power that allowed the The Dreyfus "question" in the Affair. The "resistance of the esprit de corps" - here meaning the Army - and the The "revolutionary agitation", i.e. the Dreyfusards, were also responsible for the political and social disorder. Faced with a group "clothed with unquestionable moral authority" that asserted the innocence of the condemned man, Clarisse Coignet recalled that justice was a "beautiful word, but easily abused²⁷¹". She particularly attacks Zola: "A famous letter, calling into question national institutions and public authorities, covering those who represent them with invective and contempt, appealing to the most detestable popular passions, gives the signal for the outburst²⁷²." Without denying the bullying of Jews and Protestants, Clarisse Coignet considers that the initial violence came from the "Dreyfus revolutionaries", who, in a republican country, should have used the legal resources at their disposal, such as petitions, to express their disagreement with the government, and not to incite rebellion.

For Clarisse Coignet, without having created it, the Affair exacerbated the "war that divided France into two camps²⁷³". This war was unleashed in the school. The philosopher considers that the Catholic Church is partly responsible. While it could have sincerely accepted secular education, it considered it not only insufficient, but also guilty. However, there was nothing to prevent it from supplementing the school work with Thursday and Sunday schools.

269 Quoted in *Ibid*, p. 314.

270 Clarisse Coignet, *Where are we going? op. cit.* p. 48.

271 *Ibid*, p. 49.

272 *Ibid*, p. 50.

273 *Ibid*, p. 42.

The cohabitation of Church and State could have been achieved in peace and freedom. But the Catholics were intransigent: having never accepted the Republic, they did not even submit to the "wise counsel of the Sovereign Pontiff²⁷⁴".

Clarisse Coignet believes that the republicans have made a bad choice in maintaining the war: "Secularism is no longer the neutral ground where all opinions can find a place, it is a new doctrine involving a morality derived from science intended to destroy and replace religion²⁷⁵". For the philosopher, this drift can be explained by the persistence, in France, of "the ancient doctrine which, uniting in a single body all powers, religious and political, constitutes, above the individual, the governments of authority²⁷⁶". While the republicans fought against a Catholic absolutism, they reproduced the fusion of politics and religion by making secularism not a pure separation of politics and religion, but an instrument of war, in the hands of politics, against religion. The new laws, by passing from the congregation to the congregationalist,

"This is a clear violation of republican law on a point that is sacred among all: freedom of conscience²⁷⁷". However, if France is, according to Clarisse Coignet, essentially anti-clerical - as evidenced by its Gallican tradition - it is by no means anti-religious. Clarisse Coignet affirms that her conception of secularism has not changed since the 1860s: "While bringing the origin of morality back to the human conscience, I have always recognised that a personal religious faith, by ideally extending it beyond life through the definitive triumph of justice and goodness, can bring it great strength in practice.²⁷⁸".

Following the example of Marie Baertschi, Clarisse Coignet sees in the combist policy a reversed clericalism. By attacking the congregations, the Republic denied individual freedoms and, according to the philosopher, was "nothing more than a pastiche [...] of the monarchy²⁷⁹". The misfortune of the Republic was that it succeeded centuries of monarchy without any preparation of minds and morals to initiate a transition. Like Pauline Kergomard and Marie Dugard, Clarisse Coignet considered that the French had not been accustomed to governing themselves through free examination. Thus, although the moralist was theoretically in favour of the separation of Church and State, she considered that neither the nation, which was too ignorant, nor its government, with its authoritarian and liberticidal tendencies, were ready for this.

Although Ferdinand Buisson and Clarisse Coignet had been active in the same ranks after meeting during the siege of Paris in 1870, the *Affaire* and then *combisme* separated them. Indeed, the former defended the anti-congregational laws, considering that a Republic could not, without betraying itself, give a blank check to the congregations by registering "serfdom contracts²⁸⁰".

274 *Ibid*, p. 38. Here she refers to Leo XIII's encyclical *In the midst of sollicitudes* (1892).

275 *Ibid*, p. 40.

276 *Ibid*, p. 9.

277 *Ibid*, p. 15.

278 *Ibid*, p. 6.

279 *Ibid*, p. 15.

280 F. Buisson, "La crise de l'anticlérisme", *Revue politique et parlementaire*, October 1903, quoted by Patrick Cabanel, "Les intellectuels protestants, des intellectuels organiques de la Troisième République?"

Considering that society must prevent anyone from denying their own freedom, Buisson justifies the exceptional regime that the Republic reserves for congregations. Conversely, Clarisse Coignet asserts that "personal vows [...] which commit us only to ourselves and to God, are a pure act of conscience. To make an exception of those who have taken them [is] to deprive them of a part of the rights of the citizen²⁸¹". She compared the new laws to those of Louis XIV against the Protestants and could not be satisfied with a regime where freedom became "the privilege of those who think in a certain way²⁸²". Like Marie Baertschi, she saw no possible victory in this confrontation between a state atheism and a clericalism reinvigorated by the struggle: science and faith are complementary, not antinomic. Neither can destroy its opponent:

For a long time to come, the parties will be able to tear each other apart, but, each representing a facet of nature and of human life, they will not destroy each other. Catholicism will not destroy the current of free thought and free science, which has freed the mind from all ecclesiastical yokes, and the freed mind, turning into a despot, will not destroy religious feeling.²⁸³.

Several decades after the first debates on secularism, the XX^e century does not bring the consensus sought for so long. Between supporting the politics of the radicals and defending liberalism, several intellectuals took up the 'secular question' and put their rhetorical skill to work in the service of their conception of secularism. If those who expressed themselves in *La Fronde* showed an anti-clericalism that sometimes joined anti-religious criticism, it must be noted that most of the women in public education whose voices were heard were careful not to slide into this terrain. In a country where a quarter of secondary schools are run by Protestant women²⁸⁴ and where the teacher training colleges were shaped by the liberal Protestant spirit, it is unlikely that the Comboni period was concretely translated into the development of an anti-religious secularism²⁸⁵.

Conclusion of Chapter 3

This chapter analyses the shock of the Dreyfus Affair for the women who were most active in the debates on schools at the turn of the century. For them, the consequences of the Affair were threefold: firstly, the political crisis constituted an injunction to speak out, which resulted in their participation in petitions published in the press, the publication of articles

281 Clarisse Coignet, *Where are we going?* *op. cit.* p. 55.

282 *Ibid*, p. 56.

283 *Ibid*, p. 65.

284 Françoise Mayeur, *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles sous la Troisième République*, *op. cit.* p. 365.

285 This is also the conclusion reached by Jacques and Mona Ozouf when they study the teachers of the Belle Époque, see *La République des instituteurs*, *op. cit.*

or books, as well as through their collaboration with intellectual groups²⁸⁶ Secondly, the Affaire changed the way these women viewed society and the school, and consequently the content of their intellectual production, which at that time focused on themes such as secularism, neutrality and the role of education in democracy. Finally, the events of the late 19th century influenced the behaviour these teachers and headmistresses adopted in their professional activity, in relation to their pupils and their superiors. While these personalities do not express themselves on the purely judicial issues of the Affair, their reading of the events is centred on the investigation, a subject on which they bring a field expertise. The study of their careers gives an idea of the impact that the Affair had on reflections on the republican school twenty years after the school laws, as the links between the Dreyfus Affair and the school had not been dealt with as such in historiography until then.

The Affair consecrated the public existence of the male figure of the intellectual, to which the University contributed by largely swelling the Dreyfus ranks. It must be noted that the educated female elite also provided its share of women committed to values that were the same as those that mobilised the men. In this chapter, the aim was to analyse the trajectories of these women intellectuals by showing the relationships between their private lives - for example, their personal experience of anti-Semitism -, their professional practices - through their memories as students but also through their conflicts with the administration - and their public commitment, which took different forms.

As Jacques and Mona Ozouf have noted, the Affair is interpreted by many trial professionals "as a gradual passage from darkness to light, a situation in which [they] rediscover their innermost conviction and the meaning of their profession²⁸⁷". This observation applies perfectly to the personalities studied here, who consider that the school's failings are at the origin of the crisis, and that school reform is also the solution. Their common goal is to create an independent citizen whose conduct is governed by republican principles. The Affair gives meaning to their vocation as teachers.

All of the women intellectuals analysed here share a republican anchorage based on common references such as the Declaration of Human Rights. Beyond these convergences, the aim was to highlight the nuances that characterise them individually in their interpretation of contemporary events and in the solutions they advocate.

If these personalities do not have the stature of the great Dreyfusards that history has remembered, they act as intellectuals through their ability to articulate their thinking to the issues of their time²⁸⁸ They were also able to take risks by publicly exposing themselves in a commitment to secular education.

286 Ligue des droits de l'homme for Mathilde Salomon, Comité Condorcet for Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, free-thinking associations for Marie Baertschi and Albertine Eidenschenk, etc.

287 Jacques and Mona Ozouf (with V. Aubert and C. Steindecker), *La République des instituteurs*, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

288 Formula of Françoise Blum, Muriel Carduner-Lossfelt, "Du genre en histoire des intellectuels", in "Figures d'intellectuelles", *Mil neuf cent, revue d'histoire intellectuelle*, n°16, 1998, p. 133-143.

Chapter 4

Field experts in the "demopedic party":

the place of women in popular education initiatives

Introduction to Chapter 4

Not only did the Affaire provoke new reflections on the secular school, but it also pushed several committed women teachers to open up to a new public and to opt for new means of action. Some of them took to the stage for the first time in the great popular education movement that accompanied the Affaire. They joined the party

"demopedic"¹ "They are part of the new dynamic of adult education that is emerging in the popular universities. The latter aim to popularise scholarly culture for the general public, particularly the working classes. They thus differ from the more common forms of popular education, which tend to pursue a professional objective through the distribution of knowledge specific to a profession"².

The UP movement was also accompanied by a surge in the number of lay patronages created for adolescents. While the women involved in education considered hitherto the Affaire revealed the need to develop critical thinking beyond the compulsory school population. The aim here is therefore to analyse the theoretical production of these intellectuals on the subject of popular education, but also the way in which they took part in it in practice. At the end of the 1890s, popular education became an "educational action that claimed to reach mainly working-class people and that intended to act on the individual outside of school to transform society"³ ". Women teachers had skills to bring to bear on this objective, with an audience different from that of their classes. However, the expansion of their audience raises the question of how to adapt their

The wave of popular education is a pedagogical challenge. The wave of popular education is a pedagogical challenge.

The gender approach is of great interest here: in particular, it makes it possible to re-read the history of the UPs, which, as Laurent Besse explains, "have been little studied since Lucien Mercier's fundamental thesis, more than thirty years ago"⁴ ". The aim here is to look at the rare female elements that animate them, at a time when women taking the podium are the exception. Let us recall that the plaque placed on Séverine's house at her death in 1929 states:

"Here] lived and died Séverine, great journalist, great speaker"⁵ ". As Laurence Klejman and Florence Rochefort explain, at the end of the XIX^e century, "'oratrice', feminine of orator,

1 Invented by Proudhon, this term means "education of the people" and was taken up by republicans, such as Gambetta in 1881: "Let us educate each other; for that is [...] the nature of a democratic government and society. [...] Proudhon said: Democracy is demopedia. (quoted by Yves Déloye, "L'Instruction", in Vincent Duclert and Christophe Prochasson (eds.), *Dictionnaire critique de la République*, op. cit. pp. 183-188).

2 Carole Christen (dir. of the dossier) "Industrial education and the knowledge taught to adult workers in France (1800-1870) ", *Les Études sociales*, n° 159, 2014/2. See also his HDR, *À l'école du soir. Une histoire sociale et politique des cours d'adultes (1815-1870)*, defended on 16 January 2021.

3 Laurent Besse, "Éducation populaire", in Christian Delporte, Jean-Yves Mollier, Jean-François Sirinelli, *Dictionnaire d'histoire culturelle de la France contemporaine*, Paris, PUF, 2010, p. 270-271.

4 Laurent Besse, "Introduction", in Carole Christen, Laurent Besse (eds.), *Histoire de l'éducation populaire 1815-1945, Perspectives françaises et internationales*, Villeneuve d'Ascq, Presses Univ. du Septent, 2017, pp. 217-220.

5 Christine Bard, *Les filles de Marianne*, op. cit, p. 435.

sounds to contemporary ears [...] like an ugly neologism⁶. " In what way does the UP moment constitute a break in the emergence of women on the platform? What place did women occupy in the demopedic party that defended popular and secular education?

The aim is to follow these women outside the walls of their schools and to compare their discourse with their concrete commitments. For, as Florence Rochefort states, "questioning the posture [...] of the intellectual places us at the intersection of the individual and the social, at the crossroads of biography and the analysis of thought⁷".

Firstly, it will be necessary to study the challenge represented by the creation of a secular peri and post-school education for girls in a context of rivalry with the Church. It will be necessary to analyse the new women's networks that were institutionalised for this purpose. Secondly, we will study the women involved in the adult education movement both as founders of UP and as critical observers of the movement. In a third step, the particular category of women speakers will be studied, as the UPs constituted new forums for female intellectuals. Finally, in a last development, it will be appropriate to analyse the particular career of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, who founded, presided over and ran the Université Populaire Lyonnaise at the same time as she ran the Lyons girls' high school.

I- Lay patronages for girls: the role of women in the conquest of peri- and post-school education

According to Pierre Tournemire, after the school laws of the 1880s, "the Church did not give up its claim to a monopoly on education and sought to compensate for its loss of influence over young people [...] by developing after-school activities⁸". It succeeded so well that in 1900, according to Jean-Paul Martin, "there were 2,350 denominational boys' oratories and 1,800 girls' oratories, which, together with the catechism works of perseverance, concerned nearly 4 million children⁹". The republicans were then seized with "a veritable obsessive fever [...] in the face of denominational patronages¹⁰". They decided to focus their efforts on secular patronages, in particular through the Ligue de l'Enseignement, which from 1894 onwards reoriented itself towards extracurricular education (alongside the school), which included extracurricular activities (patronages for children) and after-school activities (adult classes). This shift leads to a redefinition of the meaning of popular education. As Laurent Besse and Carole Christen explain, the term ceases to refer to the school and defines the

6 Laurence Klejman, Florence Rochefort, *L'Égalité en marche*, op. cit, p. 33.

7 Florence Rochefort, "À la découverte des intellectuelles, à Françoise Pasquier", art. cit.

8 Pierre Tournemire, *La ligue de l'enseignement*, Toulouse, Les Essentiels, 2000, p. 16-17.

9 Jean-Paul Martin, "Entre philanthropie et féminisme. Le comité des dames de la Ligue de l'enseignement (1901-1914)", in Florence Rochefort (ed.), *Le pouvoir du genre*, op. cit. , p. 47-63.

10 Jean-Michel Ducomte, Jean-Paul Martin, Joël Roman, *Anthologie de l'éducation populaire*, Toulouse, Privat, 2013,

If no instance of "popular education [...] before 1894 excludes school education, almost none of it includes it from that date onwards¹¹ ".

Driven or supported by the Ligue de l'enseignement, secular extracurricular initiatives grew strongly until 1904, with a record in 1900¹². Sylvie Fayet-Scribe notes, however, that at that time, "as far as patronage is concerned, Catholic superiority seems unquestionable¹³ ". Léon Bourgeois recognised this in 1896: "School patronages! Another fine institution, but we must be modest: it was not us who invented it, it was our adversaries¹⁴ ". The Catholics enjoyed a comfortable lead at the beginning of the 20th century, particularly in the care of girls.

The aim here is to analyse the way in which women introduced the question of secular extracurricular education for women into the debates on popular education. Their action goes hand in hand with a questioning of the school born of the Ferry laws, accused of ratifying the hierarchies of a class society. Their initiatives were part of a feminist struggle - it was a question of offering girls what already existed for boys - and a struggle in the name of a new social thought: in a perspective that was often more solidarist¹⁵ The aim was to compensate for the failure of the school to reconcile the classes through the patronage system. And since, according to the general opinion, "to be effective, women's patronage must be run by women¹⁶ "It is not surprising to find Mathilde Salomon, Pauline Kergomard, Marie Dugard, Albertine Eidenschenk, Marie Baertschi and many of their colleagues among them. They collectively breathed new life into the secular school on behalf of and alongside it at the dawn of the XX^e century.

A) Mathilde Salomon's ideal patronage: "the more intimate reciprocal penetration of the different classes of society

Although the turn to secular women's extracurricular activities took place at the very beginning of the 20th century, Mathilde Salomon was ahead of the movement. As soon as the Ligue de l'Enseignement reoriented itself towards popular education in 1894, she stressed the need for women's patronages. She was asked by the *Revue Bleue* to comment on the new ambition of lay people to accompany young people "From School to Regiment" in 1895. In her contribution, Mathilde Salomon began by stating that lay patronages should not be replicas of Catholic patronages. She goes on to

11 Laurent Besse, Carole Christen, "L'histoire populaire en chantier", in Carole Christen, Laurent Besse (dir.), *History of Popular Education 1815-1945*, op. cit. pp. 35-50.

12 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, op. cit.

13 Sylvie Fayet-Scribe, (preface by Émile Poulat), *Associations féminines et catholicisme - De la charité à l'action sociale, XIX^e-XX^e siècle*, Paris, les éditions ouvrières, 1990, p. 104.

14 Quoted by Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, op. cit.

15 See Jack E. S. Hayward in *International Review of Social History*: "Solidarity: the Social History of an Idea in Nineteenth Century France", 1959, vol 4, pp. 261-284; "Educational Pressure Groups and the Indoctrination of the Radical Ideology of Solidarism, 1895-1914", 1963, vol 8, pp. 1-17.

16 Speech by a member of the Ligue de l'enseignement quoted in Jean-Paul Martin (ed.), (preface by Jean-Michel Ducomte), *La Ligue de l'enseignement: Une histoire politique (1866-2016)*, Rennes, PUR, p. 119.

is wary of the term "patronage": "it is contrary to the spirit of our French society¹⁷". According to her, patronage implies paternalistic action by one class towards another under the guise of Christian charity, which is unacceptable in a democratic society. Indeed, as Jean-Michel Ducomte, Jean-Paul Martin and Joël Roman write, "denominational patronage [...] provides a repulsive model [for secularists], exclusively assimilated to authoritarianism¹⁸". The headmistress of Collège Sévigné therefore advocated another model: "instead of patronages, I would like associations [...] whose active members would be children aged 13 to 17¹⁹". This is the spirit in which the Collège Sévigné patronage already operates. The pupils who attended it, mostly from the middle classes, ran the association and decided on the direction to take. Every Thursday, they welcome poor girls from the neighbourhood with whom they do needlework, prepare amusing readings and organise a tea party. Mathilde Salomon wanted to expand the activities of the patronage by holding outdoor meetings in the summer, going on excursions to the countryside in the summer and visiting museums in the winter.

Its aim is to make the association an instrument of class reconciliation:

"If properly understood, [such an initiative] could perhaps become the starting point of a whole system [...] of mutual education, with the patronage classes having to learn something else, but no less than the patronised classes. Mathilde Salomon considers that secular patronages cannot reproduce a vertical model where the one who provides knowledge and material aid is in a position of superiority over the one who receives. Noting that many unfortunate people wallow in an "incurable distrust" of those who want to help them, Mathilde Salomon puts all her hopes in the children: "[they] do not distrust each other: it is through them that we can reach the parents". In hoping to create a friendship between children from different classes, Mathilde Salomon follows the same logic as Ferdinand Buisson when he declared, as a good promoter of the single school: "The quickest way to reform society is to reform the school. [Let us achieve among children what is not, it is said, achievable among men. Perhaps these children, now men, will no longer find it so impossible to achieve²⁰."

After presenting her Parisian patronage, Mathilde Salomon insists on the need to spread this lay model in the rural world. In the provinces as in Paris, the objective is the same:

"the reciprocal penetration [...] of the different classes of society. When they come to understand each other, [...] the third word of our national motto will have a less ironic meaning²¹".

The patronage initiated by Mathilde Salomon at the Collège Sévigné continued in the following years. In 1897, it welcomed 14 children²². It was in the name of this pioneering initiative that Mathilde Salomon spoke at the International Congress of Secondary Education in 1900. She

17 Mathilde Salomon, 'De l'École au Régiment', *Revue bleue*, 31 August 1895.

18 Jean-Michel Ducomte, Jean-Paul Martin, Joël Roman, *Anthologie de l'éducation populaire*, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

19 Mathilde Salomon, 'De l'École au Régiment', *Revue bleue*, 31 August 1895.

20 Quoted by Frédéric Mole, *L'École laïque pour une République sociale*, *op. cit.*, p. 328.

21 Mathilde Salomon, 'De l'École au Régiment', *Revue bleue*, 31 August 1895.

22 Personal papers of Mathilde Salomon, 1897.

presents its initiative as a "practical complement to the moral education of young girls in high schools²³". Far from only benefiting the most humble, patronage is a lesson in morality for those who dedicate themselves to it: "our secondary schools for girls, gradually entrusted with the moral future of so many future families, must make it clear [...] that teaching is not separate from education. Nothing is more educational than taking care of a poor child.

Mathilde Salomon recalls that the secondary school curriculum aims to develop in young girls a taste for effort, courage and perseverance. But "living examples have a different power". The headmistress of Collège Sévigné is well aware that, unlike their brothers, many secondary school girls live in the closed circle of the family, far from any "living example". As a result, "many girls are brought up in a strange ignorance of human misery²⁴". When they meet poor people, "they instinctively look upon them [...] as a separate species". Prolonged contact with poor children would be for them a "lesson in things, fruitful for self-examination".

However, such an approach may lead to a challenge to the social order. Mathilde Salomon welcomes this: "It is good that the quietude and comfort of some should be disturbed [...] by the thought of the suffering of others, [it is good] to inspire some concern about the legitimacy of the well-being that one has not bought with one's work". Far from reproducing the model of a charity that maintains a distance between the benefactor and the obliged by legitimising social differences, the patronage that Mathilde Salomon dreams of would question the legitimacy of idle wealth. For the director of the Collège Sévigné, a lay patronage can only be democratic. This plea is accompanied by an implicit questioning of the school model of the Third Republic. Mathilde Salomon declared that in America and Switzerland, petty bourgeois and working class children rubbed shoulders in a school system that she described as "truly democratic" since it welcomed all children "without any distinction other than age, aptitude or purpose". But in France, the existence of two competing levels of education - primary and secondary - allows well-to-do families to spare their offspring from "promiscuity" with the children of the people. As a result, the school does not play its role in bringing people together.

One of the arguments used against social mixing is the fear of contagion of "poor people's diseases". To alleviate these fears, Mathilde Salomon suggested that in each oratory, poor children should be subjected to a compulsory medical examination by medical students. This would reassure the parents of the schoolgirls and give work to young women, while at the same time initiating a "hygienic surveillance" of the working classes. Lay patronage would exist for the benefit of all. By "moralizing" some working-class children, the schoolgirls would "moralize" themselves: "And [...] without heavy expenditure, this work of education will have collaborated [. . .] in the great task which will be the glory of the twentieth century: the

23 Mathilde Salomon, "Complément pratique de l'éducation morale des jeunes filles dans les Lycées. Patronage d'enfants par des jeunes filles", *Revue universitaire*, July 1900. Also reproduced in *Rapports préparatoires au Congrès international de l'enseignement secondaire à Exposition universelle de 1900*, Paris, Colin, 1900, 48 pp.

24 Mathilde Salomon, 'De l'École au Régiment', *Revue bleue*, 31 August 1895.

sincere reconciliation between all social classes. Mathilde Salomon's initiative was intended to break away from the model of the patroness who gives charity to buy her salvation. However, while challenging an unjust social order, Mathilde Salomon's project was based on the usual springs of philanthropy: feminine devotion, redistribution of wealth through voluntary deductions from one's own fortune, and the moralization of the wealthy and working classes. Although it was not a Catholic charity, the Collège Sévigné initiative was not inspired by socialism either: it was an in-between solidarity.

However, the period of the Affaire was an opportunity for Mathilde Salomon to draw closer to socialism. In 1898, she summed up her year: "I saw two remarkable people, Mme de Hirsch and Jaurès²⁵". In Jaurès, Mathilde Salomon first admired the Dreyfus supporter, before recognising the relevance of the political ideology he carried. In 1903, when she left the general assembly of l'Abri, a philanthropic association that could not satisfy all the requests, Mathilde Salomon concluded: "Jaurès is right. It is an economic question."²⁶ " Although her admiration for Jaurès gradually convinced her that the "social question" was an economic question before it was a moral one, it was within a philanthropy with a solidarity dimension that she inscribed the peri and post-school works she ran during the Belle Époque. When she died in 1909, the lay patronage of Collège Sévigné still existed. It was a branch of an association of high school girls whose mission was to help working-class girls make their trousseau. Sections were also active in the public secondary schools of Versailles, Bordeaux, Condom and Le Mans²⁷. The project that Mathilde Salomon developed at the Congress of Secondary Education in 1900 did not remain without effect.

B) Popular education and the critique of the Ferry school as a reproduction of a class society

Solidarity-based compromise is the dominant thinking in public education. The objective of class reconciliation was more convincing in the educational world than class struggle. Thus, when Jacques and Mona Ozouf summarised the testimonies of the teachers of this period, they found that they all emphasised a Jaurès who was more of a reformist than a revolutionary:

Like Jaurès, our teachers act through words. Like him, they also experience the futility of the imperious shortcuts advocated by the worshippers of the permanent revolution.

"In the word revolution, [...] he deleted the letter r. Educators cannot but recognise the kinship with their own profession, which requires them to encounter daily the resistance of beings, the length of time, and to practice the humble virtue of patience²⁸.

25 Personal papers, 1898 - Mme de Hirsch, it is recalled, finances scholarships at the Collège Sévigné.

26 Personal papers, 1903.

27 See Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, April 1910.

28 Jacques and Mona Ozouf (with V. Aubert and C. Steindecker), *La République des instituteurs*, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

Jacques and Mona Ozouf's conclusions apply to the intellectuals analysed in this thesis. Several of them claimed to be socialists, but none of them adhered to a revolutionary discourse.²⁹ The women teachers know the time it takes to form citizens' consciences. All of them refuse, as if by professional reflex, to accept speeches calling for a coup de force. Their profession consists in making the law prevail over force and words over violence, which does not prevent them from militating in favour of a more democratic Republic. It must be said that the women civil servants in the Public Education Department at the time came mainly from the middle or working classes. This partly explains the interest they showed in the fate of the working classes. However, while Jaurès was the political figure most favoured by male and female teachers, it was Ferdinand Buisson who appeared to be the guiding figure for most of the female intellectuals studied here.

More of a radical-socialist than a socialist, Buisson joined Jaurès on many issues relating to education. However, while Buisson called for the merging of primary and secondary education into a single, indivisible national education system, Jaurès preferred a "single school" to a . a "producers' school" that would train working-class children for their future role as actors in working-class history³⁰. However, when the intellectuals studied here questioned the division of public education into two orders, they did so from the perspective of Buisson and not that of Jaurès³¹. Thus, as early as 1899, Pauline Kergomard proclaimed her contempt for the school system inherited from the Ferry laws, which espoused the hierarchies of a society forged by capitalism:

Why send girls under the age of twelve to secondary school, since the education they can assimilate is nothing other than primary education? [It would be simpler, and also more fraternal, to educate all girls together, whatever the social position of their parents. For it is not a question, in a democracy, of inventing artificial links between individuals; it is necessary to create unalterable sympathies. And these sympathies are created only by comradeship, and we are comrades only on the school benches. The time for this dissemination of fraternal feelings could be brought forward by the reunion of the two orders of education in the alumni associations, and especially in the patronages. [...] A game of shuttlecock or croquet, in which the players struggle without any other passion than that of the game, naturally prepares them to sit side by side to listen to the lesson of the same teacher³².

29 With the notable exception of Madeleine Vernet, a supporter of a "class" school where proletarians would develop their combativeness as future leaders of the proletariat. Traces of a reformist socialism can be found in Marie Baertschi, Albertine Eidenschenk, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello and Pauline Kergomard.

30 Frédéric Mole, *L'École laïque pour une République sociale*, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

31 On these early questionings about the single school, see Jean-Noël Luc, Jean-François Condette and Yves Verneuil, *Histoire de l'enseignement en France, XIX^e-XX^e siècle*, Malakof, Armand Colin, 2020, pp. 185-195.

32 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 11 March 1899.

For Pauline Kergomard, popular education initiatives had to be part of an overall reform of public education. The primary role of lay patronages should therefore be to enable girls from different social backgrounds to come together.

Mathilde Salomon came to the same conclusion. In her personal papers, she wrote a note on primary education in which she welcomed the decision of the Chamber of Deputies to standardise the curricula of all boys' primary classes, whether they were in a lycée or a local school: "The most sincere efforts to bring classes closer together cannot succeed as long as education allows irreducible differences to persist³³". True to her outspoken nature, Pauline Kergomard wrote in *La Fronde* that "neither the State nor families have the right to predestine children³⁴". A few months later, at the Congress on the Status and Rights of Women in 1900, she expressed the wish that all children should attend the same primary school, with only the best going on to secondary school.³⁵ The wish, considered revolutionary, was rejected. Seven years later, the inspector repeated in *L'École nouvelle* that it was necessary to democratise a school unworthy of the Republic:

I am still a fervent supporter of schooling *at all levels*, receiving on the same benches the children of intellectual workers, the children of manual workers and also the children of those who are not workers at all. Does this mean that necessarily ALL children MUST go through ALL the stages leading from primary school [...] to the lecture halls of the faculties? Obviously not! [...] The freedom given to all will benefit some to go all the way; others, to go only halfway [...]. But it will be enough that it exists for the country to feel the benefit of it³⁶.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello did not say anything different in the walls of her popular university in November 1900. For her, the public school was not fulfilling the missions that the French Revolution had left it as a legacy. She presented the national education plan presented by Lakanal to the Convention a century earlier as a model. She hoped that one day it would be implemented: 'All young Frenchmen will receive a solid primary education in the same schools. After this first compulsory stage, young people, not according to their social rank, but according to their aptitudes [...] will divide themselves freely between schools for manual work [...] or classical studies³⁷.' "

Albertine Eidenschenk also points out the inadequacies of the republican school. In 1906, she criticised the primary classes in secondary schools, those spaces "for the use of the petit bourgeois that our love of equality carefully maintains in all secondary schools for boys and girls³⁸".

33 Personal papers, undated, probably after 1899.

34 Pauline Kergomard, "Esquisse d'un enseignement basé sur la psychologie de l'enfant", *La Fronde*, 16 Feb. 1900.

35 Proceedings of the *International Congress on the Status and Rights of Women*, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

36 Pauline Kergomard, "Écoles maternelles - réponses", *L'École nouvelle*, 12 January 1907.

37 Speech by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello at the inauguration of the Maison du peuple, 24 November 1900, reproduced in *Annales de l'Université populaire lyonnaise*, No. 2, Lyon, A. Storck et compagnie, February 1901.

38 A. Eidenschenk, "Les cours du soir obligatoires", *L'École nouvelle*, 28 July 1906.

These criticisms of a socially segregated school can be found both among some reformist socialists and in the radical-socialist ranks³⁹. For Mathilde Salomon, Pauline Kergomard, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello and Albertine Eidenschenk, the pleas for a single school always went hand in hand with a reflection on popular education: for them, secular patronages, UPs and evening classes were stages in the democratisation of education.⁴⁰ If the different levels of education were not to be merged, the popular education movement should at least bring them closer together. Thus, when Pauline Kergomard reported on the Congress of Secondary Education held in Rennes in 1898, she welcomed the wish to encourage teachers from the three orders to collaborate in popular education. She also praised the report presented by Lucie Saffroy, former headmistress of Fontenay and now primary school inspector. The latter was interested in the "petites A", associations of former pupils, and their development into secular patronages for young girls, which she felt should henceforth be at the centre of republican concerns, given the need to rally women to the Republic⁴¹.

But to train women citizens in these popular education spaces, the pedagogical techniques then in use had to be modified. Pauline Kergomard advocated the adoption of the "citizen debate" in extracurricular works: "Hosts and guests would keep a good memory of these cordial receptions where so many ideas and feelings were shared, and this memory would contribute to revive this fraternity which has so much difficulty in triumphing over our prejudices⁴²".

Despite the call for the collaboration of the various levels of education in popular education, when in January 1895 a decree provided for subsidies for the organisation of adult education courses and popular lectures, it was the staff of primary schools who were targeted. The task of organising local adult education courses fell primarily to primary school teachers, "Small A" or secular patronages⁴³. Édouard Petit, the Inspector General responsible for surveys on popular education at the turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries, thus advised that the third year of teacher training colleges should be used to train the future leaders of these initiatives. As far as the girls' normal schools were concerned, many teachers and headmistresses felt directly challenged by the demopedic movement. The *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes* reflects the interest of this professional body in popular education initiatives⁴⁴. In April 1900, Albertine Eidenschenk requested that information on current events in the works of the "Fontenaysiennes" be included in the bulletin

39 See in particular the speech by Herriot, a friend of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, in 1906: "If we had wanted to create and perpetuate social divisions, we could not have found anything better than this system of education which isolates, during childhood, adolescence and part of youth, men who should be brothers and fight shoulder to shoulder in life", quoted by Frédéric Mole, *L'École laïque pour une République sociale, op. cit.*, p. 262.

40 For an overview of the discussions on the single school, notably at the Joint Congress of Secondary and Primary Education in 1904, see Yves Verneuil, 'Les professeurs de l'enseignement secondaire au début du XX^e siècle : entre corporatisme et esprit de catégorie', *Carrefours de l'éducation*, 2004/1, n°17, pp. 102-117.

41 See Pauline Kergomard, in *La Fronde*: "Choses de l'enseignement. Le congrès de Rennes", 4 October 1898 and "Choses of teaching, 13 October 1898.

42 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 3 November 1898.

43 See an example of these actions initiated by a schoolteacher: Alain Corbin, *Les conférences de Morterolles, hiver 1895-1896, À l'écoute d'un monde disparu*, Paris, Flammarion, 2013.

44 Notably Rachel Albert, 'University Extension in England', *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1899.

extracurricular⁴⁵. A year later, she published an article in which she described the project she had set up at the Ecole Normale de Chambéry⁴⁶.

C) Albertine Eidenschenk: from the Solidarité féminine de Chambéry to compulsory evening classes

Albertine Eidenschenk was quick to follow the popular education movement when she returned to the ranks of public education after her pregnancies in 1899. As headmistress in Chambéry, she became close to the Cercle Savoisien of the Ligue de l'enseignement, which sponsored a Sunday school for young girls created by lycée teachers and schoolmistresses. Although the Sunday school was very well attended in the winter of 1898-1899, it threatened not to reopen due to a lack of students a year later. To save the work, Albertine Eidenschenk proposed to hold the meetings within the walls of her normal school and to involve her student teachers as well as her professors. She also suggested adding a recreational part to the actual lessons. The meetings were therefore resumed in a new place and in a new form in December 1900 with 62 female students. They ended in May 1901 with 110 women and 150 registered members. Albertine Eidenschenk describes the reasons for this great success, hoping that the initiative would inspire her Fontenaysian colleagues in the rest of France.

The young girls welcomed at the Women's Solidarity were offered domestic education classes to initiate them into their future role as mothers and wives, natural science classes, history classes - a lesson on Napoleon I... with projections! -and moral and civic talks, for example on the Solidarity doctrine or on the problem of alcoholism. The Solidarité féminine was formed outside of any religious denomination and was committed to absolute respect for the conscience of its members. This did not prevent Albertine Eidenschenk from applying her "Active neutrality". Scientific truths are presented, including their contradictions with the biblical account. In addition to these courses, there are playful activities. For example, the women listeners sing texts by Maurice Bouchor or melodies learnt at Fontenay by the teachers of the teacher training college. The teacher-students read to the listeners works from the contemporary repertoire (such as Anatole France). The session ended with dancing, "so much so that we saw the time of departure coming with regret⁴⁷". Albertine Eidenschenk also organised a tombola where the girls could win savings books, dresses and stationery.

The theme of the lessons taught and the type of prizes to be won testify to the solidarist tendency in which the work is embedded, a tendency defined by Jean-Paul Martin as a compromise between

"utopian collectivism and unbridled liberalism⁴⁸". In this logic, secular women's extracurricular works go beyond simple popular education and are akin to a secularised form of philanthropy, as Albertine Eidenschenk writes: "To offer [young people

45 See J. Gignan, "Compte-rendu de l'assemblée régionale de Chambéry", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1900.

46 Mme A. Eidenschenk, "La Solidarité féminine de Chambéry", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1901.

- 47 Mme A. Eidschenk, "La Solidarité féminine de Chambéry", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1901.
- 48 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, *op. cit.* , p. 229.

girls], with a few healthy distractions, a little education, that's good. But [...] when you see them coming to these meetings with pierced shoes, when you see so many pale and anaemic figures, you can't help but think that there would be something else to do⁴⁹. "

For the following year, she therefore proposed to extend the tasks of the Solidarité féminine. In addition to the Sunday school, Albertine Eidenschenk herself taught a series of adult classes on morality, civics and maternal and infant hygiene. Albertine Eidenschenk also wanted to set up a mutual aid society for diligent girls. She encouraged her colleagues to follow her example. The popular education movement gave the Fontenays girls the means to pay their debt to society, as they had benefited from exemplary educational conditions: "[The aim is to] bring the women of the bourgeois class closer to the girls of the working class [...]. Will we succeed? I am convinced of it. In order to win hearts and act on them, [...] we must, in a word, have the 'popular soul' that the Inspector was so keen to give us.

Albertine Eidenschenk did not stop there. In 1906, when she was head of the largest teacher training college in France at Douai and had just been elected to the CSIP, she put forward a proposal for compulsory evening classes on behalf of herself and her husband. The Eidenschenks' starting point is twofold: the recent elections were a great Republican victory. It is generally agreed that this is the result of secular education, the greatest strength of the Republic. Albertine Eidenschenk knows, however, that "the opponents of the current regime [...] are taking advantage of this lesson to try [...] to regain the ground they have lost through post-school works⁵⁰". So the war continues to be played out elsewhere, in post-school initiatives. Albertine Eidenschenk was well aware of the workload of the teachers, who were not only responsible for the day-to-day running of their school, but also for the adult education classes in the evenings and the patronages on Thursdays and Sundays. As a representative of the interests of the primary staff, she cannot decently base her project of compulsory evening classes on the voluntary work of the primary staff. She also knows that the state is not prepared to spend large sums of money to encourage the creation of evening classes. Nicolas Palluau estimated that in 1914 the budget set aside to reward the 83,339 primary school staff involved in after-school activities was 653,000 francs: this represented an average of 7.83 francs per teacher⁵¹. With such sums, it is impossible to envisage a systematisation of after-school education for adolescents.

Albertine Eidenschenk and her husband therefore proposed a solution that would not cost the state money and would not overburden the teaching staff. First of all, they want to reduce the working day for children in primary schools: they have 30 hours of lessons per week and six hours per day. Albertine Eidenschenk points out that in

49 Mme A. Eidenschenk, "La Solidarité féminine de Chambéry", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1901.

50 A. Eidenschenk, "Les cours du soir obligatoires", *L'École nouvelle*, 28 July 1906.

51 Nicolas Palluau, "Les "professeurs du peuple". Instituteurs et encadrement de l'éducation populaire (1896-1914)", in Carole Christen, Laurent Besse (eds.), *Histoire de l'éducation populaire 1815-1945, op. cit.*, pp.237-252.

In Germany, all children are in school for only four and a half hours a day. It therefore proposes to limit the time spent in school by all primary school pupils by lightening their curriculum. The idea is to free up time for teachers to reinvest in compulsory evening classes for teenagers. The hour and a half saved each day would be used in three-hour blocks on certain weekdays for classes for teenagers aged 13 to 17. Albertine Eidenschenk also proposed that purely primary education for children between the ages of 6 and 13 should focus exclusively on reading, writing and arithmetic, with some history, geography, morals and object lessons. The Certificat d'études, which is too encyclopaedic, would be limited to these subjects. In return, adolescents would study contemporary history, civics and natural sciences. Young men could complete their training with elements of rational agriculture, for example, while girls would be trained in home economics.

Albertine and Laurent Eidenschenk insist on the urgency of such a reform: France is already ahead of Switzerland and Germany in terms of the continuation of schooling among adolescents. Moreover, in many respects, the school system born of the Ferry laws needs to be renovated. Albertine Eidenschenk complains that compulsory schooling is not sufficiently enforced for children up to the age of 13. In view of this, it is better to limit the daily attendance time at school, which is unsuited to the nature of children, but to ensure their regular attendance. Adolescents should in return complete their education over a period of four years.

The project was publicised in *L'École nouvelle*, but it was also relayed by the general public press. Thus, *L'Humanité* summarised the project and gave it its support⁵². Why didn't Albertine Eidenschenk present this project to the CSIP? Was it because she had not managed to convince her primary school colleagues of its relevance? In any case, in 1906 she signed a vow with them to hand over custody of the school to the teachers - and no longer to the town hall - in order to facilitate the organisation of extracurricular initiatives. In fact, in cases where municipalities are hostile to secular schools, the mayor can exercise his right of control over the building to prevent events from being held outside school hours. This would mean that the teacher would have full control over the school. However, the permanent section of the CSIP rejected the vow and kept the school under the responsibility of the mayor⁵³. Albertine Eidenschenk's calls for a renovation of the school born of the Ferry laws did not find an echo in a rather conservative high council.

D) The renewal of the Ladies' Committee of the Ligue de l'enseignement at the dawn of the XX^e century: the arrival of a new generation of professionals

The teachers active in secular extracurricular initiatives were supported by an association, the Ligue de l'enseignement. It took a turn in 1894-1895 by making the

52 Émile Glay, "À la laïque - les cours du soir obligatoires", *L'Humanité*, 5 November 1906.

53 Vote discussed on 28 December 1906, CSIP minutes, F/17/13643.

It was not until the aftermath of the Affaire, however, that women's patronages really attracted his attention. However, it was not until the aftermath of the Affaire that women's patronage really attracted his attention. The League was nevertheless open to women from the time of its foundation during the Second Empire. It was led by Jean Macé, nicknamed the

"In 1876, he created a committee of some forty ladies in the Parisian circle of the League. As early as 1876, he set up a committee of about forty ladies in the Parisian circle of the League, including Clarisse Coignet. Despite this, women had little influence in the association before 1901. The issue of female education was, moreover, marginal in the congresses of the XIX^e century.

Anna Lampérière, a member of the Commission for Democratic Youth Patronage created by ELEC in 1894⁵⁴Anna Lampérière, a member of the Commission for Democratic Youth Patronage created by ELEC in 1894, reported in the *Revue pédagogique* on the conclusions of the 1895 congress in Bordeaux. The girls' patronages were not the subject of any in-depth reflection. Anna Lampérière therefore declared that women's education was one of the questions left "up in the air" at the congress. She justified this by quoting the speech of Léon Bourgeois, who, in addition to being her mentor, was then the president of the Ligue: "As for women's education, in the current state of affairs, it is wrong to make it, *a priori*, a separate issue⁵⁵". Seven years later, at the Lyon Congress, Édouard Petit stressed, on the contrary, "the need to involve women in secular propaganda and popular education, and [denounced] the mistake we have made in leaving them too much on the sidelines until now⁵⁶".

Between 1895 and 1902, the Dreyfus Affair shook things up. Thus, in April 1901, the Solidarité féminine was founded, active in the Paris region, and at the same time a Comité des dames de la Ligue was recreated, which extended its action to the national level. These two groups brought together women ready to initiate a popular education movement aimed exclusively at girls and teenagers. In December 1901, the young pharmacist Louise Napias, who was a member of both committees, reported on this new feminine impulse in popular education:

It was soon realised that, while the number of works for young boys was increasing, almost nothing was being done for young girls. The Ligueurs appealed to [...] devoted republican women and set up a "Ladies' Committee" charged with extending and developing the patronage of young girls. [Paul Bert said that: *when you educate a boy, you educate a single man; whereas if you educate a girl, you educate a whole family.* The League, convinced of this idea, makes an urgent appeal to all women, so that they [bring] their support to [...] the secular school⁵⁷.

The Women's Committee works hand in hand with the Women's Cooperation. Their initiatives aim to support girls before, during and after compulsory schooling. Before, by setting up crèches, nurseries and maternity wards to help poor mothers and their children.

54 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, op. cit, p. 246.

- 55 Quoted by Anna-M. Lampérière, "Le congrès de la Ligue de l'Enseignement à Bordeaux", *Revue pédagogique*, January 1896.
- 56 Quoted by Odette Laguerre, "Congrès de la Ligue de l'Enseignement", *La Fronde*, 30 September 1902.
- 57 B. Galien [*alias* Louise Napias], "Autour de l'École laïque", *La Fronde*, 21 December 1901.

infants. During, by supporting existing patronages and creating new ones. After, through alumni associations and after-school initiatives.

The founding assembly of the *Coopération féminine* was held in April 1901 in the presence of Ferdinand Dreyfus, a former member of parliament, and Étienne Jacquin, the president of the *Ligue*. The *Coopération féminine* was therefore halfway between a private association and a public work, given the importance of the institutional and political support it received. The association was chaired by Mme Jules Ferry, "whose name is a whole programme"⁵⁸. The secretary was none other than Marie Dugard. It was she who gave a "very literary little speech"⁵⁹ "She concluded by hoping that French women would show themselves to be of equal value to American women: during her trip to the United States, she had been struck by the importance of female action in philanthropic works.

At this founding meeting, Etienne Jacquin announced that the *Comité des dames de la Ligue de l'Enseignement* was being reorganised. The *Coopération féminine*, focusing on Paris and the Seine department, would be the local branch of the *Comité des dames*. The two bodies would pursue the same goal: "the preservation of childhood and the intellectual sowing of adolescence". Mme Jules Ferry was chosen as president of the *Comité des dames*, to underline the relationship between the two groups. This time Louise Napias was the general secretary, while Lucie Saffroy and the wife of Édouard Petit were the vice-presidents.

The reorganisation of the *Comité des dames* in 1901 was a break in the history of *La Ligue de l'enseignement*. It can be explained by the sociological composition of the new *Comité des dames*. With a few exceptions - such as Anna Lampérière or Marie Bonneval - most of the women active in the *Ligue* before the XX^e century came from the "republican aristocracy". Thus, the three women elected to the General Council at the constitutive congress of 1881 were Mme Hippolyte Carnot - the mother of the future President of the Republic -, Mme Dorian - related to the deputies Charles and Daniel Dorian - and Mme Émile Javal, who was the wife of Sadi Carnot's learned friend and the grandmother of Louise Weiss. These women, who came from wealthy families, corresponded to the figure of the "lay patroness": they had no professional activity and derived their legitimacy from their patronymic. In the *Comité des dames*, they rubbed shoulders with the widows of Edgar Quinet and Jules Michelet, as well as Mrs Lockroy, Mrs Brisson and Mrs Clamageran - all of whom were also members of the *Comité des dames*.

"Women of". Jean-Paul Martin states: "this organisation with a presumably high average age"⁶⁰ became "ghostly"⁶¹ "at the turn of the century.

Although Mme Jules Ferry, a new "woman of", was appointed president of the committee, which was reconstituted in 1901, it should not be concluded that this new group was a continuation of the previous one. According to the *monthly Bulletin de la Ligue*, the new body was driven by, among others

58 Eugénie Risler, the future Mme Jules Ferry, was the daughter of a Protestant entrepreneur working in the chemical industry in Alsace. She married Jules Ferry in 1875 and brought him a large dowry. Their witnesses were Gambetta

and Clemenceau.

59 According to Marie-Louise Néron, "Before, during and after school", *La Fronde*, 26 April 1901.

60 Jean-Paul Martin, "Entre philanthropie et féminisme. Le comité des dames de la Ligue de l'enseignement (1901-1914)", art. cit.

61 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

Mlles Delhomme and Fiévet, teachers at the Sophie Germain upper primary school, Mlles Kastler and Dugard, teachers at the Lycée Molière, Mlles Becker and Saint-Étienne, who teach at the Lycée Fénelon, Mlle Matheron, teacher at the Lycée Racine, Mlle Billotey, teacher at the Edgar Quinet upper primary school, Mme Frédel, primary school principal and Mlle M. Brezène, teacher⁶². Public education officials formed the matrix of this new committee. Many came from Fontenay or Sèvres. Mme Henri Marion, head of Fontenay, was also a member of the committee. It was therefore the generation of daughters of the Republic, trained in its institutions of excellence, who took over from the "secular patronesses". Most of them came from the middle classes, and some from the working classes. They owe their social ascension to the secular school. Finally, the presence of female teachers from teacher training colleges, higher primary schools and secondary schools testifies to the fusion of the primary and secondary orders in a common desire for popular education.

After launching an appeal to all those of good will in January 1901, the committee officially met in April. Lucie Saffroy and Françoise Ginier, primary school inspectors, as well as Marie Baertschi and Pauline Kergomard joined the ranks of the founders. During the Belle Époque, the Ladies' Committee of the Ligue de l'Enseignement brought together the finest women in public education. And when there were absentees among the expected women, it was because, due to a lack of places, they were in the League's Parisian circle and not in the national committee, such as Anna Lampérière, Mathilde Salomon and Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello.⁶³ In addition to these personalities, there were "new women" who evolved outside the ranks of public education, such as Louise Napias, a pharmacist, and Blanche Edwards-Pilliet, the first female hospital intern. At the beginning of the 20th century, the League became the den of intellectuals committed to educational issues.

Beyond these varied profiles, it is worth noting the numerical importance of the "field experts": whether they were schoolteachers, primary inspectors, teachers or doctors, most of them were aware of the realities on the ground. But, as Jean-Paul Martin writes about the Ligue, "one would be tempted to say that the main factor in the group's homogenisation is its republican allegiance⁶⁴". One could go further and say that the members of the Comité des dames and the Coopération féminine came from the ranks of Dreyfusism. This is what Louise Billotey implied when she declared in 1902 at the General Assembly of the Coopération féminine: "[the initiative] was born of this great and admirable movement which had as its inspirers the best servants of democracy, those who [...] go to the people to enlighten them⁶⁵". As opponents of nationalism, the Comité des dames and the Coopération féminine were part of the UP movement born of the Affaire. Before joining these groups, Denise Billotey received a diploma of honour in 1899 for her participation in adult e d u c a t i o n ⁶⁶. For her, after-school initiatives were just a

62 *Bulletin de la Ligue française de l'enseignement*, January-February 1901.

63 Albertine Eidenschenk is connected to the Savoy branch of ELEC.

64 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

65 Speech at the General Assembly of the Women's Co-operation on 5 June 1902, *Bulletin de la Ligue*, August-September 1902.

66 See his career file in the archives of the Instruction publique, F/17/23971.

a natural extension of her profession. Thus she declared in 1902: "We are all convinced that the action of the secular school is insufficient because it is interrupted too early, that its alleged inefficiency is due to the fact that it ceases at the moment when it needs to be exercised most⁶⁷". Denise Billotey's career file includes a letter from Mme Jules Ferry to Paul Lapie, Director of Primary Education, in support of her candidacy for the directorship of the Ecole Normale de la Seine in 1902:

It is the benevolence you have shown to our women's meeting [...] which authorises me to address to you today a very warm recommendation in favour of one of our devoted collaborators, Miss Billotey. [You have also witnessed the generosity with which she has [*entrusted?*] her time and talent to works intended to strengthen the influence of the school and to serve the cause of secular education⁶⁸.

The weight of professional educators in secular popular education contrasts with the profile of Catholic women involved in this field at the same time. Thus, when she studied the group gathered around Mercédès Le Fer de la Motte, a former secularised nun at the beginning of the XX^e century, Sylvie Fayet-Scribe wrote that the women active with her had no other status "than that of being general secretary, president or vice-president of an association⁶⁹". None of them is a graduate earning an independent living.

E) Acquisition and development of field expertise in popular education within the Comité des dames

Before any initiative, the Ladies' Committee began by legitimising its existence. Louise Napias set about doing this in a paper presented to the League's Congress in the summer of 1901. She insisted on the need to direct popular education towards young girls, despite the doxa that considered their place to be at their mother's side, not in the patronage or evening classes.⁷⁰ Louise Napias also deplored the difficulty of finding women to run the lay patronages. The Ladies' Committee therefore decided to contact the departmental circles of the League to encourage them to recruit women locally. Marie Dugard made this appeal⁷¹. She presented the local Ladies' Committees as an opportunity for women from the privileged classes to play a role in society that they had long been denied:

67 Speech at the General Assembly of the Women's Co-operation on 5 June 1902, *Bulletin de la Ligue*, August-September 1902.

68 Undated letter, probably 1902, Denise Billotey's career file, F/17/23971.

69 Sylvie Fayet-Scribe, "Mercédès Le Fer de la Motte (1862-1933): le document en action dans l'histoire de l'éducation populaire", in Carole Christen, Laurent Besse (eds.), *Histoire de l'éducation populaire 1815-1945, op. cit.*

70 Miss Louise Napias, "Democratic Patronage of the Young Girl", *Bulletin de la Ligue*, July 1901.

71 It bears the signature of Mme Jules Ferry, on behalf of the Comité des dames, *Bulletin de la Ligue*, July 1901.

For too long, either because of a too narrow conception of their role, or because of the traditional habit of seeing their beneficence directed towards horizons other than those of democracy, women have been left out of the movement of solidarity which is transforming the old world; a regrettable distance [because] women, especially those who have an easy life, will never feel the greatness of the ends that the modern spirit wants, if they do not work to achieve them.

It was a question of provoking the same female devotion from the laity as the Church was capable of doing. At the 1902 ELEC Congress, the Ladies' Committee called for the recommendation not to call on women teachers, who were already very busy, but "to interest in secular works [women] who have so far been directed towards church works: wives of industrialists, shopkeepers, farmers and workers⁷²". The aim was clearly to counter Catholic initiatives. Women involved in secular popular education should be an embodiment of morality in action:

When we hear the opponents of the secular school [...] boast of what devotion and apostolate we know not, we too could set up a *Golden Book* in which the simple history of one year of the League would be recorded. In our country, those who do good do so simply, quietly, without ostentation and without arrogance, believing [that] the reward of a good deed is to have done it.

Popular education is presented as a means for women to participate in the construction of a secular and democratic society. This is not far from Michelle Perrot's observation that "women have developed, through charity and philanthropy, often transformed into more professional social work, an intervention in the city which has given them real expertise and a sense of effective social citizenship⁷³". By analysing the Comité des dames, thanks to which women maintain a sociability, assert their expertise and speak out against men, we can, like Sylvie Fayet-Scribe, ask ourselves "whether popular education has not above all (but not only) benefited those who practised it⁷⁴".

The Ladies' Committee has several objectives. At the time of its creation in 1901, it declared that it wanted to bring together the associations of former pupils of public schools. It also wanted to organise canteens, workshops, trousseau works, courses for teenage girls and Sunday meetings. These initiatives should be encouraged by providing lecturers, books and projection equipment. It was necessary to ensure that young girls learned "to take their rightful place in the home, to fulfil their role as housekeepers and educators in the community".

72 Voeu du Comité des dames au Congrès de Lyon *Bulletin de la Ligue*, October-November-December 1902.

73 Michelle Perrot, *Les femmes ou les silences de l'Histoire*, op. cit, p. 279.

74 Sylvie Fayet-Scribe, (preface by Émile Poulat), *Associations féminines et catholicisme*, op. cit. , p. 17.

the family and in society⁷⁵ ". The discourse is not dissimilar to that held by Camille Sée 20 years earlier at the time of the creation of women's high schools. In order to train these future mothers, household education emerged at the beginning of the XX^e century, a discipline at the heart of the League's concerns. Thus, at the meeting of 9 May 1901, the pharmacist Louise Napias declared her desire to train good mothers, "in the scientific sense of the word⁷⁶ "and to fight against depopulation by preserving the health of infants. She linked infant mortality to the ignorance of mothers and wanted to develop the teaching of "child rearing" in after-school works. At the end of 1901, the Committee therefore set up a weekly evening class devoted to maternal education. Blanche Edwards-Pilliet opened the series with a course on newborn hygiene; Louise Napias dealt with nutrition through breastfeeding and sterilised milk. The courses were given exclusively by women: all were medical doctors, except for a publicist and an inspector from the Villejuif asylum⁷⁷. If domestic education seems to reduce women's horizons by making motherhood their destiny, it is rather as a scientific and emancipating education that it is conceived by the Comité des dames. The aim was to make women the vectors for improving the health of the working classes. Conducted by medical graduates, these evening classes gave a platform to female pioneers and proposed new models of professional success for women.

The Committee also valued other types of professional expertise. In June 1901, for example, Lucie Saffroy wrote a programme circular to address the difficulties of some directors of patronage schools in managing large numbers of children. As a primary school inspector, she was well placed to give advice. Moreover, in March 1900, the education inspector noted that "Mlle Saffroy has given herself to the work of popular education with a zeal and devotion that is much appreciated in the very working-class districts of the 20th arrondissement⁷⁸ ". The following year, the Inspector General noted that she "spends a lot of time⁷⁹ "Miss Saffroy, who is full of tenderness for the unfortunate, has exerted the most fertile influence around her. In 1903, in view of the development of the works founded under her impetus in the district where she was inspector, the inspector of the academy considered her worthy of the Legion of Honour, which she received in the following months⁸⁰. Like Denise Billotey, an upper primary school teacher, Lucie Saffroy's involvement in the Ladies' Committee of the League seems to stem spontaneously from her duties as a primary school inspector. Her dual role was appreciated in the missions she was given. In 1903, the Committee awarded her a grant to attend the Universal Exhibition in Saint Louis and represent it on the organising committee⁸¹.

75 *ELEC Bulletin*, January-February 1901.

76 *ELEC Bulletin*, June 1901.

77 *ELEC Bulletin*, January-February 1902.

78 Document from the Inspector of Education, March 1900, Lucie Saffroy career file, AJ/16/1481.

79 Document from the Inspector General, March 1901, F/17/22543/A.

80 See the opinion of the Inspector of Education, 20 March 1901, AJ/16/1481.

81 *Correspondance hebdomadaire, Ligue française de l'enseignement*, 21 June 1903.

Pauline Kergomard also contributed her expertise in the field. During the summer 1901 Congress, the Inspector General insisted on the need not to reproduce the school world within the patronages: physical education in particular had to be promoted⁸². While this discipline raised concerns when it was aimed at young girls, Pauline Kergomard insisted on the need for all children and adolescents, regardless of their sex, to let off steam and strengthen their bodies and their health. She therefore called for "games committees" to be set up in the patronages. Here we find the kindergarten specialist who, throughout her career, sought to see children develop freely, far from the mortifying rigour of school discipline.

F) The Maria Deraismes patronage, a model for secular popular education?

Among the works that were the focus of the Comité des dames was the Maria Deraismes patronage, founded in September 1899 by two future members of the Comité, Louise Napias, who was the president, and Marie Baertschi, the secretary. The patronage was created in homage to Maria Deraismes, a feminist and freethinking orator who died in 1894 and was the founder of the Society for the Improvement of Women's lot and the vindication of their rights. Louise Napias was a former ward of this Society, which supported her and helped her finance her studies in pharmacy⁸³. The Maria Deraismes patronage welcomes girls aged at least eight in the XIV^e arrondissement on Thursdays, Sundays and public holidays. If they can afford it, members pay a small fee, half of which goes to a solidarity fund. The patronage offers games, walks, singing, painting, hygiene and sewing lessons, and a snack for all the girls. Louise Napias and Marie Baertschi also set themselves the task of organising a complete education to extend the primary school curriculum (history, literature, common law, physical and natural sciences). The patronage also organised holiday camps thanks to the relief and solidarity fund. 190 girls were enrolled in the oratory in 1899, with an average of 100 in winter and 70 in summer. As Mathilde Salomon had tried to do in the Collège Sévigné oratory, the girls participated directly in the Board of Directors by appointing five of them as deputies⁸⁴.

Because of the diversity of the activities offered, the Maria Deraismes patronage appears as a model of novelty. Directed by a pharmacist and a teacher from a teacher training college, it had nothing to do with the tradition of charitable works. When Marie-Louise Néron covered its inauguration for *La Fronde*, she noted the presence of Ferdinand Buisson, the charity's honorary president, and Pauline Kergomard, who gave a much appreciated speech⁸⁵.

82 *ELEC Bulletin*, October-November 1901.

83 See the intervention of Mrs. Féresse-Deraismes, Maria Deraismes' sister, at the Feminist Congress, on the subject of patronage, *Actes du Congrès international de la condition et des droits des femmes*, op. cit. , p. 25.

84 *Report of the International Jury of the 1900 Paris International Exhibition, Group XVI, Social Economy - Hygiene - Public Assistance*, "Patronage Maria Deraismes", p. 183.

85 Marie-Louise Néron, "Le patronage Maria-Deraismes", *La Fronde*, 4 December 1899.

In 1900, the Universal Exhibition was an opportunity to diversify the activities offered at the patronage: the children visited this great Parisian event and attended talks related to the Exhibition organised by members of the Ligue de l'enseignement⁸⁶. Some of the children's productions were exhibited and received an "honourable" mention from the jury. The following year, Louise Napias was awarded the grand medal of the Ligue de l'enseignement for her dedication to the patronage and the Ladies' Committee. She also received the Palmes académiques, usually awarded to civil servants from the Education Ministry⁸⁷.

At the same time, the Paris municipality, which had fallen into the hands of the nationalists, withdrew the subsidies it had previously granted to the oratory. Like the Collège Sévigné, the Maria Deraismes patronage appeared to be far too secular an initiative in the eyes of the new municipality. The oratory survived in spite of everything. It was no doubt thanks to Marie Baertschi, who was a member, that the Union des libres-penseurs du XVI^e arrondissement organised a collection in June 1900 in favour of the oratory⁸⁸. Two years later, the Ladies' Committee considered this patronage, "despite its recent existence, the meagre resources at its disposal, and the indifference of a large number of parents, [as] a most perfect type of the genre⁸⁹". Is it therefore the most accomplished example of what lay initiative can do in the face of Catholic patronages? Marie Baertschi does not think so. She initiated the patronage with Louise Napias in 1899 and resigned from it between June 1900 and February 1901. Louise Napias and Marie Baertschi did not share the same definition of the adjective "secular". In February 1901, in her article "L'esprit laïque" published in *Pages libres*, the former Fontenaysian declared:

Some time ago I wanted to look after a patronage which was called secular: the first condition imposed on the administrators was that they would undertake never to enter a church even for a baptism or a funeral. I am still looking for, but I cannot find, a difference with the camp opposite, which imposed [on] its lady patrons [to] attend mass regularly⁹⁰ ?

Is there any truth in the article in *La Presse*, which, in a vitriolic portrait of Louise Napias, accuses her of having founded an anti-clerical patronage⁹¹ ? It seems that Louise Napias and her fiancé Augustin Chaboseau are indeed notorious anticlericals. Are the Comité des dames de la Ligue and the Coopération féminine, in their image, hostile to Catholicism? Most of the members refused to make the secular patronages an anti-religious struggle. True to the positions she had taken elsewhere, Marie Dugard spoke out on this subject in June 1903 at the assembly

86 Anonymous, 'Patronage Maria Deraismes', *La Fronde*, 7 February 1901.

87 Renée Rambaud, "La Ligue française de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 24 May 1901.

88 "Libre-pensée", *Le Radical*, 13 June 1900.

89 *ELEC Bulletin*, May-June 1902.

90 Marie Édouard Fuster, "L'esprit laïque", *Pages libres*, 2 February 1901.

91 "Les Pharmaciennes", *La Presse*, 29 August 1904.

general of the *Coopération féminine*: "through philosophical insights that strongly struck the Assembly, she demonstrated that the secular nature of the work, far from alienating anyone, should, on the contrary, invite all truly free-minded women to join in⁹²".

II- Founders of popular universities and critical observers of the movement: UPs as an injunction to reflection and action

In 1901, Dick May wrote about the history of the popular university movement in the *Revue Socialiste*. She stated: "I believe it is impossible not to attribute the immediate cause of the 'movement' to the Dreyfus Affair. [...] Today's France has emerged from the Dreyfus Affair with an ardent desire for education, a taste for morality, and a passion for sociology⁹³". "The Dreyfus Affair highlights the ease with which an entire people can be deceived.⁹⁴". A "taste for morality", because it was a question of spreading the values of the Republic in a country permeable to nationalist discourse. "Passion for sociology", because the UP wants to be a place of reflection on contemporary society. Like many republicans, the intellectuals involved in the UP understood with the Affaire that "school was not enough to fight ignorance, which in their eyes was responsible for all social ills⁹⁵". At the time of the changeover to a new century, Dick May considers that the question of the UP

is full of future, [and] can hardly see a higher one in this heritage that 50 years of social education bequeath, on the edge of two centuries, to a democracy conscious of its progress, quivering with superb impatience⁹⁶. [The UPs are a masterpiece of social pedagogy at the dawn of new times⁹⁷.

If women play a minor role in the UPs - "very few [...] are at the origin of the creations⁹⁸" The aim here is to focus on the few founders and critical observers of this movement. The latter insist on the fact that women, aware of what educational deprivation means because of their gender, share with the working classes an interest in these initiatives to democratise knowledge. The intellectuals affirmed the existence of a common destiny between feminism and the popular education movement that was concomitant with it. At a time when feminists were demanding a right to education for women, they were also demanding a right to education for men,

92 *Correspondance hebdomadaire, Ligue française de l'enseignement*, 7 June 1903.

93 Dick May, "Some reflections on popular universities", *Revue socialiste*, January 1901, pp. 32-49.

94 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914: éducation populaire et mouvement ouvrier au début du siècle*, Paris, éditions ouvrières, 1986, p. 32.

95 Preface by Madeleine Rebérioux to Lucien Mercier, *Les universités populaires, op. cit.*, p. 8.

96 Dick May, "Some reflections on popular universities", *Revue socialiste*, January 1901, pp. 32-49.

97 Dick May, "Some thoughts on the UPs (continued)", *Socialist Review*, February 1901, pp. 165-184.

98 Lucien Mercier, *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914, op. cit.*

What place do they advocate for women intellectuals in this movement to popularise knowledge? Although women were in the minority, how did the UP enable some of them to position themselves in a predominantly male world of knowledge? How do women intellectuals, who are often alienated from partisan activism, understand a movement that flirts with socialism?

A) Women's reflections on the UP movement

The 1900 World Fair hosted two congresses organised by women's groups. In the midst of the UP boom, popular education could not fail to feature in their programme. The Congress of Women's Works and Institutions brought together women, mainly from the philanthropic sector. It ratified a wish relating to the multiplication of the UPs put forward by Pauline Kergomard⁹⁹. The Congress on the Status and Rights of Women, which was more radical, raised the question of the place of women in the UP. After reading a report advocating the creation of special UPs for women, the congress opposed this recommendation: "We must only ask the [UPs] for courses of particular interest to women and mothers, courses which, however [...] must be offered to women and men together, must instruct them in common in the things which can emancipate their conscience¹⁰⁰. "

From the outset, women were quite welcome at turn-of-the-century public meetings. When Marie Aynié analysed the Dreyfus rallies, she noted that "the organising bodies [...] encouraged [...] their participation: by simply mentioning that their presence was authorised or even by exempting them from the admission fee required of male participants¹⁰¹. " Lucien Mercier makes the same observation about the UPs, where women sometimes form the bulk of the audience. Thus, during the municipal election campaign of 1900, "They are even alone at conferences, while men attend political meetings¹⁰² ".

The future explorer Alexandra David-Néel, a contributor to *La Fronde*, considered that women should not only be present in the audience. Addressing a cultivated female readership through this daily newspaper, she urged her female readers to invest in the UP:

We women, who are in a better position to understand by our own example how the systematic and continuous deprivation of serious instruction can influence the mentality of beings; we who must be full of compassion for minds that have been weakened and distorted by ignorance, because we ourselves have been such, cannot be indifferent to the work of instruction. There is no lack of educated women among us [...]; if I address myself more particularly here to the female initiative, I

99 Session of 20 June, *Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Women's Works and Institutions*, *op. cit.* , p. 107.

100 *Proceedings of the International Congress on the Status and Rights of Women*, *op. cit.*

101 Marie Aynié, *Les amis inconnus*, *op. cit.* p. 249.

102 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux) *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914*, *op. cit.* , p. 157.

I hasten to add that in this matter, as in all others, in my opinion, gender rivalries are misplaced. In the face of science, intellectuals who feel themselves to be equals must walk hand in hand¹⁰³.

For women as well as for the working classes, the UP is an opportunity for emancipation through knowledge. The injunction to support the movement was imperative for women intellectuals. Alexandra David-Néel wanted to make their participation in the UPs a stage in their integration into the intellectual milieu, which should refrain from any "gender rivalry".

Several activists did not wait for her advice. Thus, at the first meeting to prepare for the creation of a Society of Popular Universities around the Cooperation of Ideas in February 1899, 70 to 80 people were present, including about ten women¹⁰⁴. When the Society was officially founded in March, Dick May and Pauline Kergomard were on the organising committees. A year later, Marie Baertschi, Miss Rousselle, a teacher from the city of Paris, Mme Chalamet, secretary of the *Résidence universitaire* and Mme Compain, inspector of the *Union pour le sauvetage de l'enfance*, a philanthropic association founded in 1887 by Pauline Kergomard and Caroline de Barrau¹⁰⁵. With a total of 33 names on the Board of Directors, women represent 12% of the members¹⁰⁶.

Several women played an important role in the movement. Dick May, for example, organised the International Congress of Social Education at the Exhibition in 1900, which was attended by 180 participants. The aim of the Congress was to make recommendations to ensure the continuity of the popular education movement. It was chaired by Émile Duclaux, a Dreyfus supporter and head of the Pasteur Institute, and welcomed intellectuals from Belgium, Germany, the United States, Great Britain, Italy, Russia and Switzerland. For France, one can note the participation of Georges Deherme, founder of the Cooperation of Ideas, Charles Gide, leader of the cooperative movement, and Paul Crouzet, the husband of Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, who was very involved in the UP in Toulouse. Dick May writes the conclusions of the assembly in the *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* as general secretary¹⁰⁷. In the framework of the UP, the relationship between intellectuals and the people should not be one of complacency, but of fraternity; teachers should respond to the needs of their listeners, who had been consulted beforehand; popular education should spread the scientific spirit; it was necessary to associate a popular elite that would grow with time; alongside teaching, it was necessary to found works of solidarity, such as consumer cooperatives. Dick May's objective is to internationalise this reflection: "Everything that is called social must be above all human, and everything that is human must be conceived, or foreseen, internationally...".

103 Alexandra Myrial [Alexandra David-Néel], "L'enseignement dans les UP", *La Fronde*, 3 April 1902.

104 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Reberieux) *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914*, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.

105 "Women's scientific movement", *La Femme*, 15 March 1900.

106 See the first issue of the *Bulletin de la Société des universités populaires*, 15 March 1900.

107 Dick May, "The International Congress of Social Science Education", *Journal of Metaphysics and Morals*, 1900, pp. 791-2 - There is a constant confusion in Dick May's title of the Congress, between The "Congress of Social Education" and the "Congress of Social Science Education".

Equally concerned with popular education, Anna Lampérière is behind the International Congress of Social Education, which takes place from 26 to 30 September and welcomes 500 members¹⁰⁸. She brought together Charles Seignobos, Arthur Fontaine, Émile Durkheim, Charles Guieysse, Édouard Petit and Léon Bourgeois. Among its listeners were Louise Compain, who was a member of the Société des UP, Jeanne Dejean de la Bâtie, director of Fontenay, and Blanche Edwards-Pilliet, a member of the Ladies' Committee of the Ligue de l'enseignement. While Dick May moved in the ranks of reformist socialism, Anna Lampérière was an advocate of solidarism. In her Congress, she summarised the conclusions of numerous reports sent in by primary, secondary and higher education teachers on how the public school could be part of this movement¹⁰⁹. However, neither Dick May's congress nor the one organised by Anna Lampérière specifically addressed the role of women in this popular education dynamic. It has to be said that both of them have a unique relationship with feminism¹¹⁰.

B) The UPs or the internationalisation of intellectuals' thinking

The UP movement, which coincided with the organisation of the Universal Exhibition in Paris, was conducive to the internationalisation of a reflection on popular education. Great Britain was a model¹¹¹. Rachel Albert, who had just graduated from Fontenay, was awarded a scholarship to spend two years in England between 1896 and 1898. In the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, she described the "university extension" movement across the Channel¹¹². More than in France, the English university was seen as an aristocratic institution reserved for an elite. Faced with the demand for the democratisation of knowledge, the English University, forced to 'go to the people', sent its professors on lecture tours. Rachel Albert notes the simultaneity of this movement with that which brought women into higher education. The democratisation of knowledge would be active on both the social and gender levels. English women are not mistaken and are very active in university extension:

The woman, who more readily than the man lets her heart speak, has been the determined champion of the cause [...]. Can

108 On these two congresses, see Anne Epstein, 'A "Reason to Act, an Ideal to Strive Towards" Women as Intellectual Organizers at the Paris Exhibition of 1900', in Myriam Boussahba-Bravard and Rebecca Rogers (eds), *Women in International and Universal Exhibitions, 1876- 1937*, New York, London, Routledge, 2018, pp. 127-141.

109 *Actes du Congrès international de l'Éducation sociale*, Paris, Alcan, 1901.

110 See Mélanie Fabre, *Dick May, une femme à l'avant-garde d'un nouveau siècle*, *op. cit.* and Anne R. Epstein, " Pas "tout à fait des nôtres": Anna Lampérière and the Feminists at the Turn of the Twentieth Century', art. cit.

111 On the English movement and its reception in France, see Janie Mortier, "L'université et l'éducation populaire en Angleterre au début du siècle", in Roger Lejosne, *Éducatons anglo-saxonnes, XVIII^e-XX^e siècles*, Amiens, Presses de la Faculté CLERC, 1997, p. 77-89 and "L'Université populaire de part et d'autre du Channel", in François Poirier (ed.), *Cordiale Angleterre. Regards trans-Manche à la Belle Époque*, Paris, Orphys, 2010, p. 145-161.

112 Rachel Albert, 'University Extension in England', *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1899. See also her career file: F/17/24174.

Perhaps, having finally obtained to dip her lips in the cup of science, she also felt the desire to give her less fortunate brothers and sisters a taste of it.

According to Rachel Albert, most of the 'extensionist centres' were initiated by women. In fact, women make up 70% of the audience. Rachel Albert had the opportunity to attend classes with an Oxford professor while in London. She also participated in summer conferences and excursions, debates and *garden parties*. By democratising education without "watering it down or watering it down", the English *university extension* is, according to her, a model: it resolves "victoriously the thorny problem of post-school education, for which [France is] far [...] from having yet found such a satisfactory solution". Blanche Edwards-Pilliet, the daughter of an English doctor, portrays the British system with much less enthusiasm when she deals with the same issue in *La Fronde*. More than Rachel Albert, she described England as a country of gross social inequality.

Whereas in France, the flowering of the UPs would testify to a "defence movement against reaction, an attempt at intellectual and social renovation"¹¹³ "The *university extension* would have quite opposite objectives and would not question social hierarchies. On the contrary, following the example of the French Catholic workers' circles, *university extension* would seek to turn the common man away from any socialist sympathy: "The constant action exerted on [the worker] by the educated residents and professors coming in, in cleverly conducted talks, The result is a man with a passion for British respectability.

However, this *university extension* was opposed by the *settlements* movement, which was inspired by socialism, whereby university students settled in working-class neighbourhoods and shared the daily life of the workers while contributing their own intellectual skills. This is the principle of *Toynbee Hall*, founded in 1884. Blanche Edwards-Pilliet encouraged the French UPs to make the right choice between these two orientations: to move away from philanthropic, religious and aristocratic popular education to a truly emancipatory, democratic and working-class education. Where Blanche Edwards-Pilliet's views converge with those of Rachel Albert is in the place of women in the English movement: they both emphasise the importance of their role¹¹⁴.

In France, the UPs were an opportunity to discover Ruskin, the inspiration for the popular education movement born in England. Louise Debor, who devoted several articles to the UP in *La Fronde*, retained from Ruskin's philosophy the idea that the beautiful goes hand in hand with the good. Popular education must therefore place art at the heart of its concerns. Art is both a highly educational discipline and a "sweet compensatory home" for the disadvantaged¹¹⁵. At the same time,

113 Maximilienne Blais, "L'éducation populaire en Angleterre", *La Fronde*, 4 November 1900.

114 Blanche Edwards-Pilliet also discusses the English model in "Les nouvelles lois scolaires en Angleterre" where she talks about the opportunity for English women to benefit from evening classes like boys (*La Fronde*, 4 April 1900).

115 Louise Debor, "À propos d'art populaire", *La Fronde*, 14 March 1900; "Les Musées et le peuple", 11 July 1901. See also Pauline Kergomard, "Le beau dans l'éducation populaire", *La Fronde*, 7 October 1899.

Pages libres also analyses Ruskin's legacy: the periodical entrusts Elsie Wright and her future husband Émile Masson with a series of articles on the English thinker, and in particular a study on the *Ruskin-School Home*, an educational initiative with frankly socialist, even libertarian, leanings¹¹⁶. From a much less socialist perspective than that of Blanche Edwards-Pilliet or Elsie Wright, Louise Debor considered that the educational movement should "transform the popular instinct into a popular conscience, [...] awaken in the manual worker a taste for ideas, [...] free him from dead traditions, from evil prejudices, and prevent him from blind and violent transient drives¹¹⁷. " These "blind and violent passing impulses" are those of revolutionary socialism. While Blanche Edwards-Pilliet and Elsie Wright saw the UPs as an instrument for spreading socialism among the common man, Louise Debor saw them as a machine for integrating the poor classes into the nation in a paternalistic perspective. For the proletarian, whose "deep consciousness [...] is still buried, obscure and close to the unconscious", the UP would be an opportunity to "rise to the light" through contact with the scholar, the literate and the artist¹¹⁸. This moralising discourse did not prevent Louise Debor from praising "mutual education" by giving as an example the socialist initiatives of the Free University of Brussels, its *Maison du peuple*, and the English *Toynbee Hall*.

Faced with the popularity of *Toynbee Hall* in French intellectual circles, Pauline Kergomard also devoted an article to what she considered to be an example of fraternity given by aristocratic England to republican France: in order for the French UPs to be a good thing, "something at once lively, practical and... French, let us take inspiration from *Toynbee Hall*; let us not copy it¹¹⁹". Pauline Kergomard, attentive to educational innovations abroad, still considered that the French should find their own model, in keeping with their political institutions and the spirit of their society.

A "citizen of the world in the bedroom"¹²⁰ "Dick May was also convinced that international exchange would enable each country to learn from the experience of others. In 1900, she wrote to her friend, the socialist deputy Eugène Fournière, to find a way to go and see for herself how popular education was organised abroad:

I would be in great need of going to see what is happening in Belgium, [...] to apply the system in a popular university (we are starting right now at the Solidarité du XIIIè) [...]. M. Liard, whom I consulted and who has only missions outside Europe to give me (that will be after the success!) tells me that M. Millerand is

116 See Mélanie Fabre, "Elsie Wright et Émile Masson, deux pédagogues admirateurs de Ruskin entre France et Grande-Bretagne", in Renaud d'Enfert, Frédéric Mole and Marie Vergnon (eds), *Circulations en éducation. Passages, transferts, trajectoires (XIX^e-XXI^e siècle)*, Geneva, Presses univ. de Genève, 2021, pp. 28-35 (forthcoming).

117 Louise Debor, "À propos de l'éducation critique du peuple", *La Fronde*, 8 November 1899.

118 Louise Debor, "À propos d'éducation populaire", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} March 1899.

119 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 25 March 1899.

120 Dick May, 'How Morality Will Be Taught in Paris (An Experiment)', *Journal Review*, January 1899, p. 275.

quite capable of giving me with perfect ease a mission to go and study the cooperative organisation in Belgium, and, if possible, in Milan¹²¹.

Even with her extensive political networks, it does not appear that Dick May was able to secure funding for a study tour. So it was abroad that she brought to her a few months later, at her International Congress of Social Teaching. Ernest Aves gave a talk on *Toynbee Hall*, collaborators of the Webb couple spoke on the English movement and Henri la Fontaine, a Belgian socialist senator, described social education in his country, which was organised around the Université libre de Bruxelles and the Maison du peuple¹²².

It is apparently with the model of the Free University of Brussels in mind that Mathilde Salomon attempted to found a UP. Information about her attempt is fragmentary. The headmistress of the Collège Sévigné would have started out as an auditor of the UP if we are to believe what she wrote in her diary in January 1899: "Soirées populaires: vu Bouchor¹²³". She appreciated these talks: "The pleasure of conversation consists in feeling one's mind set in motion by that of others". When she declared in 1900: "Fourth popular evening successful [*sic*]¹²⁴ When she declared in 1900: "The fourth popular evening is successful [*sic*]", should we deduce that she herself was the initiator of a UP? Indeed, there is talk of a project around the Collège Sévigné. In April 1901, Mathilde Salomon lent her salon to Céline Renooz, a feminist thinker and lecturer in the UPs, in order to merge the neighbourhood's popular education initiatives into a single entity. Céline Renooz invited the Dreyfusard Gaston Moch. He replies:

I believe [...] that it will be very difficult [...] to set up something in these districts that resembles [...] the Université Libre de Bruxelles. [...] I only know, for the moment, of the existence of four "People's Universities" in these two districts, [...] which are not exactly among the most flourishing¹²⁵.

In 1901, the UP crisis had already begun. Mathilde Salomon's attempt to save them by imagining a merger between initiatives that were geographically close. The project was not a total failure, despite the difficulties encountered by the movement on a national scale. In December 1902, Mathilde Salomon's initiative was still alive, as she received from Salomon Reinach her membership with a donation of 50 francs. She replied:

We have almost no money; it is obvious that this is a great difficulty; it is not the greatest and if most [UPs] do not work well and do not give good results, this is due to many other causes. The ones that

121 Letter to Eugène Fournière, 21 May, probably 1900, Eugène Fournière fonds, IFHS, AN.

122 See *Congrès international de l'enseignement des sciences sociales*, Paris, Félix Alcan, 1900, 345 p.

123 Personal papers of Mathilde Salomon, January 1899.

124 Personal papers, Easter 1900.

125 Letter from Gaston Moch to Céline Renooz, 20 April 1901, fonds C. Renooz, Marie-Louise Bouglé archives, BHVP.

Will the schools that are now being established be able to take advantage of the schools that have been established? That is what the future will tell; it would be unwise not to pursue a movement which has its great interest¹²⁶.

What form did Mathilde Salomon's action in the UP movement take exactly? The sources are too incomplete to answer this question. There are, however, several certainties: as a Dreyfus supporter, Mathilde Salomon was very involved in the UP movement during the Affair. She was not at ease as a speaker and did not participate in the movement as a lecturer. However, thanks to the Collège Sévigné and to her sociability at the CSIP, she had an important network in the capital. Finally, despite her age - she was over sixty - and her frail health, she had already embarked on several popular education initiatives such as the lay patronage founded a few years earlier at the Collège, which could serve as a basis for new projects.

C) Pauline Kergomard, founder of the Union populaire du XIV^e arrondissement

As a school inspector in daily contact with working-class children, a contributor to *La Fronde* and a convinced Dreyfus supporter, Pauline Kergomard could not lose interest in the UP. From March 1899, she was a member of "La Coopération des idées, Société des universités populaires". Two days before its official inauguration in October, she announced the opening of this first UP in *La Fronde*. She took the opportunity to call on artists or owners of art objects to contribute to the decoration of the premises. Founded by Georges Deherme, the Coopération des idées is a space for intellectual sociability whose discussions Pauline Kergomard wants to extend beyond the inaugural session: "In the evening, I would have great pleasure in offering a cup of tea to my friends from *La Fronde*.¹²⁷" A month later, she gathered a dozen people at her home to organise her own UP in the Montparnasse-Plaisance district¹²⁸. The movement was then in its infancy. Indeed, Lucien Mercier considers that only 15 UPs were in operation at the end of 1899, while there were 116 the following year and 124 in 1901, before the movement ran out of steam¹²⁹. In December 1899, the Union populaire du XIV^e arrondissement was set up. It benefited from the help of a Masonic lodge which offered it hospitality, before moving a year later to a poorer district of Plaisance¹³⁰.

The inauguration of the Union Populaire was presided over on 18 December by Émile Duclaux, Director of the Institut Pasteur. Pauline Kergomard gave the opening speech. In tracing the genealogy of the movement, the Inspector General considered that the popular education project had been in gestation for a long time: "Generous ideas are in the air, we are sucking them in with all our might

126 Letter to Salomon Reinach, 4 December 1902.

127 Pauline Kergomard, "Le beau dans l'éducation populaire", *La Fronde*, 7 October 1899.

128 See Pauline Kergomard, "La loi de l'enseignement devant la Chambre", *La Fronde*, 23 November 1899.

129 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux) *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914, op. cit.*, p. 47.

130 Dick May, "Some reflections on the UPs, continued and finished", *Socialist Review*, February 1901, p. 167.

We don't even know it's there. Then there comes a day when they manifest themselves in several places at once¹³¹ ". At the People's Union of the XIV^e, the aim is to 'facilitate the *mutual* moral and social education of citizens'. The founder insisted on mutuality: when the intellectuals had passed on all they knew, the workers, in turn, would have to spread their experience. Pauline Kergomard believed that they were capable of doing this: "the art of speaking well can be deeply rooted in a popular soul; one can charm one's friends without having made any special studies; it will therefore be necessary to sing and speak [...] as you do at home, among friends, since at the University you will be at home and among friends".

On 31 January 1900, Pauline Kergomard was enthusiastic: UP had 400 members. Beyond the number, for the Inspector General, "the important thing is that we find ourselves well together, and so far our meetings have exceeded our most optimistic desire¹³² ". UP has scheduled classes on microbes and tuberculosis, but also on the Boer War, as well as readings by Molière and Hugo. Pauline Kergomard was convinced that the UP should bring the common man into contact with the "beautiful": "Our aim is [...] the education of souls through contact with the beauties of literature and art". Hence the founder's insistence on the need to make the UP premises welcoming and well decorated.

Among the founders of the Union populaire du XIV^e, many were friends of Pauline Kergomard, such as Théodore Steeg, the son of the late Jules Steeg, but also the poet Maurice Bouchor. Among those who spoke at the forum, many were linked in one way or another to public education. There was a succession of students from the École normale supérieure on the rue d'Ulm, professors from the Sorbonne and the lycées, and teachers, whom Pauline Kergomard did not hesitate to call upon¹³³. In February 1900, Charles Bayet, Director of Primary Education, gave a conference on the Republican school in the presence of his predecessor in this post, Ferdinand Buisson¹³⁴. Bayet launched into a vitriolic description of the French school before the Ferry laws. It is to the Republic that France owes its admirable school system in its entirety. But Andrée Téry, who covered this conference for *La Fronde*, was not fooled: she considered that after having praised the obligation, secularity and free education of primary school, it was time to apply these principles to secondary education. No doubt Pauline Kergomard and Ferdinand Buisson agreed with Andrée Téry's criticism of the republican school as insufficiently democratic. But while being part of the "advanced republicans", Pauline Kergomard was not ready to turn her UP into a socialist platform. In a *post-mortem* tribute to her, her sons recall the difficulty she had in maintaining the UP's apolitical line:

The People's University of the XIV^e arrondissement sank into politics. [They wanted] to steer it towards socialism. Now, Pauline Kergomard, a socialist to the highest degree,

131 Anonymous, "L'Université populaire du XIV^e arrondissement", *La Fronde*, 19 December 1899.

132 Pauline Kergomard, 'The first month of the XIV^e Popular Union', *La Fronde*, 31 January 1900.

133 See *Pauline Kergomard (1838-1925)*, 1926 brochure, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

134 See Andrée Téry, "L'école républicaine", *La Fronde*, 12 February 1900.

that is to say, very much concerned with practical social questions, never consented to be enrolled in a party. She was a very individualist, "brilliantly independent" [...] and would never have put up with the discipline and compromises of political life. Moreover, she had a certain contempt, a certain prejudice against active politics¹³⁵.

Pauline Kergomard therefore distanced herself from the UP, refusing to endorse its socialist turn. By avoiding all partisan militancy, she wanted to make the UP a bastion of republicanism. While the nationalists conquered Paris in 1900, for her, the UP should be "such as to give us hope that in the next elections it will not be the *Merciers* who will hold the line¹³⁶".

D) Popular education, social science and socialism in Dick May

Of all these women upstarts, it is Dick May who stands out for her activism, who, it is said, has "the soul of an empire founder¹³⁷". She posed as a theoretician of popular education, setting out her thoughts in numerous articles. In particular, she insisted on the need to bring UP education into line with the major contemporary issues. As early as 1895, she wrote: "the democracy of the XX^e century would do without Latin dissertations and will not do without social education¹³⁸". It is still necessary to define what this social teaching is:

"It seems to be agreed - provisionally - that the expression: *social sciences* applies to any kind of work and presentation touching in any way on the study of societies¹³⁹". For Dick May, "any social question, approached by scientific methods, according to scientific views, is a matter for study and teaching¹⁴⁰". This is how the convergence between the popular education movement and the emergence of the social sciences came about, as Lucien Mercier writes:

[The UP] benefited from the movement of ardent curiosity that pushed the youth of the schools, troubled by the successive crises of the Republic, towards the study of social problems. [It] appeared as a centre for the popularisation of social sciences among a working class elite excluded from traditional educational institutions¹⁴¹.

As Christophe Prochasson has shown, at the turn of the century, social sciences and socialism went hand in hand¹⁴². The social sciences were interested in the fate of the working classes and

135 Pauline Kergomard (1838-1925), 1926 brochure, *op. cit.*, p. 36-37.

136 Pauline Kergomard, 'The first month of the XIV^e Popular Union', *La Fronde*, 31 January 1900.

137 Louis Ferrière, "Le Collège libre des sciences sociales à Paris", *Revue de morale sociale*, September 1900, p. 323.

138 Dick May, "Le Musée social", *Revue de Paris*, May-June 1895.

139 Dick May, "The Free College of Social Sciences", *Political and Parliamentary Review*, April-June 1897, p. 390.

140 Dick May, "The Free College of Social Sciences", *Review of Political Economy*, October-November 1897, p. 891.

141 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux) *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914, op. cit.*, p. 22-23.

142 Christophe Prochasson, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les intellectuels, le socialisme et la guerre, 1900-1938*, Paris, Seuil, 1993.

demonstrate the social mechanisms that reproduce inequalities. They therefore serve as a theoretical backstop for socialism. Dick May, herself a reformist socialist, saw popular education as a place for reflection that would produce ideas for socialism and as a place to de-demonise this political doctrine by exposing its scientific nature. This is what she wrote to Georges Renard, a socialist activist and former communard, in 1896: "We are working by study and speech to widen or mark out the roads opened by history on the forthcoming 'states' of society¹⁴³. " Four years later, in the midst of the "upheaval", Dick May wrote again: "Your friends [the socialists] are happy with us. We support them with a patient and lasting shoulder. But do they even realise what we are doing, and [...] do they understand that the politicians of the day would be building in the wind if moral and social education did not prepare the concrete pits for them¹⁴⁴ ? "

Dick May, however, refused to make the UP a school of socialism. She wrote in 1901 in the *Revue Socialiste*: "The People's University has no flag. It is not socialist.¹⁴⁵. " For Dick May, a PU should be a place for contradictory discussion between opposing opinions, not a place where political or religious dogma is preached. For her, it is through confrontation with other ideas that personal opinions evolve. In this ideal 'school of criticism'¹⁴⁶ "In this ideal of a 'school of criticism', minds would naturally fall in line with the most correct and convincing philosophies and ideologies. Thus, the UP need not declare itself socialist: by pushing everyone to question their prejudices and by opening a space for free discussion, it serves socialism. Therefore, for Dick May, "when the Volkshochschule says: I am a socialist, it is wrong, and it ceases to be a Volkshochschule and becomes an action group¹⁴⁷ ". All preaching is the very negation of the PU. In this sense, Dick May's discourse corresponds to Emmanuel Jousse's definition of reformist socialism: "more than a political pragmatics, more than a mode of relation to power, more than a theoretical ensemble, reformist socialism is defined as an ethic of discussion¹⁴⁸ ". But, according to Dick May, it is also characterised by an injunction to popular education. The texts of Georges Renard are a revelation for her in this respect:

What grabbed me (and kept me) was the new principle that you are slowly introducing into the arid socialism of the theorists, the condemnation of "intellectual and moral inequality" alongside (why not above) "inequality of conditions", and of fortunes. Here at last is the fruitful principle which could renew this struggle¹⁴⁹...

143 Letter to Georges Renard, 7 December 1896, fonds Georges Renard, BHVP.

144 Letter to Georges Renard, 8 April 1900.

145 Dick May, "Some thoughts on the UPs, continued and ended", *Socialist Review*, February 1901, pp. 165-184.

146 Frédéric Mole contrasts three politico-educational doctrines: the school of criticism, the school of producers and the single school - Frédéric Mole, *L'École laïque pour une République sociale*, *op. cit.*

147 Dick May, "Some reflections on the UPs, continued and concluded", *Socialist Review*, February 1901, pp. 165-184.

148 Emmanuel Jousse (preface by Marc Lazar), *Les hommes révoltés*, *op. cit.*, p. 381.

149 Letter to Georges Renard, 12 November 1892.

By considering educational deprivation as serious as the deprivation of material means of existence, Dick May is part of a "socialism of education" shared by many upheavalists. Far from political struggles, popular education offered a fruitful field of action for many women who were suspicious of partisan action. Many were hostile to any political recuperation of the UP, including by the left, and showed almost unlimited confidence in the education of the masses as an agent of republicanisation. Dick May wrote to Georges Renard:

"We who are not pessimists, let us dip our pens and wait for the next century. We have the right to hope for something, since we are determined to help it.

E) Dick May and the Solidarity of XIII^e: a model UP?

The transition to the new century was a break for Dick May. She resigned from the Free College of Social Sciences, which she had founded in 1895, and set up a rival institution, the Free School of Advanced Social Studies, in 1900. Less oriented towards theoretical analysis, more in tune with the social movement in progress, the Free School housed, among other things, a standard course to train UP lecturers. Dick May wanted students who had studied contemporary social issues within the walls of his school to be able to pass on their knowledge in the UPs. It was in the Free School's premises that the UP Society was housed, as well as the *Cahiers et la quinzaine* and *Pages libres*, journals that were both born in the wake of Dreyfusism. But if the *École libre*, which brought together the whole of intellectual and Dreyfusard Paris, was a great success from its first years, Dick May did not limit herself to this single achievement: in 1900 she founded a UP entitled Solidarité du XIII^e arrondissement. For her, it was in the UPs that the real issues of popular education were unfolded: "To penetrate the living masses, to go and propose to our brothers in industrial or agricultural work some of those rules which we believe to be good, would be infinitely more noble, more urgent and more useful than to attract to us [...] several hundred students¹⁵⁰. "

The Solidarité du XIII^e can be considered an annex of the *École libre*. The teachers were those already recruited by Dick May for his university: Seignobos and Hauser shared the contemporary history of France, Buisson took charge of the philosophy course, Duclaux organised the physical and natural sciences course, Vidal de la Blache the geography course. Charles Gide, for his part, offered lessons on political economy and public law. Each discipline was taught by its most authoritative representative. Ferdinand Buisson was particularly involved with Dick May. It was at his home that the preparatory meetings were held and he chaired the General Assembly¹⁵¹. Beyond the prestige of its speakers, the Solidarity of the XIII^e is also original in its functioning:

150 Dick May, 'How Morality Will Be Taught in Paris (An Experiment)', *Journal Review*, January 1899, p. 274.

151 See Dick May's letters to Gabriel Tarde, Fonds Gabriel Tarde, Centre d'histoire de Science-po.

Teaching by lecture, which has hitherto been the normal method of teaching at the people's university, is not sufficient teaching: I would add, after having followed several experiences quite closely, that [...] a series of very general lectures [...] only give a glimpse of science. [...] From these remarks [...] came the simple idea, which seemed bold (only because it was new), of giving *courses* instead of lectures to our friends in the thirteenth arrondissement¹⁵².

Instead of the "superficially encyclopaedic teaching of the conference", Solidarity therefore prefers a system of ongoing courses. Dick May recognises that this is a "kind of luxury" that most UPs cannot afford. Dick May's ambition to make her UP a model is self-evident. She wrote to the sociologist Gabriel Tarde: "Are you interested in the model popular university that we are going to open, one of these days, in the south of Paris¹⁵³ ? "

As in many other UPs founded by intellectuals, popular listeners are represented at the Solidarity of the XIII^e in the decision-making bodies. This UP functions in a two-headed way with a Teaching Council composed of professors and a Board of Directors managed by workers. The Teaching Council adapts to the requests of the Administrative Council to meet the needs and desires of the public. The Solidarity of the XIII^e is not limited to its teaching function: it houses a consumer cooperative, which the founder describes as a 'school of social application', whose aim is to convince workers, through practice, of the effectiveness of the principle of mutualisation. The aim was to offer quality foodstuffs at the best price by cutting out the middleman. The cooperative was governed by a set of rules that offered its employees an eight-hour day, a weekly rest period and a minimum wage of 5 francs. In Dick May's words, "The cooperative is socialist. The university is scientific¹⁵⁴ ".

Just because the UP is scientific does not mean it should not contribute to democratic progress. When Hauser, who had committed himself to teaching contemporary history, withdrew from the UP in 1900, Dick May called on Georges Renard to help him:

We need him, [...] you must help us to keep him. [If you only knew how few of us there are to carry out an overwhelming task, and how urgent it is [...] that we have taken back Paris before the 1902 deadline... The struggle is going on, however, more insidious, less frank than in the heroic days of the Affair, just as bitter [...] - but we are defending ourselves, I swear to you¹⁵⁵ !

For Dick May, without being at the beck and call of politicians, the UP has a role to play in the republican reconquest of Paris. By hosting discussions on how to reform the

152 Dick May, "Some reflections on the UPs, continued and finished", *Socialist Review*, February 1901, p. 170.

153 Undated letter to Gabriel Tarde.

154 Dick May, "Some reflections on the UPs, continued and completed", *Socialist Review*, February 1901, p. 174.

155 Letter to Georges Renard, 19 April [1900].

In society, they are a battleground against social conservatives. We can apply to Dick May Christophe Prochasson's formula of "socialo-dreyfusist commitment"¹⁵⁶ "It is to a republican and Dreyfusian socialism that she adheres. For her, contradictory and enlightened discussion necessarily leads to the defence of a social Republic. Moreover, the UP itself creates an ideal micro-society of "trans-class" friendship from which national politics should be inspired.

Dick May's project was initially very ambitious. In a letter to Eugène Fournière, she looks for ways to install her UP within the walls of the Maison du peuple:

We are willing to take the Maison du Peuple immediately, - if it is rented to us; we will put in it a university of a perfected type, (my plan was adopted unanimously: it will be applied by the elite of scholars, historians and our colleagues in the humanities); we will associate with it a hygienic cafe-restaurant, baths, etc.¹⁵⁷.

The Solidarity of the XIII^e did not finally take over the walls of the Maison du peuple founded by Deherme. Similarly, Dick May's project to create small *Toynbee Halls* in Paris, on the English model, did not see the light of day¹⁵⁸. It is true that Jacques Bardoux founded the Université Populaire de Belleville of a type similar to that of the English *settlements*, but the initiative did not last long. It was the Catholics, particularly through the creation of the Union familiale de Charonne, founded at the turn of the century by Mlle Gahéry after her trip to England, who proved to be the most capable of founding lasting *settlements* on the English model¹⁵⁹.

In the absence of *settlements*, a bathhouse and a restaurant, Dick May was convinced, when Solidarity was created, that she had found an ideal teaching solution with the courses. In 1900, the UP was very well attended: Buisson's 9 philosophy lessons were attended by an average of 137 people; Duclaux's 18 science lessons were attended by 88. But by 1902, the Solidarité du XIII^e was deserted: the system of courses was not enough to ensure its survival. Lucien Mercier concluded that the "attempts to adapt and mimic traditional teaching, presented as a miracle cure for the disaffection of members, did not produce the hoped-for results"¹⁶⁰. The crisis of the UPs does not only affect the Solidarité du XIII^e, quite the contrary.

F) Diagnosing the UP crisis

Dick May is lucid. After writing an enthusiastic assessment of the UPs in 1901, she continued to assume her role as chronicler of the movement by wondering, in the autumn of 1902, about its loss of steam: "Will this 're-entry' of our popular universities [...] be accompanied - once

156 Christophe Prochasson, *Les intellectuels, le socialisme et la guerre*, op. cit, p. 32.

157 Letter to Eugène Fournière, undated.

158 Dick May, "Some reflections on the UPs, continued and concluded", *Socialist Review*, February 1901, p. 179.

159 Sylvie Fayet-Scribe, (preface by Émile Poulat), *Associations féminines et catholicisme*, op. cit. , p. 25.

160 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914*, op. cit.

more - of combined efforts to mask the nothingness of realities under the trompe-l'oeil of the inaugural sessions¹⁶¹ ? " She is convinced that UP will not see a comeback:

The workers will not return. [...] Some of them, our collaborators from the beginning, because the trade union movement absorbs them, ... because their presence there is useful and good, and because they will apply for the general good the notions of method and criticism preciously gathered at the university. And the others will not come either [...] because they return too late from a day that is too heavy, because their minds are distracted, their bodies weary, and their rest must be as regenerative and prolonged as possible to make the morning resumption bearable.

While Lucien Mercier considers that the intellectuals' lack of understanding of the working class world is the real cause of the failure of the UPs, whose effervescence was not accompanied by a reflection on adult education¹⁶² Dick May argues that the time was not right: "The popular university that was *needed* was not feasible before the eight-hour day¹⁶³". So should the UP be closed until labour laws provide more leisure for workers? Dick May says: "If we [...] leave [the UP], you can be sure that it will not remain empty: the eternal adversary will move in [...]. And that will be a good thing, since we will have deserted. The eternal adversary is *reaction*, whether it drapes itself in the costume of nationalism, Caesarism or Catholicism. But if closing the UP means giving up the fight, to what task should these now deserted places be dedicated?

This is precisely what I would like to consult our friends about [...] through the intermediary of the *Little Republic*. I would like all those who have an idea, a plan, an objection, to explain themselves [...]. And to begin with, I don't see why I shouldn't tell you my idea, which is to use the popular university temporarily to prepare for the eight-hour day.

Did Dick May discover, thanks to the experience of the UPs, the reality of daily working life and the urgency of supporting the workers' demand for 8 hours, which had priority over popular education? Like Albertine Eidenschenk when she welcomed poor girls from Chambéry into her oratory, could Dick May "not help thinking that there was something else to do¹⁶⁴" than organising classes? In any case, his proposal to devote the UP to obtaining the eight-hour day was not followed up. Few intellectuals were prepared to transform the UPs into instruments of trade union struggle. Dick May was trying to push the

161 Dick May, "Les universités populaires", *La Petite République*, 3 November 1902.

162 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux) *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914*, *op. cit.*, p. 115 and p. 122.

163 Dick May, "Les universités populaires", *La Petite République*, 3 November 1902.

164 Mme A. Eidenschenk, "La Solidarité féminine de Chambéry", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1901.

She asked intellectuals from all walks of life to contribute their expertise to a struggle which, in her view, should not be seen as a corporatist struggle, but as a step forward for the Social Republic.

Louise Debor did not draw the same conclusions from the failure of the movement. For her, even if few workers took advantage of the conferences, it was a question of "forming an avant-garde elite¹⁶⁵". It was necessary to mobilise serious listeners "who would understand, reflect, criticise, and then assimilate the truths exposed". The UP therefore addressed workers who were intellectually and socially in exceptional conditions compared to the common lot of their class. For Louise Debor, the role of intellectuals was limited to training this elite, which would then act in turn on the masses. Two weeks after the publication of Dick May's article, is it to his proposal that Louise Debor responds when she declares, in the name of intellectuals: "it is not in our power to decree the eight-hour day and to abolish professional overwork"?

Unlike Dick May, Louise Debor does not exempt intellectuals from their responsibility for the failure of UP. She notes that it is "very difficult for them to adapt themselves exactly to the degree of culture and attention span of an audience so different from their usual listeners or students. [...] The lectures of the [UP] are generally too didactic in tone, too stilted in appearance". She advocates making the sessions less academic. Why not bring music into the UP, as well as talks and guided readings instead of lectures?

If the malaise was striking in 1902, it was at the very beginning of the UP that the difficulties that would become fatal to them were outlined. Marie Baertschi, who was very active as a lecturer, drew up an initial assessment at the International Congress of Philosophy in the summer of 1900. André Lalande, author of the report on the congress in the *Revue philosophique*, began by emphasising the part played by women:

It would not be a true reflection of the congress if we were to forget the female element which constituted a notable fraction of it - on certain days it amounted to nearly a third of the audience - and which participated very effectively in the work, since the two secretaries of the Moral Section were Misses Baertschi and Darlu. If the equalisation of men and women is to find favourable ground somewhere, it is natural that it should be above all in a science as rationalist and as unconservative as philosophy¹⁶⁶.

Lalande exaggerates the progressive character of philosophy on the basis of gender¹⁶⁷ It should be remembered that there is no female agrégation in philosophy and that this discipline is not represented in women's public education. However, some women manage to enter the holy ark of philosophy through the small door of morality. Thus, Marie Baertschi, a history teacher, and Jeanne Darlu, a literature teacher and daughter of the philosopher Alphonse Darlu, shared the secretariat of the morality section of the International Congress of Philosophy. It must be said

¹⁶⁵ Louise Debor, "La question des Universités populaires", *La Fronde*, 16 November 1902.

¹⁶⁶ André Lalande, "Le Congrès international de philosophie (tenu entre le 1^{er} et 5 août 1900)", *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger*, July/December 1900, p. 482-503.

167 See Michèle le Dœuff, *L'Étude et le rouet, Des femmes, de la philosophie, etc.*, Paris, Seuil, 2008, [1989].

that they were evolving in a school environment that gave pride of place to moral instruction: this discipline was at the centre of training at Sèvres and Fontenay and was very well represented in the competitive examinations for public education. During the Belle Époque, who better than the teachers at the Ecole Normale and the lycée teachers embodied republican morality in action? At the International Congress of Philosophy, the question is UP is placed in the section "Morality". Marie Baertschi gave the presentation. While most of the UPs created are barely a year old, the speaker is lucid about their shortcomings:

Conferences are too random. No adaptation to the environment, no continuity. [Each speaker], solicited by the organisers, comes to speak about anything. But the mere contradiction of the ideas they put forward is not enough to awaken a critical mind. [...] The listeners then fall back on ready-made doctrines, or end up saying among themselves: "It's nice to hear, but all this is basically a joke"¹⁶⁸. "

According to Marie Baertschi, the only UPs which really fulfilled their role were those of workers' initiative, whose audience was very homogeneous. According to Lucien Mercier, they represented two thirds of the initiatives¹⁶⁹. The others, although conceived as an opportunity for class reconciliation, failed, as Marie Baertschi explains:

There is a lot of mistrust among the people [...]. They accuse us of having come here to have fun. They distrust politicians who are preparing their election. (Women are better received for this reason.) "There are still some good bourgeois. That's about the maximum effect"¹⁷⁰.

While the female lecturer was still a curiosity at the turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries, Marie Baertschi notes that female speakers were rather well received in the UPs, as they appeared to be fundamentally disinterested from a political point of view, not being eligible. It is therefore because women are marginalised from political life that they are seen by the audience as the purest servants of science. But the presence of a few women among the intellectuals involved in the UPs was not enough to break the mistrust of the working classes. The true friendship between proletarians and intellectuals that Pauline Kergomard, Dick May and Mathilde Salomon had hoped for was clearly a failure. The social distance is too great, the misunderstanding persists. Marie Baertschi recommends a solution: encourage the creation of self-managed UPs by workers. In her view, what the UPs lacked until then, caught up in a movement that encompassed them, "was an individual *spirit*".
Unlike other intellectuals

168 Reproduction of Marie Baertschi's presentation by André Lalande, "Le Congrès international de philosophie (tenu entre le 1^{er} et 5 août 1900)", *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger*, July/December 1900, p. 503.

169 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914*, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

170 Quoted in André Lalande, "Le Congrès international de philosophie", *Revue philosophique* July/December 1900.

who wanted to patronise the movement, Marie Baertschi considered that there was a need for "no big companies, no People's Palace; but [the] effacement of the intellectual before the worker".

III- Fromspeakers in the UP? From new forums for intellectuals

When Michelle Perrot considers George Sand to be the only woman in the nineteenth century capable of combining sufficient public recognition and political commitment to be qualified as an intellectual in the full sense of the term¹⁷¹ However, she points out that the lady of Nohant always expressed herself only in writing: "She internalized the prohibition on public speech by women: 'It is like a natural shyness, [...] it is like a bad shame that makes us afraid to say out loud what we feel.'¹⁷² " This monopolisation of the platform by men is not without justification: women have a weak, high-pitched voice and are verbally incontinent when they are allowed to speak¹⁷³. Traces of this system of representation can easily be found in the debates that began at the turn of the century, when Jeanne Chauvin and Maria Vérone demanded the right to plead as lawyers. Where did this mistrust of the female orator, who embodied the essence of the bas-bleu for Daumier in 1844, come from? Didn't Paul already demand in his *Epistle to the Corinthians* that "women should keep silent in the assemblies¹⁷⁴ " ? Built against the Church, the model of secular education born in the 1880s did not encourage young girls to express themselves publicly either.

Did the popular education movement that accompanied the Affair represent an opportunity for women in this respect? Not if we are to believe Lucien Mercier, who notes that "the woman lecturer is not a common phenomenon¹⁷⁵ ". At the *Coopération des idées*, only two women appear in the list of 119 speakers who intervened between April 1900 and June 1901¹⁷⁶. However, in her thesis on lectures in the XIX^e century, Eunyoung Lee qualifies this finding by pointing out the evolution visible in the 1890s "in the perception of a woman sitting in the lecturer's chair. [...] Women were now accepted as qualified to speak to an audience. [...] At a time when the level of education remained highly unequal according to social condition and sexual difference, [the lectures] functioned as a laboratory of sexual democratisation¹⁷⁷ ".

171 Michelle Perrot, "Les intellectuelles dans les limbes du XIX^e siècle", in Nicole Racine and Michel Trebitsch (eds.), *Intellectuals. Du genre en histoire des intellectuels*, op. cit. pp. 101-114.

172 Michelle Perrot, (based on interviews with Jean Lebrun), *Femmes publiques*, op. cit. , p. 341.

173 *Ibid*, p. 266.

174 Michelle Perrot, (with Jean Lebrun), *Femmes publiques*, op. cit, p. 260.

175 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914*, op. cit. , p. 156.

176 *Ibid* , p. 239.

177 Eunyoung Lee, *Au plaisir de savoir. L'invention des conférences populaires, Paris, 1860-1914*, PhD thesis in history under the direction of Christophe Prochasson, EHESS, 2016, pp. 242 and 427.

The aim here is to extend this reflection by drawing up a panorama of women who speak out in the particular moment of the UP, which is absent as such from Eunyoung Lee's thesis. How does this period mark a break in the history of women's public speech? Most women speakers spoke on feminine, even feminist, topics, but the end of the XIX^e century also marked the promotion of "democratic era women scholars"¹⁷⁸": this was the advent of female lecturers who were medical doctors, agrégées or licenciées, whose profile was a break from the self-taught women of previous decades.

In order to analyse these speakers, this study is not limited to the UPs alone: other spaces that are part of this popular education movement, such as conferences organised by *La Fronde*, the Ligue de l'enseignement, free-thinking associations, etc., have been included. The aim is to consider these events not only in their popular entertainment dimension, but above all as political spaces. It will also be necessary to look at a few speakers in particular: those who came from the ranks of public education and who reinvested their own knowledge, their expertise in the field and their pedagogical mastery for a new audience, often under the disapproving gaze of the administration.

A) The turn of the century: conditions favourable to the emergence of a new type of speaker

Female intellectuals in the late nineteenth century were not the first to claim the right to be orators. As early as the French Revolution, Olympe de Gouges expressed a desire to 'get up to the podium'. The same was true of the Saint-Simonian women and of some revolutionaries in 1848. A little later, when rare women achieved success as lecturers at the end of the Second Empire, they came up against a misogynistic legacy constantly updated in the XIX^e century, as this text by the engineer and explorer Louis Simonin testifies:

I don't know if they belong here, in a pulpit, and if it is appropriate for them to speak in public. If they come to speak to men, they will have to take up subjects that interest men [...]; if, on the other hand, they come to speak to women, as women are not generally in the majority in our meetings, I think that it is not here that they should come. [...] Women who speak in public make toiletries [...], and men come to see the toiletries they have made¹⁷⁹.

178 In the words of Vincent Duclert, "La pensée de Spinoza et la naissance de l'intellectuel démocratique dans la France du tournant du siècle", *Archives juives*, 2003/2, p. 20-42.

179 Louis Simonin, "Conférences du boulevard des Capucines", *Revue des cours littéraires de la France et de l'étranger*, 2 May 1869, quoted by Eunyoung Lee, *Au plaisir de savoir. op. cit.* p. 241 - the following information about Clémence Royer, Maria Deraismes and Olympe Audouard comes from this thesis.

Despite this widespread opposition, three women became established as lecturers between the 1860s and 1890s. The first was Clémence Royer (1830-1902), who publicly presented the results of her self-taught research in all fields: philosophy, science and economics. After her success in Switzerland, she gave her first lecture in Paris in 1861. Self-confident, she presented herself as a scientist: she formulated "categorically scientific theories with an imperial air¹⁸⁰". Although Clémence Royer gave lectures in Belgium, Holland and Italy and brought together 250 people in a Parisian talk in 1869, she never obtained recognition from the authorities. In 1869, an inspector declared: "Miss Royer is a curious example of the influence of unhealthy reading on a female brain that is too completely emancipated. She seems to me to have, moreover, only a success of curiosity¹⁸¹".

Maria Deraismes (1828-1894) also established herself as an orator during the same period. She spoke in France, but also abroad. Self-taught, she gave both literary lectures and numerous feminist speeches, notably on the right to divorce. Olympe Audouard (1832-1890) shares many similarities with Clémence Royer and Maria Deraismes: she is self-taught, has a great rhetorical talent, is capable of tackling various subjects and evolves in the feminist ranks. However, although these three women enjoyed popular success and made a living from their intellectual activity, they faced many obstacles: when in 1880, after 20 years of activity as a lecturer, Clémence Royer demanded the right to speak in the Salle Gerson at the Sorbonne, the academic council refused her access. At that time, the women's conference remained "a word of effraction¹⁸²".

The situation changes at the end of the XIX^e century. Firstly, an elite of women gained access to higher education. This is the epic that Juliette Rennes studied in her thesis on women's access to prestigious professions¹⁸³. Neither women doctors, nor lawyers, nor agrégées existed until then in France: the rare women speakers who spoke before this date were self-taught, and could not claim any university education to legitimise their words. Secondly, the end of the XIX^e century coincided in France with a feminist wave, studied in particular by Laurence Klejman and Florence Rochefort, which was accompanied by the affirmation of a right to speak¹⁸⁴. Finally, as Anne R. Epstein shows, the development of feminism was accompanied by the acquisition of a "gender capital" that allowed women to express themselves on certain subjects where they could assert a competence considered to be specific to their sex: "women in France are beginning to acquire an expertise which, when associated with traditionally feminine attributes such as femininity and maternity, gives them the right to speak out.

180 A critic quoted in *Ibid*, p. 249.

181 Quoted in *Ibid*, p. 250.

182 Michelle Perrot, (with Jean Lebrun), *Femmes publiques*, *op. cit.*, p. 390.

183 Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature*, *op. cit.*

184 Laurence Klejman, Florence Rochefort (preface by Michelle Perrot), *L'Égalité en marche*, *op. cit.*

[endows] them with a *gender-specific* authority to which men have no access¹⁸⁵ ". Increasingly, women are speaking as 'experts' on certain issues.

At the turn of the century, several women intellectuals spoke out because they had degrees and knowledge worth passing on; they gave feminist lectures at a time when the 'women's question' was gaining ground in society and was of interest to the general public; they also spoke as women, naturally specialists in certain issues such as philanthropy, motherhood and education. The ferment of the UP was concomitant with the appearance on the public scene of feminist intellectuals.

B) UP, a feminist platform?

Many of the women who expressed themselves as feminists in the UP were also active in socialist networks. This was the case of Élisabeth Renaud, who first worked in the Guesdist ranks before joining the independent socialists during the Affaire. Convinced that women were "slaves of slaves", she formed a socialist feminist group with Louise Saumoneau in 1899. Invited to speak at the Maison Commune, she gave a conference on collectivism¹⁸⁶. The Polish woman Orka, whose real name was Melania Rajchman, also combined feminist and socialist activism and regularly gave lectures at the Éducation sociale de Montmartre¹⁸⁷. Feminist and socialist speakers also include Madeleine Pelletier¹⁸⁸ an iconoclastic activist who in 1906 became the first woman to receive a degree in psychiatry, as well as Maria Vérone, a contributor to *La Fronde*, who was one of the first women lawyers in France. Raised in a militant left-wing family - she was made secretary of the Congrès de la Libre-Pensée in 1889 by her father when she was only 15 - Maria Vérone gave lectures on political subjects in Paris from the age of 18. As a public schoolteacher, she was dismissed because of her activism. Nevertheless, she continued to give lectures, including during the UP period. For example, she gave a talk at the Social Education Department on "The education of girls"¹⁸⁹ in 1904. At the crossroads of socialism and feminism, Odette Laguerre [*biographical note 6, p. 621*] spoke in Roanne about working women, while Gabrielle Petit spoke in the same UP about "Women, their role and their future"¹⁹⁰ ". In addition to Odette Laguerre and Maria Vérone, several female contributors to *La Fronde* expressed themselves in the UPs, such as

185 Anne R. Epstein, 'Gender and the rise of the female expert during the Belle Époque', *Histoire@Politique. Politique, culture, société*, n° 14, May-August 2011: 'women in France had actually started to acquire expertise that - when reinforced by traditional feminine attributes such as femininity and motherliness - would endow them with a gender-specific authority to which men completely lacked access'.

186 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914, op. cit.*, p. 156.

187 *Ibid.*

188 Claude Maignien, Charles Sowerwine, *Madeleine Pelletier, une féministe dans l'arène politique*, Paris, les éditions ouvrières, 1992; Christine Bard (ed.), *Madeleine Pelletier: logique et infortunes d'un combat pour l'égalité*, Paris, Côté-femmes, 1992.

189 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914, op. cit.*, p. 156.

190 *Ibid.*

Constance Dubien, Louise Renard, Pauline Kergomard and, of course, Séverine. In addition to being feminists, all of them expressed fairly advanced opinions on social issues.

Some intellectuals, instead of giving lectures, use UPs as a theatre stage. This is the case of Vera Starkoff, whose plays are not only written with the aim of being performed in the UPs, but also take the UP world as a backdrop: they are shows for the UPs, about the UPs¹⁹¹. It is also through her skills as an actress and playwright that Nelly Roussel has made a name for herself in the UP. A free-thinker, socialist, feminist and Dreyfus supporter, Nelly Roussel was, like Madeleine Pelletier, fairly marginal in the feminist movement.¹⁹² She was indeed a neo-Malthusian, which made her an exception in the feminist ranks of the early XX^e century. Nelly Roussel met her future husband Henri Godet in 1898. He was a Dreyfus supporter and a member of the League of Human Rights. It was with him that she began her activity in a Masonic-inspired UP, of which he was an administrator, the UP Diderot. Both of them led numerous discussions and readings on Victor Hugo¹⁹³. In 1901, at the age of 23, Nelly Roussel gave her first feminist lecture. She had always been passionate about theatre and two years later wrote *Par la révolte*, a twenty-minute play that was a great success. On the stage, four actresses: the first one plays Eve, and is accompanied by three actresses representing respectively the Church, the Republican Society and the Revolt. Eve calls on the Church to help her, then turns to the Republic, but the Rebellion is the only one to extend its arms to her. Marguerite Durand, with her rich past as an actress, takes part in these performances. The success was immense. Nelly Roussel then began a career as an orator. During the Belle Époque she toured France, Switzerland, Belgium and Hungary. She used to perform her own theatrical texts. Her play *Par la révolte* was published five times: she sold 4,000 copies at the end of her lectures between 1905 and 1907. For Nelly Roussel, the UPs were the testing ground for an exceptional career as a lecturer.

More in tune with first-wave feminism, Louise Renard also evolved in the crossroads of feminism and socialism. It was through her marriage to Georges Renard in 1883 that she entered intellectual life. Before moving to Paris in 1900, Louise and Georges Renard lived in Lausanne where they participated in the creation of a Maison du peuple¹⁹⁴. Among Louise Renard's drafts preserved in the Bibliothèque historique de la Ville de Paris, a text entitled "Comment nous avons fondé la Maison du peuple à Lausanne" (How we founded the Maison du peuple in Lausanne) summarises the Renard couple's first experience of the UP in Switzerland¹⁹⁵. Georges Renard, professor at

191 Cecilia Beach, "Women's Social Protest Theater in the *Université Populaire*: Vera Starkoff and Nelly Roussel", *Women in French Studies*, 2003 (special issue), pp. 78-90.

192 Elinor Ann Accampo, *Blessed motherhood, bitter fruit: Nelly Roussel and the politics of female pain in Third Republic France*, Baltimore, USA, the Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006.

193 On Nelly Roussel as an intellectual and on her collaboration with her husband, see Elinor Accampo, 'Nelly Roussel and Henri Godet: A Paradoxical Marriage of Minds', in Raymond Darteville and Mélanie Fabre (eds.), "Couples d'intellectuels, de l'intime au politique (1880-1940)", *Les Études sociales*, n°168, 2019/2, pp. 107-130. 194 Marc Vuilleumier, 'Les débuts de la maison du peuple à Lausanne', *Cahiers d'histoire du mouvement ouvrier*, volume 18, Editions d'en bas, 2002, p. 90-95.

195 See the Georges Renard collection, Ms2543, Bibliothèque historique de la Ville de Paris.

the University of Arts in Lausanne, is the driving force behind the project¹⁹⁶. Her colleagues, students and "ladies of the town" participate in the initiative. The Maison du peuple organises public readings and musical evenings. Louise Renard was delighted: "We got to know each other. Bourgeois' and 'workers'. It is very useful and very beneficial. [...] We become friends. [After all, the bitterness of some workers, the antipathy, the distance of some bourgeois, comes from not knowing each other¹⁹⁷. " Arriving in France at the height of the UP explosion, Louise Renard took part in it. On 27 March 1904, she gave a conference entitled "Children in modern literature¹⁹⁸ ". It was from her husband, a former teacher of the Ecole Normale Supérieure, that she acquired her knowledge of literary history. Her interest in children was based on her "gender capital", the only symbolic resource at her disposal, since she did not have a degree. Louise Renard gives a talk which appears to be an extension of her maternal role in the public space. Moreover, she does not present herself as a lecturer. In her draft, she crossed out the word "lecture" and replaced it with the more humble term "talk". She insists on this detail: "I remind you that this is not a Conference. It is a series of hearings that complement each other. And I claim only one thing: to be the very modest thread [...] that will link the pearls of the necklace. Indeed, Louise Renard's talk is enhanced by a selection of readings by her husband, among others. The talk was also interspersed with songs. Convinced of her illegitimacy to speak, Louise Renard warns her listeners: "My intention [...] is not to instruct you. It is to entertain you.

However, the subject matter is more political than it appears. Louise Renard uses texts by Hugo, Zola, France and Bouchor to condemn class society. While commenting on an extract from *L'Assomoir*, Louise Renard declares that little Lalie, the daughter of an alcoholic and surrogate mother to the rest of her family, 'is one of those humble people of whom Christianity would have made a saint, and to whom we moderns would say in the strongest terms: - Defend yourself! This talk was also an opportunity for Louise Renard to pay tribute to the Dreyfus supporter, socialist and anti-clerical activist Anatole France. She selected one of his texts, read by her husband: "It is the confession of a boy attending high school, - at a time when, in the secular establishments of the State, confession was compulsory. One can imagine the delight that Georges Renard felt reading this passage, as he asserted himself as the leader of the protest at Ulm in 1870 by writing a petition for the abolition of compulsory mass for students, a move that was crowned with success¹⁹⁹.

Although several feminist intellectuals took to the stage at the UP, the most radical did not always meet with the approval of the audience. Thus, Madeleine Pelletier was able to repeat, within the walls of the Semaille, that "women do not belong to men and that they should have the right to vote", but she did not win the support of the public.²⁰⁰. According to Lucien Mercier, the doxa that

196 On the Renard couple, see our article: Mélanie Fabre, "C'est un roman d'amour vécu qui vaut bien ceux qu'on invente": Louise et Georges Renard, amour et politique', *Les Études sociales*, n°168, 2019/2, p. 77-105.

197 See the Georges Renard collection, Ms2543, BHVP.

198 It is not possible to determine where this conference was held. Only the draft is preserved.

199 Philip G. Nord (translated by Christophe Jaquet, preface by Vincent Duclert), *Le moment républicain, op. cit.*, p. 62.

200 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914, op. cit.*, p. 158.

The overall approach to gender relations in the UPs is to support women in their role as wives and mothers. Several UPs included women's issues in their programme, but this was limited to housework, needlework and childcare lessons. Lucien Mercier underlines the "ambiguity of a movement that combines completely traditional measures - the housewife - with avant-garde thinking on subjects as controversial as coeducation, sexual freedom or contraception²⁰¹".

At the UP Congress in 1904, Vera Starkoff passed a motion that "it would be useful to increase the number of lectures and talks on feminist subjects²⁰²". A call for female speakers was launched. The organisers noted that more women came to the lectures when they were given by women speakers. For some, the UPs should also be used as an instrument of female emancipation. The head of the UP in Agen said: "Any attempt to liberate men will be in vain if female emancipation is not achieved at the same time²⁰³". The place of women as listeners and lecturers must therefore be urgently reconsidered. It seems, however, that conformism continues in the UP: at the 1910 Congress, when the question of introducing neo-Malthusianism into the programme of feminist talks was raised, the assembly concluded that contraception was above all "a matter for men²⁰⁴".

C) Women scholars of the democratic era

The themes addressed by female lecturers in the UPs are not limited to women's issues. The end of the 19th century saw the birth of a new generation of female intellectuals, similar to the scholar of the democratic era²⁰⁵ who were both competent in a scientific field and dedicated to the task of popularising it for the general public. As Anne Rasmussen and Vincent Duclert explain, the desire for transmission that drives the democratic intellectual is a "civic concern: [...] scientists owe the nation [...] regular reports on their activities²⁰⁶". For Vincent Duclert, it is this "link between knowledge practices and a choice of citizenship [that] is at the basis of the birth of the democratic intellectual²⁰⁷". At the end of the XIX^e century, access to higher education allowed precisely a new generation of female graduates to express themselves not only as activists, but also as scholars. As H el ene Charron points out, non-graduate women expressed themselves more on themes that were 'naturally' accessible to them such as

201 *Ibid.*, p. 160.

202 See "Le Congr es des UP", *L'Aurore*, 24 May 1904.

203 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Reb erioux), *Les universit es populaires, 1899-1914, op. cit.*, p. 157.

204 *Ibid.*, p. 159.

205 Vincent Duclert, "La pens e de Spinoza et la naissance de l'intellectuel d emocratique dans la France du tournant du si cle", art. cit.

206 Vincent Duclert, Anne Rasmussen, "Les revues scientifiques et la dynamique de la recherche", in Jacqueline Pluet-Despatin, Michel Leymarie, Jean-Yves Mollier (eds.), *La Belle  poque des revues, 1880-1914*, Paris,  ditions de l'IMEC, 2002, p.237-254.

207 Vincent Duclert, "Spinoza's thought and the birth of the democratic intellectual...", art. cit.

women's issues, charity and children's issues, while women graduates are positioned in less gendered areas²⁰⁸.

Many women doctors are investing in the UP by highlighting their skills in the field of health: this is the case of Mélanie Lipinska, winner of the Académie de médecine and consultant doctor at the Luxueil hospital²⁰⁹ Blanche Edwards-Pilliet²¹⁰ who, in addition to her work as a general practitioner, teaches nursing at the Bicêtre hospital; Louise Napias, a pharmacist at the Pitié-Salpêtrière hospital²¹¹. The lectures that Louise Napias gave in the UPs bear witness to the intertwining of her scholarly concerns and her militancy. Thus, it is at once as a freethinker, a feminist and a specialist in the medical system that she speaks about "secular nurses in public assistance" at the Union populaire du XIV^e arrondissement of Pauline Kergomard²¹² and of "lay nurses in hospitals" at the Fraternelle du XIII^e²¹³. It was also in the name of her personal journey that she gave a large free public lecture for the inauguration of the Maria Deraismes patronage²¹⁴. By dealing with "Maria Deraismes, her life and work", she paid tribute both to a lecturer in whose continuity she was involved and to a personality to whom she owed the financing of her own studies. Louise Napias also used her experience at the Maria Deraismes patronage as the subject of several conferences. Thus, on 28 March 1902, she spoke of "Secular school and female patronage" at the Union populaire du XIV^e arrondissement²¹⁵. She spoke as president of the patronage, but also as secretary of the Comité des dames de la Ligue de l'enseignement, whose primary mission was the secular patronage of girls.

The difficulties encountered by the first female university students because of their gender naturally pushed them into the arms of feminism. Thus Louise Napias, Blanche Edwards-Pilliet and Jeanne Chauvin expressed strong feminist convictions that were reflected in their public speeches. Louise Napias discussed Michelet's *La Femme* at the Union des libres-penseurs du XIV^e arrondissement in November 1900²¹⁶ and wondered "what is meant by feminism" at the Fraternelle in January 1901²¹⁷. The UP offered her a platform to defend her freethinking, feminist and socialist convictions. *The Press* accused her of "playing politics"²¹⁸. It was a "politician" with convictions identical to her own that Louise Napias met at the UP of the XIV^e. A specialist in labour laws,

208 Hélène Charron, (preface by Marie-Rose Lagrave), *Les formes de l'illégitimité intellectuelle, op. cit.*, p. 310.

209 Mélanie Lipinska, *Histoire des femmes médecins depuis l'Antiquité jusqu'à nos jours*, Paris, Jacques & cie, 1900.

210 Barbizet Claude, Leguay Françoise, *Blanche Edwards-Pilliet : Femme et médecin, 1858-1941*, Le Mans, Cénomane, 1988.

211 On Louise Napias, see her letters to Marguerite Durand (1900, 1901, 1908), BMD, ancien fonds M. Durand / *La Fronde*, 0.91, (now letters and manuscripts 1), and in the Jane Misme fonds, letter of 11 July 1911.

212 See *La Lanterne* of 30 April 1901.

213 See *La Lanterne* of 13 July 1901.

214 Paule Mink, "Libre pensée", *L'Aurore*, 22 January 1899.

215 See *Le Petit Parisien* of 28 March 1902.

216 See *Le XIX^e siècle* of 29 November 1900.

217 See *L'Aurore* of 28 January 1901.

218 See "Les pharmaciennes", *La Presse*, 29 August 1904.

Augustin Chaboseau was involved in the UP movement and was active in socialist and feminist circles. The marriage of this intellectual couple took place in December 1902, with the blessing of Ferdinand Buisson, who gave a speech²¹⁹. A new generation of women graduates and feminists had a new model for marriage, far from the bourgeois marriage...

Among the democratic intellectuals who combined an important scholarly background with political and social commitment, we should mention Jeanne Chauvin, a licentiate in literature and doctor of law, who delivered numerous lectures between 1898 and 1902, combining legal skills with feminist convictions, as she had already done in her thesis entitled *Étude historique sur les professions accessibles aux femmes*, published in 1892. To take just one example of the link between scientific practices and activism in this intellectual, we can cite the programme of the free course she organised at the town hall of the III^e arrondissement for the year 1900-1901: she dealt with paternal power and the rights of the mother, the administration of married women's property, the protection of women against the abuses of marital authority and divorce²²⁰. Jeanne Chauvin's legal skills were put to good use in the feminist cause. It must be said that at the turn of the century, the lawyer's name was associated with the feminist struggle. The media coverage of her fight to be admitted to the bar led the press to compare the "Chauvin case" to the Dreyfus affair, with her name appearing in the newspapers an average of 19 times a day in 1898²²¹.

Among the women scholars of the new century, there are also a few female teachers from the Ecole Normale or the Lycée. Most of them were not directly involved in the UP. For example, it was under the auspices of the Union Démocratique pour l'Education Sociale that Camille Lévy, a high school teacher, gave lectures on literature. Miss Lauriol, a science teacher at the Edgar Quinet primary school, gave lectures for the Société de géographie²²². It must be said that the presence of women teachers in the UP was generally frowned upon by the administration of Public Education, which, in theory favourable to popular education, was suspicious when it brought civil servants into contact with places that were not very popular. The administration reminded civil servants of their duty of reserve, "worried that the workings of the Universités populaires are closely linked to life in the neighbourhood and to political struggles²²³". This is just one of the paradoxes of the discourse emanating from the Ministry. Thus, in the absence of the UPs, teachers were invited to set up after-school initiatives, the number of which exploded at the time of the Affaire, but they were forbidden to mention the name of Dreyfus in class²²⁴. Teachers had to be the pillars of the Republic and defend it at all costs, but their fight must not be too subversive, at the risk of turning against the regime. This is what the

219 *Correspondence of the Ligue française de l'enseignement*, issue of 21 December 1902. See Louise Napias' invitation to Marguerite Durand for her wedding, BMD, autograph letters and manuscripts, 1.

220 This programme appeared in *L'Aurore* on 19 November 1900.

221 Juliette Rennes, 'Chauvin Jeanne', biographical note in Christine Bard, Sylvie Chaperon (eds), *Dictionnaire des féministes: France, XVIII^e-XXI^e siècle*, Paris, PUF, 2017, pp. 287-289.

222 Eunyoung Lee, *Au plaisir de savoir*, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

223 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914*, *op. cit.*, p. 96-97.

224 See Jacques and Mona Ozouf (with V. Aubert and C. Steindecker), *La République des instituteurs*, *op. cit.*; Alain Corbin, *Les conférences de Morterolles*, *op. cit.*

members of the teaching body in Roanne when Jules Ravaté, a worker and union activist, tried to found a UP with Jules Thomas, a secondary school teacher. The two of them brought together teachers, schoolteachers and workers in January 1900. The second planned meeting did not take place: the teachers, called to order by administrative pressure, withdrew²²⁵.

D) Henriette Wurmser or the setbacks of a high school teacher at the UP in Saint-Quentin

Unlike women in the professions, female teachers faced the harassing scrutiny of the administration. Henriette Wurmser, a history teacher at the Lycée de Saint-Quentin, paid the price. It seems that she was asked in the summer of 1900 to give a lecture at the newly founded UP. She accepted: "This work is so much in my heart that I have tried and will try to do my best²²⁶." But this commitment, consistent with her Dreyfusian convictions, displeased her superiors. She recounted this years later, in 1934:

In the enthusiasm of my youth, in the ardent fraternity which inflamed many of us at that time - it was in 1897 or 98 - I had the imprudence [...] with some of my colleagues from the boys' high school, to found a Popular University, to which I devoted all my leisure time. The scandal was great in the eyes of a timid headmistress, of right-thinking colleagues, even of an illiberal inspector general, and I was subjected [...] to all the malice of a narrow and petty milieu²²⁷.

Henriette Wurmser's recollections are imprecise. Indeed, the Mutualité intellectuelle de Saint-Quentin was founded not in 1897 or 1898, but on 18 June 1900. As for the troubles Henriette Wurmser is said to have suffered from her professional entourage, there is no mention of them in her career file. Is this pure invention?

Several sources confirm the role Henriette Wurmser played in the UP of Saint-Quentin until she was transferred to Amiens at the beginning of the 1904 academic year. Thus, at the national Congress of the UP in the summer of 1904, she represented the Mutualité intellectuelle²²⁸. According to Lucien Mercier, although the workers should have represented their UP in Paris, they recused themselves at the last moment, afraid of the mission, and preferred to send Henriette Wurmser, who had been active with them for four years²²⁹. Wurmser, who made frequent visits to Paris, was active in Dreyfus circles. In Paris, she was hosted by Mrs Brandon-Salvador and her sister Gabrielle Alphen-Salvador, a member of the Ladies' Committee of the Ligue de l'enseignement and founder in 1901 of the first school

225 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914, op. cit.*, p. 68.

226 Letter to Mrs. Eugene Manuel, 26 July 1900, Eugene Manuel fonds, BIS.

227 Henriette Degouy-Wurmser, *Trois éducatrices modernes, Mlles Léonie Allégret, Marguerite Caron, Amieux*, Paris, PUF, 1934, 151 p., p. 48.

228 See *Cahiers de la quinzaine*, n°20, 5th series, 1904.

of lay nurses. The Salvador sisters' sociability enabled Henriette Wurmser to come into contact with Auguste Scheurer-Kestner, Émile Duclaux, Gabriel Monod, Louis Havet²³⁰ All of them were early Dreyfus supporters and pillars of the UP (with the exception of the Vice-President of the Senate, who died in September 1899). To these personalities should be added Pastor Wagner, who took up the pen to defend Henriette Wurmser when she came up against the hostility of her hierarchy, her superiors finding her insufficiently tidy and not so sober in appearance for a secondary school teacher.

When Henriette Wurmser was appointed to Amiens in September 1904, the administration's aim was to move her away from Saint-Quentin. Her headmistress wrote: "For reasons of which I have kept the administration informed, Miss Wurmser's removal is necessary in the interests of the Lycée²³¹". It is likely that these reasons included Henriette Wurmser's participation in the Mutualité intellectuelle de Saint-Quentin. In any case, she had to leave the town and the UP. Lucien Mercier stated that "the intellectual mutuality of Saint-Quentin is recovering with difficulty from [this] mutation²³²". After three years in Amiens, Henriette Wurmser was finally appointed to Paris, to the Lycée Lamartine (1907) and then the Lycée Racine (1908). At the end of the 1900s, did she take part in the popular education initiatives that still existed in the capital? It is difficult to say.²³³ What is certain, however, is that her association with the workers of Saint-Quentin at the time of the UP played a role in her politicisation to the left. The support she gave to the workers undoubtedly put her in difficulty in a secondary education system initially reserved for young bourgeois women, where girls from the working classes were *persona non grata*²³⁴. It was probably not good for the image of the lycée to see a teacher rubbing shoulders with the workers²³⁵.

In 1912, Henriette Wurmser wrote a history textbook for secondary schools. The book gives some indication of her political views. She notes, for example, that "the interests remain opposed between the boss and the worker²³⁶". She noted, for example, that "interests remain opposed between the boss and the worker", since industrialisation made the worker a slave to the machine and to his boss, "sometimes exploited, sometimes condemned to unemployment". The worker is exposed to the risk of illness, infirmity and old age and legitimately demands "a fair share of the profits made through his collaboration". Although Henriette Wurmser hopes to see the emergence of a state of mind favourable to the reconciliation of classes through the concord of labour and capital, some of her developments have undeniably socialist overtones, which makes her book an exception in the world of girls' textbooks. While most morality classes for high school girls insist on the need to moralise

230 See an undated letter from Charles Wagner in the career file of Henriette Wurmser, F/17/24059.

231 Note from the headmaster dated 2 March 1904, Henriette Wurmser's career file.

232 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914*, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

233 *The Radical* of 24 February 1907 mentions a Miss Wurmser who is said to have given a reading of *Stella* at a party of the Patronage laïque et Ternes et de la Plaine Monceau and *L'Aurore* of 13 November 1907 speaks of this same Miss Wurmser, who is said to have interpreted *La Muse et l'Ouvrier*, a famous text by Bouchor. Is this Henriette Wurmser?

234 Jo Burr Margadant, *Madame Professor*, *op. cit.*, p. 213-214.

235 We know the scandal caused a few decades later by Simone Weil's attitude when, as a philosophy teacher, she went

to the café with the workers in Puy-en-Velay.

236 Henriette Wurmser, *Histoire de la civilisation*, Paris, Ailliaud, 1912 - see what Jean-Pierre Daviet says in *La société industrielle en France : 1814-1914, productions, échanges, représentations*, Paris, Seuil, 1997, p. 266.

The social republic, the only one worthy of being called a 'republic', must enact laws to protect workers against accidents at work and against the risk of illness. The Social Republic, the only one worthy of being called a "Republic", must enact laws protecting workers against accidents at work and against the risk of illness. It must act in favour of workers' pensions, factory hygiene, the reduction of the working day and the increase of wages. Henriette Wurmser proclaimed that each worker had "rights to a quantity of wealth proportionate to his efforts, his skill, the duration and the more or less arduous nature of his work". Hidden behind the politically acceptable label of solidarism, Henriette Wurmser's discourse is in fact reformist socialism. If the agrégée d'histoire allows herself such advanced opinions in a textbook for secondary school girls, it is likely that she would have held an even less conformist discourse in the UP. No doubt this would have been shocking to the public education system or to the families who used the school.

E) Marie Baertschi, "muse" of the UP "whose ardour fills Paris from Plaisance to La Chapelle

It was probably because she was on leave from the Ministry of Education between 1897 and 1904 that Marie Baertschi was free enough to become so involved in the UP movement. The diary kept by Daniel Halévy during the Affair provides valuable information about her. Her name appears for the first time in a note written in June 1899. Daniel Halévy tells of having accompanied the poet Fernand Gregh to the Soirées ouvrières de Montreuil-sous-Bois, considered to be the forerunner of the UP, since they were founded in 1895 by an anarchist craftsman, Émile Méreaux. That evening, Marie Baertschi was in charge of the talk:

Miss Baertschi, a tall young woman, simple, with beautiful movements, beautiful features, a little tired from work [...]. Workers enter [...]; they like their speaker. Soon there were 40 of them; there could hardly be more. She spoke. On the origins of France [...]. This was the subject she had been asked to address. They listen [...]. The manly heads are serious, attentive, and Gregh in front of me also listens, visibly astonished, struck²³⁷.

After an hour and a quarter of presentation, the workers question the speaker. Then the evening ended. Robert Dreyfus, who, like Proust, Halévy and Gregh, had studied at the Lycée Condorcet, joined the group formed around Marie Baertschi. In the following months, Charles Guieysse, a Dreyfus lieutenant who resigned from the army in 1899, was added to this core group and in 1901 became the mastermind behind *Pages libres*. The list would be incomplete without Paul Grunebaum-Ballin, founder of a UP and future architect of the Separation as Briand's chief of staff. Daniel Halévy had the impression of being at the centre of an intellectual cyclone triggered by the Affaire:

²³⁷ Daniel Halévy [texts collected and presented by Jean-Pierre Halévy], *Regards sur l'affaire Dreyfus*, Paris, Fallois, 1994, 291 p., p. 154.

The three important figures of our party are first of all [Robert] Dreyfus, admirable for his perseverance, tactics and activity; Mlle Baertschi, of whom I have already spoken: a charming woman and a good woman whose ardour fills Paris from Plaisance to La Chapelle; a former teacher in Versailles, she argues with her inspector about the Dreyfus affair, gives her resignation, prepares her licence and passes it in three months, her agrégation and is received first in the summer; she is offered a class in the provinces, she refuses, she does not want to leave Paris, where she gives lessons to live by multiplying in the evenings and in all the working-class districts. Dreyfus is our tactician, she is our muse. The third, who will undoubtedly become the first, is Guieysse, a former artillery lieutenant, who also broke his career because of the Dreyfus affair: an active, extremely energetic, intelligent man, who devotes himself to popular education. I am the fourth. This is our party, very interesting. [He is the *Dreyfus Affair* [...]. The Dreyfus Affair on the march, seeking its formula, its means of action on eternity²³⁸.

Despite some inaccuracies, the way Daniel Halévy summarises Marie Baertschi's 'Dreyfus moment' through her professional trajectory converges with other sources. The teacher did not resign from the Ministry of Education, but was on leave. The "licence" that Marie Baertschi obtained in 1898 is in fact the certificate of aptitude for secondary teaching in literature. As for the agrégation, it is true that she passed first in 1899. Finally, when Daniel Halévy speaks of a class that Marie Baertschi would have refused in the provinces, this converges with the letter in which Ferdinand Buisson proposes that she take over the direction of the secondary course being created in Coulommiers. Daniel Halévy's characterization of Marie Baertschi as a teacher is revealing. She had just graduated from Fontenay. Was this a lack of knowledge, on the part of a man, of the value of the female ENS, which did not have the prestige of the rue d'Ulm? Modesty on the part of Marie Baertschi who liked to present herself as a humble teacher, as in her letter to Eugène Manuel²³⁹ ? However, Daniel Halévy points out that the speaker was the first to pass the agrégation. This prestigious competition for men is a much more eloquent expression of Marie Baertschi's intellectual value than other diplomas specific to the female school system. The gendered character of Daniel Halévy's description of Marie Baertschi is also reflected in the formula: 'Dreyfus is our tactician, she is our muse'. The men have the rigour of political strategies, the woman the breath that inspires and transcends. It is first of all by her boundless devotion, a typical quality of the "eternal feminine", that Marie Baertschi stands out: this woman The "charming" and "good" woman runs to teach every night in the working class areas.

Daniel Halévy does not exaggerate. Marie Baertschi first became involved in the Soirées ouvrières de Montreuil: on 27 May 1899 she gave a lecture on the history of the monarchy

²³⁸ Daniel Halévy [texts collected and presented by Jean-Pierre Halévy], *Regards sur l'affaire Dreyfus*, op. cit.

239 Letter to Eugène Manuel, 18 April 1899.

absolute in France²⁴⁰. In June of the same year, Daniel Halévy attended one of his talks at the same place on the origin of the French people. On 9 December 1899, Marie Baertschi sent him a letter explaining that she had proposed to the workers of Montreuil to organise a musical evening in the presence of Maurice Bouchor. She asked him to help her find voices to complete the choir. She also spoke on behalf of the audience: "They also asked me to ask you if you have any plans for an excursion with them in January: [...] they would like to start their visit to the Egyptian Museum again.²⁴¹ " She also asked Halévy to send her the statutes of the UP de la Chapelle: "The Montrouge group, which is going to open in a fortnight's time and which would like to have statutes as small as possible, asks me to send you the statutes of the groups I know so that you can draw inspiration from them.

Far from being just a lecturer, Marie Baertschi acted as an intermediary between many Parisian UPs. She was very familiar with the UP de la Chapelle, founded in the north of Paris in November 1899 at the instigation of Daniel Halévy and called the Enseignement mutuel du XVIII^e arrondissement.²⁴² Marie Baertschi was part of the founding team, together with Maxime Leroy, André Spire, Robert Dreyfus, Maurice Bouchor, Philippe Chaslin and a group of employees²⁴³. The UP was small in scale, with around 200 members eight months after its foundation in the summer of 1900. In addition to the UP, there was a lay patronage run by Marie Baertschi, at the same time as she worked with Louise Napias at the Maria-Deraismes patronage, founded in the south of the capital. At the Enseignement mutuel, Marie Baertschi was helped by Bella Gueller, who not only looked after the children, but also organised legal and medical consultations²⁴⁴. Born in Russia in 1866, Bella Gueller obtained a doctorate in medicine in Paris in 1901: she was part of the new generation of women graduates. In addition to the lay patronage, Marie Baertschi gave lectures at the Enseignement mutuel: in April 1900, she warned Daniel Halévy that because of an unforeseen trip to Italy, she would have to postpone the planned talk.²⁴⁵

Marie Baertschi also actively participated in the foundation of the Émancipation du XV^e in November 1899 in southwestern Paris. Of socialist inspiration, the Emancipation brought together several normaliens, including Mario Roques, François Simiand, Paul Mantoux, Étienne Burnet. But it was Paul Grunebaum-Ballin and Marie Baertschi who decided, in the autumn of 1899, to transform the social studies group into the UP²⁴⁶. The young agrégée gave numerous lectures, including one in December 1899, before 350 to 400 listeners, on the history of freedom of conscience since the Middle Ages, via the Renaissance and the Reformation²⁴⁷.

240 See *Le Rappel* of 20 May 1899.

241 Letter sent to Daniel Halévy, Saturday 9 December 1899, Halévy fonds, NAF 28147, BNF.

242 Sébastien Laurent, (preface by Serge Berstein), *Daniel Halévy, op. cit.*, p. 139.

243 *Ibid.*, p. 141.

244 *Ibid.* p. 145 and p. 180.

245 Letter to Daniel Halévy, 13 April 1900, Halévy fonds, NAF 28147.

246 Dick May, "Some reflections on the UP, continued and finished", *Revue socialiste*, February 1901. It does not mention Marie Baertschi by name but refers to a "agrégée de l'enseignement secondaire".

247 Francis Farmée, "In a UP", *Le Radical*, 12 December 1899.

Marie Baertschi was clearly not afraid to join socialist initiatives. For example, she became involved in the Revolutionary Socialist Alliance of Seine-et-Oise, which was set up about twenty kilometres west of Paris. At the head of this group, Jean-Marie Jouandanne, a railway worker and trade unionist, sought to reproduce in his departmental federation the attempt made by Deherme at the *Coopération des idées*. His aim was also to bring together "intellectual elements capable of making our doctrine understood²⁴⁸". When he approached Daniel Halévy to ask for his help in January 1900, Jean-Marie Jouandanne had already obtained the support of Maurice Bouchor and Marie Baertschi. Halévy agreed, like them, to hold a regular conference in the Seine-et-Oise region every week or two. A month later, Jean-Marie Jouandanne contacted him again to tell him about the preparatory meeting for the inauguration: "We had a magnificent meeting here in Port-Marly last Sunday with the citizen Maurice Bouchor, Miss Baertschi [...]. Maurice Bouchor [...] had a very legitimate success with *La Muse* and *L'Ouvrier*. We ended this session with the *Internationale*²⁴⁹". Did Marie Baertschi sing the *Internationale* with the workers? Did she try to popularise socialist doctrine for the workers, since this was the mission that Jouandanne initially reserved for the intellectuals involved in the Revolutionary Socialist Alliance? It is unlikely: Marie Baertschi never claimed to be a socialist. But whatever she did or said, it would have been enough for the administration to know that a teacher at a teacher training college had taken part in a meeting where the *Internationale* was sung to risk dismissal.

According to her statement at the International Congress of Philosophy in the summer of 1900, Marie

Baertschi is said to have participated as an organizer or speaker in eight UPs in Paris and three in the suburbs²⁵⁰. She was active in the *Foyer du peuple*, *l'Émancipation*, *l'Aurore*, *l'Enseignement mutuel*, the *Société des Cornéliens*, the *Soirées ouvrières de Montreuil*, the UP de Montrouge, the *Alliance socialiste de Seine-et-Oise*, the *Union populaire* founded by Pauline Kergomard at Montparnasse-Plaisance and the *Coopération des idées*²⁵¹. On the strength of this experience, Marie Baertschi was active in the *Société des UP*, which was founded at the beginning of 1899 around the *Coopération des idées*. With Charles Guieysse, Daniel Halévy and Robert Dreyfus, she opposed the line of Georges Deherme. It was on behalf of this dissident faction that she wrote to Buisson:

What we wanted to ask you is, in a word, that you come next Sunday to the committee of the Faubourg, to defend with us the ideas - in our opinion just and liberal - which must animate the popular education undertaken by the Cooperation of Ideas, and which are threatened. [...] It is a question of knowing whether [t]he groups spontaneously formed in various neighbourhoods, for populations with different mindsets and

248 Letter to Daniel Halévy dated 10 January [1900].

249 Letter to Daniel Halévy, 16 February 1900.

250 André Lalande, "Le Congrès international de philosophie (tenu entre le 1^{er} et 5 août 1900)", *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger*, July/December 1900, p. 503.

251 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914*, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

The schools will be assimilated, willingly or not, to the Mother House of the suburb, and subjected to the same regulations, so as to constitute a vast "congregation" of popular education - or if they will have the right to be themselves and to live their own life. [My abhorrence of the administration tells you sufficiently which side we are on. We want absolute autonomy for the neighbourhood groups, with, if you like, a federation to maintain good 'neighbourly' relations and mutual aid between them all. This conception is that of many members of the Committee, but we have formidable opinions against us, among others that of Mr. Deherme, partisan of absolute centralization²⁵².

The group led by Marie Baertschi emerged victorious from the confrontation with Deherme. The latter was ousted from the presidency of the Société des UP in February 1900 and replaced by Gabriel Séailles. It was on this date that Marie Baertschi officially joined the board. The new general assembly confirmed two orientations to which Deherme was opposed: the autonomy of the new UPs in relation to that of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine and the commitment of each of them to assert the "secular spirit", which according to Deherme was contrary to the principle of neutrality²⁵³.

Marie Baertschi advocates that UPs should adapt to their social environment as much as possible. She applied this precept as a lecturer. Thus, when Daniel Halévy asked her in January 1900 to prepare a series of lectures, she replied:

As for the subject, I am very much at a loss: on the one hand, it must be of interest to those to whom it is addressed, and I do not know them well enough to judge, and on the other hand, there must be a certain unity between all the subjects treated [...]. Would you, who are much better informed than I am, please indicate one - literature, history, elementary philosophy - of your choice. I would be more sure of not dealing with a subject that would only interest me²⁵⁴.

F) Marie Baertschi, successful speaker who "knows how to remain a woman"

Most of Marie Baertschi's lectures in the UP deal with contemporary history and philosophical issues related to republican ethics: secularism, freedom of conscience, etc. Unlike many other intellectuals, Marie Baertschi does not deal directly with feminism or girls' education. She refused to be confined to so-called "feminine" subjects and competed with men in areas where women did not usually venture. At Emancipation, she spoke about the secular spirit, a lecture reproduced

252 Letter to Ferdinand Buisson, 2 November 1899, 022Y/2-3, fonds Ferdinand Buisson, Bibliothèque de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme français.

253 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914, op. cit.*

254 Letter to Daniel Halévy, 16 January 1900.

then in *Pages libres*²⁵⁵ in the Foyer du peuple, she talks about the Orators of the French Revolution²⁵⁶ in *L'Aurore*, she painted a portrait of Danton²⁵⁷ At the workers' evenings in Montreuil, she did a series on the French Revolution in which she discussed the Terror in detail²⁵⁸. Contemporary history, and in particular the history of the French Revolution, featured prominently in lectures designed to spread republican political culture.

Marie Baertschi mobilised the symbolic capital provided by her agrégation in history. When Francis Framée, sent by *Le Radical*, attended one of her lectures, he was impressed by her professionalism and erudition worthy of a man:

She quotes dates. She is precise. It gets to the bottom of ideas. She seeks to educate, not to amuse. And all the listeners, for an hour and a half, listen to her without the slightest weariness. They follow the development of her thought with passionate attention. The sight of them makes you feel that they are imbued with this word of truth that has come to them at last. [...] The success of Miss Marie Baertschi is considerable. [...] It is due [...] to the extent and variety of her knowledge - has she not just been awarded first place in the agrégation competition?²⁵⁹ ?

Like Jeanne Chauvin, a doctor of law, Louise Napias and Blanche Edwards-Pilliet, graduates of the Faculty of Medicine, the legitimacy acquired by Marie Baertschi is rooted in what Juliette Rennes has called a "context of universalization of the recognition given to the school verdict"²⁶⁰ ". The newly accessible diplomas for women play in their favour. But if the *Radical* journalist paints a laudatory picture of Marie Baertschi, it is also because she conforms to the rules of femininity:

Miss Marie Baertschi wins over the audience with the naturalness of her speech and gestures. [...] It is the tone of a familiar conversation, with occasional flights of fancy. And there is no trace in the lecturer - sorry, in the apostle - of that pretense of superiority, of that sharp and domineering arrogance, which one notices, not without irritation, in certain professional intellectual combativeness. Miss Baertschi knows how to remain a woman²⁶¹ ...

Unlike the feminist activists as they are represented, Marie Baertschi shines by her "real modesty". She does not pose as a rival to men and avoids the cliché of the

255 Marie Édouard Fuster, "L'esprit laïque", *Pages libres*, February 1901.

256 "Les universités populaires de Paris", *Bibliothèque universelle et revue suisse*, 1900, p. 50.

257 "Les UP - l'Aurore", *La Justice*, 8 July 1900.

258 *Les Temps nouveaux*, 6 January 1900.

259 Francis Framée, "In a UP", *Le Radical*, 12 December 1899.

260 Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature*, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

261 Francis Framée, "In a UP", *Le Radical*, 12 December 1899.

This is the reason why the pedantry of women is a repellent feature of the discourse on female education at the turn of the century. Thus, if one were to conduct a comparative study of the prize-giving discourses of male and female schools, the injunction to be modest would undoubtedly appear to be a feature of the discourse directed at girls. The female teachers themselves have taken on board the imperative of humility that weighs on female intelligence. Let us take just one example, that of Denise Billotey, a member of the Ladies' Committee and a friend of Marie Baertschi, in her speech at the Edgar Quinet primary school on 31 July 1897:

[People] fear that this culture, so widely spread, will make our pupils lose the taste for an obscure and simple existence, [...] for the occupations which will be the eternal share of women because they are their natural occupations: the care of the household and the children. [We repeat to our students: "Beware of any untoward affectation of language and appearance, [...] preserve what makes you charming: modesty"²⁶².

To be accepted, female knowledge must not be flaunted, it must not be assertive, still less vindictive. We remember the rigours that Clémence Royer attracted by behaving like a man of science. For her part, Marie Baertschi was successful precisely because she did not upset the gender order: modest, she did not flaunt her knowledge. She had a 'primary mind' and did not impose her knowledge: every demonstration was followed by a discussion in which the listeners could raise objections. Francis Framée reports that once her talk is over, "With great grace and charm she said: 'And now let's talk"²⁶³."

This desire to exchange with his audience is not feigned. It is not limited to conferences. Thus, several of her texts published in the press end with her postal address, so that anyone wishing to contact her can do so ²⁶⁴. This passion for debate appealed to her contemporaries. Thus, in the speech that Anatole France gave at the inauguration of the new premises of the Soirées ouvrières de Montreuil, he evoked the discussion time that followed any lecture given by Marie Baertschi: "I attended one of these talks and I was as charmed by the way in which Mlle Baertschi explained the storming of the Bastille to you as by the way in which you listened to her and by the judicious observations that you made, according to your custom, after the talk"²⁶⁵ ". Like Francis Framée of *Le Radical*, like Daniel Halévy and Fernand Gregh, Anatole France was 'charmed'. This was also the case for Édouard Fuster when he heard Marie Baertschi alongside Maurice Bouchor in 1899²⁶⁶.

262 Denise Billotey, "Discours de distribution des prix à l'école Edgar Quinet", *Revue pédagogique*, December 1897.

263 Francis Framée, "In a UP", *Le Radical*, 12 December 1899.

264 See 'Le Gentilhomme de Vogüé', *L'Aurore*, 13 March 1899 and Marie Édouard Fuster, 'L'esprit laïque', *Pages libres*, 2 February 1901.

265 Anatole France, *Opinions sociales*, Paris, Société nouvelle de librairie et d'édition, Georges Bellais, 1902, p. 78.

266 Édouard Fuster, 'Profiles of works - the popular readings of the poet Bouchor', *Foi et vie*, 1^{er} March 1899.

Marie Baertschi regularly accompanied the poet in his popular readings. Was it because she played the role of the muse several times in the famous dialogue *La Muse et l'Ouvrier* that she ended up becoming the muse of the UP in the eyes of Daniel Halévy? When the young history teacher took the stage in February 1900 at a party of the socialist group of the Seine-et-Oise²⁶⁷ Jean-Marie Jouandanne was so impressed that he asked for the show to be repeated in June: "To complete the programme, couldn't you get Mr Maurice Bouchor and Miss Baertschi [...] to perform 'The Muse and the Worker'?"²⁶⁸ ? "

In addition to her work as a lecturer and actress, Marie Baertschi also gave a voice. On 12 November 1899, she performed *L'Anneau d'argent* by Cécile Chaminade, *Noël* by Augusta Holmès and *Les Nocés de Jeannette* by Victor Massé, at the Société des Cornéliens²⁶⁹. His passion for singing is undoubtedly a legacy of Pécauldian pedagogy. Author of the article

"In the first *Dictionnaire de pédagogie*, Pécaut praises choral singing. According to Catherine Grivet-Bonzon, he considered that singing "accompanies republican rites as much as the stages of childhood, giving each person the feeling of belonging to a community of which he or she is the inseparable and founding member"²⁷⁰ ". For Pécaut, Catholicism contributes to the 'singular poverty [of the] musical heritage'²⁷¹ "whereas countries with a Protestant tradition have all the faithful perform songs and psalms, making the most of "the ability of the musical art to serve a moral purpose"²⁷² ". Marie Baertschi was part of this heritage, as can be seen in a text she published in *L'École nouvelle* in 1902:

I have a passion for singing, I believe in its educational virtue! Having spent part of my life in Switzerland and Germany, I know the role that singing - real singing - can play in the life of a people, and it is always a sadness for me to see how much singing is neglected in France. [...] Why shouldn't the school provide the same musical culture as the church²⁷³ ?

True to her views, Marie Baertschi wanted to introduce singing not only in primary schools, but also in the UP. Thus, together with Daniel Halévy, she planned a concert at the Enseignement Mutuel²⁷⁴. As she was unable to sing *L'Hymne des temps futurs*, she sent him the text and score of *L'Hymne à la liberté*, nicknamed the "little brother of the Marseillaise" by the soldiers of the second year. Here again, the aim was to turn an edifying work into an educational tool.

267 See letter from Jean-Marie Jouandanne to Daniel Halévy, 16 February 1900.

268 Letter to Daniel Halévy, 7 June 1900.

269 See *La Lanterne* of 6 November 1899.

270 Catherine Grivet-Bonzon, 'La musique dans le *Dictionnaire de pédagogie et l'instruction primaire* de Ferdinand Buisson : une discipline scolaire pour moraliser et éduquer le peuple', *Les Sciences de l'éducation - pour l'Ère nouvelle*, 2013/3, vol 46, pp. 89-111.

271 Article "Music" in the first *Dictionary of Pedagogy*, by Pécaut, quoted in *Ibid.*

272 *Ibid.*

273 Mme Marie Fuster, "Impressions de vacances", *L'École nouvelle*, 8 November 1902.

274 Letter to Daniel Halévy, 21 December 1899.

G) Pauline Kergomard, an exceptional speaker

Marie Baertschi was not the only woman to make an impression as a speaker in the UP era. Pauline Kergomard's oratorical talent cannot be ignored, as she captivated her audience every time she spoke. She was a regular on the podium. From her early years as Inspector General, she enjoyed bringing together teachers in conferences where she explained the principles of early childhood education. Her spontaneity and frankness sometimes got her into trouble, as when she addressed some 150 directors of asylum wards - hearing nuns - in Clermont-Ferrand in 1881. After daring to advise her audience to reduce the role of catechism in the education of children, and insisting on the instructions of bodily hygiene necessary to preserve their health, she was attacked from all sides by the local newspapers. *The Clairon* explained that "Madame l'inspectrice" had arrived in the department, "with a great frou-frou of flounces²⁷⁵ "like "a real comet with a tail of falbalas". She is a leading lady and is accompanied by primary inspectors who look like "five undertakers slightly warmed by love". It is impossible to treat a speaker as anything other than a woman of ill repute, who speaks to strut her stuff and surrounds herself with men with the constant aim of seduction. A pornographer because she advises asylums to wash all parts of the children's bodies - "including the buttocks²⁷⁶ " ! - Pauline Kergomard was likened to those "sad peccadilloes, who, in the falbalas of cocottes and the low-blues of pedants, go off [...] to make fun of women and despise their mothers". A local column did not hesitate to use the ultimate argument: Pauline Kergomard belonged to "the so-called reformed religion²⁷⁷ ". Consequently, she 'pushes the love of reform to the extreme'. Described as "Jules Ferry enjuponné", she is the victim of a pen that associates anti-Protestantism, anti-Semitism and hostility to Islam by describing her as an adept of "Judaic circumlocutions" that would have enthused Mohammed.

Pauline Kergomard's career as a speaker thus began in adversity. Visiting Pauline Kergomard's work in rural and Catholic areas attracted the distrust of a local population and political elite unused to seeing women in positions of responsibility. Added to this was the iconoclastic nature of the comments she made, whether on hygiene, discipline or the place of religion. Hence the flurry of *ad hominem* attacks against her: she is accused of being one of those shameless women who harangue the crowds and to whom the hated Republic has just offered an official platform. However, like Marie Baertschi, Pauline Kergomard gave her interventions the appearance of a conversation. This is how she declared in Montauban, during a conference on school hygiene: "I do not claim to be giving a conference in front of you [...]. I am only happy [...] to talk with you for a few moments. I seem to have a hand full of truths [that] I am sowing, while asking your indulgence for

275 Le solitaire, 'Madame l'inspectrice', *Le Clairon*, 12 October 1881, F/17/23588/B.

276 Le solitaire, 'Madame l'inspectrice', *Le Clairon*, 12 October 1881.

277 "Local Chronicle - Clermont and Puy de Dôme", article in his career file, F/17/23588/B.

this informal chat²⁷⁸. " Although this conference was published in the form of a brochure, it is in fact exceptional for Pauline Kergomard to write up her talks. Her talks are moments when she "talks", literally, in front of her audience, and then with them.

In 1906, Pauline Kergomard was accused by a contributor to *L'École nouvelle* of having stated in one of her lectures that nursery schools should only cater for poor children. A few months later, she responded in the pages of the magazine. While she acknowledged that she had said that the ideal place for a child under the age of six was in his or her family, she refuted having said that only poor children should have access to nursery school:

Never writing the text of my lectures, but very much in control of my thoughts, [...] I certainly said in 'substance', perhaps even literally, what the Inspector heard. I said this because I never thought that the child was made for nursery school. [I said it because I am more and more convinced that the child needs his mother. [But,] I have never thought - and I have never said, not thinking so - that it would be necessary to prohibit the admission to nursery school of any child "whose dress indicates the affluence of the parents and, by deduction, the leisure activities of the mother".²⁷⁹.

Beyond the subject of this controversy, this extract reveals Pauline Kergomard's spontaneity in her lectures. In a text written after the inspector's death, Denise Billotey, who worked with her, recalls that she was a great speaker: "She never lost an opportunity to address the teachers. She spoke with a verve that was not weakened by her dependence on notes [...] 'I can't read', she used to say. [...] A very lively sense [...] of comedy gave a special flavour to the stories she liked to tell of her early experiences.²⁸⁰ "

For want of access to the text of Pauline Kergomard's lectures - and with good reason! - we can get an idea of her verve by reading the articles she wrote for *La Fronde*. Full of humour and causticity, her texts stand out from the others. The Inspector General expresses herself in her own name, in the first person singular, and tells personal anecdotes. She regularly portrays herself in her work as an inspector and draws examples from her own experience. She never uses pseudonyms. Wrongly accused of being the author of an article published in 1890 in *Le Figaro*, the Inspector General replied: "I always sign with my name what I write²⁸¹ ". Pauline Kergomard considered it her duty to assume her words, since she was the official face of the French nursery school.

A member of the administration of Public Education since 1879, a former elected member of the CSIP, a tireless traveller who spent her life on inspection tours, Pauline Kergomard can express herself

278 Pauline Kergomard, *Quelques mots d'hygiène scolaire, conférence à Montauban*, Montauban, imprimerie de Forestié, 1881, 16 p., p. 1.

279 Pauline Kergomard, "Réponse de Mme Kergomard à un inspecteur", *L'École nouvelle*, 12 January 1907.

280 Denise Billotey, "Le centenaire de Mme Kergomard", *La Française*, 21 May 1938.

281 Letter from Pauline Kergomard published in *L'Estafette*, 29 October 1890.

on any subject related to education. Does she, like Marie Baertschi, roam the UP, going from talk to talk? It does not seem so. Her activity is concentrated on the UP of Montparnasse-Plaisance, which she founded. There she gave the inaugural speech and probably other talks. Her two sons remember that "when a colleague was absent, she would run all day to find a replacement... or take his place on the platform"²³² ! Pauline Kergomard was indeed used to giving lectures at short notice. At the national congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement in Caen in 1901, she replaced Mr Driessens, a specialist in home economics, at the last minute. She chose to speak on the subject of girls' patronage in front of a full house: "Mme Kergomard was the object of a demonstration of sympathy when, without any note, she took the floor and held it for a long hour and a half [...]. A triple round of applause thanked the eloquent apostle of female education"²³³ .

Although her name rarely appears among the speakers of the UP, the turn of the century was rich in talks for Pauline Kergomard in the feminist ranks. She spoke on behalf of the Society for the Improvement of Women's lot and the vindication of their rights, but also gave lectures in a series organised by *La Fronde*, which took advantage of the enthusiasm for the UP to highlight feminist issues. Unsurprisingly, it was Pauline Kergomard who opened the talks on 3 March 1900: "In a soft voice, which sometimes became vibrant and strong, she spoke to us about 'The Education of Girls in a Democracy'"²³⁴ . As usual, she was warmly applauded by a large audience. How far she has come since her lecture in Clermont-Ferrand in 1881! It must be said that Pauline Kergomard had meanwhile acquired national stature. For her, as for many intellectuals who had been involved in public education for several decades, the "UP moment" was the dawn of a new century full of hope.

Non-exhaustive summary of speakers at the time of the UP

The information comes from our research, Lucien Mercier's thesis and Eunyoung Lee's thesis²³⁵ . Shaded: highly educated women (at least 15 / 32 listed).

<u>Name</u>	<u>Age in 1900</u>	<u>Mobilised symbolic capital</u>	<u>Type of speech / location</u>	<u>Sociability networks</u>
Louise Napias	22 years	Pharmacist	Conferences - several UP	Collaborates with Marie Baertschi at the Maria Deraismes patronage - Member of the Ladies' Committee - Protégé of Blanche Edwards-Pilliet Collaborator of <i>La Fronde</i>
Nelly Roussel	22 years	Freemason, feminist and libertarian activist	Lectures and plays in the UP + lecture tours in France and abroad	Belongs to the Diderot Lodge, like Véra Starkoff and Madeleine Pelletier Friend of Odette Laguerre

²³² *Pauline Kergomard (1838-1925)*, 1926 brochure, *op. cit.*

²³³ "XXI^e National Congress", *League Bulletin*, October-November 1901.

²³⁴ Renée Rambaud, "Les conférences", *La Fronde*, 4 March 1900.

²³⁵ Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914*, *op. cit.*; Eunyoung Lee, *Au plaisir de savoir*, *op. cit.*

			abroad.	Marguerite Durand's collaboration in his plays - reader of <i>La Fronde</i>
Maria Verona	26 years	Dismissed schoolteacher Freethinking, feminist and socialist activist - soon to be a bachelor and lawyer	Conferences in the UP - Represented L'Égalité at the 1904 Congress.	Contributor to <i>La Fronde</i> Collaborates with Odette Laguerre Active in the Ligue de l'enseignement
Madeleine Pelletier	26 years	Feminist, socialist and freethinker	Conferences - la Semaille (UP)	Belongs to the Diderot Lodge, like Véra Starkoff and Nelly Roussel
Marie Goldsmith	29 years	Russian-born revolutionary socialist	Conference - UP du boulevard Saint-Antoine	?
Jeanne Brémond	30 years	Publicist	Conferences in the UP + to the League for Women's Rights	Contributor to <i>La Fronde</i>
Marcelle Tinayre	30 years	Woman of letters	Conferences in the UP	Contributor to <i>La Fronde</i>
Marie Baertschi	32 years	History teacher - Fontenay resident	Participates in conferences in hospitals ²³⁶ Conferences / songs in many UP	Friend of Pauline Kergomard, collaborates with Louise Napias and Mathilde Salomon Member of the Ladies' Committee Member of the Democratic Union for Social Education (with Anna Lampérière)
Vera Starkoff	33 years	Russian-born exile Freemason anarchist and feminist	Playwright - Represents Le Progrès social at the 1904 Congress - Active in Montreuil ²³⁷	Belongs to the Diderot Lodge, like Madeleine Pelletier and Nelly Roussel Active in the Soirées de Montreuil like Marie Baertschi
Henriette Wurmser	34 years	Associate Professor of History	Lectures at the UP of St. Quentin - representing her at the 1904 Congress	Former pupil of Mathilde Salomon Friend of Mmes Alphen-Salvador, Brandon-Salvador, Eugène Manuel
Bella Gueller	34 years	Doctor of Medicine Born in Russia	Medical consultations, UP de la Chapelle	Collaborates with Marie Baertschi
Melina / Melanie Lipinska	35 years	Medical student - laureate of the Paris Academy	Conferences Unknown places	?
Jeanne Chauvin	38 years	Bachelor's degree Doctor of Law	Lectures at the Society of Popular Conferences. + law course	Contributor to <i>La Fronde</i>
Gabrielle Petit	40 years	Feminist, pacifist, freethinker, anarchist activist	Lectures at the UP in Roanne + from 1906 onwards speeches at strikes ²³⁸	Friend of Odette Laguerre and Nelly Roussel Collaborator of <i>La Fronde</i>
Odette Laguerre	40 years	Textbook author ²³⁹ - Wife of a radical mayor	Conferences at the UP in Roanne + in Lyon	Collaborator of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello - Contributor to <i>La Fronde</i> - Friend of Nelly Roussel - In contact with Louise Renard
Blanche	42	Bachelor	Conferences	Support Louise Napias

236 The members of the Union Démocratique pour l'Éducation Sociale who gave lectures in hospitals were Mmes Muratet, Chéliga, Hudry-Menos, Lampérière, Marillier, Metin, Romieux, Seignobos, Mlles Rehm, White, Schirmacher, Vacherie de Laporte. See Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement, op. cit.* p. 263-264.

237 From Marianne Enckell's entry in the *Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier* (online).

238 "Her listeners evoke "her warm words", "her energy and ardour", "her boisterous verve". Note by Madeleine Laude in Christine Bard, Sylvie Chaperon (dir.), *Dictionnaire des féministes, op. cit.* p. 1124-1126.

239 She constantly presents herself as a secondary school teacher for girls but is not.

Edwards-Pilliet	years	Medical intern	Unknown places	Member of the Comité des dames Contributor to <i>La Fronde</i>
Louise Renard	43 years	Wife of Georges Renard	Conferences Unknown places	Friend of Dick May and Pauline Kergomard Corresponds with Odette Laguerre Collaborator of <i>La Fronde</i>
Orka / Melania Rajchman	43 years	Socialist and feminist activist Exiled from Poland	Lectures at the Montmartre Social Education (UP)	?
Séverine	45 years	Recognised publicist Pillar of <i>La Fronde</i>	Conferences in the UP	Contributor to <i>La Fronde</i> , friend of Marguerite Durand
Anna Lampérière	46 years	Former director of the normal nursery school course, Founder of the Democratic Society for Social Education	Cooperation of ideas conferences (UP) - Participate in hospital conferences	Member of the Democratic Union for Social Education with Marie Baertschi Active in the Ligue de l'enseignement
Aline Valette	49 years s240	Women's labour inspector - Socialist activist, feminist	UP du Boulevard Saint-Antoine	Contributor to <i>La Fronde</i>
Élisabeth Renaud	54 years	Socialist activist - founder of the socialist feminist group	Conferences - the Common House (UP)	?
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello	53 years	Bachelor of Science, Headmistress of the Lycée de Lyon	Conferences at the UP of Lyon + Rive-de-Gier + Valence, etc.	Contributor to <i>La Fronde</i> Collaborates with Odette Laguerre Active in the Ligue de l'enseignement
Céline Renooz	60 years	Feminist - neosophist theory	Conferences in many UPs	In contact with Clémence Royer, Mathilde Salomon, Blanche Edwards-Pilliet, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello
Pauline Kergomard	62 years	Inspector General	Conferences - The People's Union of the XIV ^e (UP) + the League of the Ens. + <i>La Fronde</i>	Friend of Marie Baertschi and Louise Renard Member of the Ladies' Committee Contributor to <i>La Fronde</i>
Camille Lévy	?	High school teacher	Lectures at the Democratic Union for Social Education	?
Ms Lauriol	?	Upper primary school teacher	Lectures for the Geographical Society	Knowledge of Marie Baertschi
Paule Gliain	?	?	UP du Boulevard Saint-Antoine	?
Marie Wathier	?	?	Active in the UP Congress 1904, 1907, and 1908 - represents the UP of the X ^e	?
Constance Dubien	?	?	Conferences in the UP	Written for <i>La Fronde</i>
Ms Martin	?	?	Conferences in the UP	?
Marguerite Souley-Darqué	?	Painter and publicist	Lectures in the UP, at the Free College of Social Sciences, at the Scientific Institute of Freethought	Contributor to <i>La Fronde</i>

240 She died in 1899.

Of note are the number of women speakers under 40 years of age (15/32), which testifies to the over-representation of the "filles de la République" generation; the number of highly qualified women - beyond the brevet supérieur - (15/32) coming from medicine (6), law (2) and the educational professions (7); the number of women born abroad (7/32), many having chosen political exile; the networks of acquaintance that linked these intellectuals (among others *La Fronde* and the Comité des dames); the number of activists who were at the same time free-thinkers, feminists and socialists.

IV- Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, founder and president of the Université populaire lyonnaise: theory and practice of adult education

At the general assembly of the Université populaire lyonnaise (UPL²⁴¹) on 3 June 1901, Édouard Herriot, the secretary general, declared: "Mme Desparmet-Ruello has been the soul of our work; not only did she create it, but [...] present at all the exercises, she has brought the Université populaire to life with the life that overflows within it; she has been the bee par excellence of our hive²⁴²". With its female presidency, the UPL is an exception among the 222 UPs founded between 1899 and 1904, 69 of which are in Paris or the suburbs and 153 in the provinces²⁴³. The founder of the UPL, which operated from 1900 to 1905, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello acquired a high profile at the turn of the century in the city of Lyon, where she was close to the mayor, Augagneur, and on a national scale, whether she was speaking at the congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement in 1902 or at that of the UP in 1904. She had the impression of being on the threshold of a new era: "Were there People's Universities ten years ago? [...] Were there magazines like *Pages libres*²⁴⁴ ?

For Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, the experience of the UPL was an encounter with the working world in a commitment where free thought, feminism and radical socialism were intrinsically linked. In the words of Carole Christen, pedagogy appears to this political enthusiast in need of political rights as a means of "substituting for politics, of doing it 'differently'"²⁴⁵. How does Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello see popular education? How does she see the role that intellectuals should play in it?

Lucien Mercier defines the republican doxa at that time as follows: "Education is the panacea, the remedy to the social question. [...] Going to the people was the response of a whole political class anxious to strengthen the Republic, for a whole 'intelligentsia' frightened by the

241 On the UPL (without mentioning Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello), Laurence Roulleau-Berger, "Sociographie des Universités populaires: le cas de Lyon" in Monique Buisson, Jean Camy, Régis Bernard, (et al.): *Education, fête et culture*, Lyon, PUL, 1980, p. 105-146 and Jérôme Henning, "Enseigner le droit à l'Université populaire lyonnaise, entre activité doctrinale et engagement politique (1899-1903)", *Les Études sociales*, 2021/1, n°173, p. 51-89.

242 *Annales de l'Université populaire lyonnaise*, Lyon, Société d'instruction et d'éducation populaire, July 1901, n°3.

243 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Reberieux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914, op. cit.* p. 156 and p. 59. It should be remembered that neither Pauline Kergomard nor Dick May preside over their UP.

244 Presentation of Charles Guieysse by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1902, n°4.

245 Carole Christen, "Introduction", in Carole Christen, Laurent Besse (eds.), *Histoire de l'éducation populaire 1815-*

1945, *op. cit.* , p. 77-79.

rise of social struggles²⁹⁶. " Does Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello fit into this ideology? In the context of the Affair and in the face of an administration hostile to such an exposed school principal, the aim is to show the major role that the UPL played in the career of its founder and president.

A) The ideal UP: speech by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello at the national congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement

Having become a member of the Ligue de l'enseignement a few months earlier²⁹⁷ Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was invited to speak at the National Congress in the summer of 1902 as president of the UPL. She presented the methods of organising a UP in the provinces and defined the directions that she thought should be followed by all UPs:

[A UP] works to put men in a position to judge, it does not judge for them. On the other hand, it must have its political ideas linked to its philosophical system; it is quite obvious that it cannot avoid pronouncing itself in favour of the emancipation of the individual, the moralisation of society, the liberation of labour, the abolition of privileges, the progressive extinction of barbaric habits such as those of slavery, the regulation of prostitution and the white slave trade, duelling and war²⁹⁸.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello addresses the thorny issue of the political neutrality of UPs. In line with most intellectuals, she considers that the UP should be a place where people can learn to be freely critical. And while the UP should never offer a platform for electoral propaganda, it cannot do without a certain amount of politics, being by essence a space for politicisation. To take up Carole Christen's analysis, it seems that Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello has adopted the distinction between "the" politics and "the" politics: "The opposition between "the" politics - suspect because it is based on conflict - and "the" politics - valued because it is assimilated to the general interest - is a classic element of the discourse of the actors of popular education²⁹⁹. " Refusing to do "politics", UP cannot fail to put "the" political at the heart of its concerns. Édouard Herriot declared: "To those who accuse us of hiding a political work under a cautious label, let us reply that politics is an essential art, much broader than we would have liked to say, and that we only intervene in debates of principle³⁰⁰. " For Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, campaigning for the emancipation of the individual cannot violate neutrality. Moreover, and unlike most of the men involved in the

296 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914, op. cit.*, p. 27.

297 His name appears among the members on the lists published in the bulletin in March-April 1902 (membership n°1723).

298 "Communication from Mrs Desparmet-Ruello on the organisation of a UP in the provinces", *ELEC Bulletin*, October-November-December 1902.

299 Carole Christen, "Introduction", in Carole Christen, Laurent Besse (eds.), *Histoire de l'éducation populaire, 1815-1945, op. cit.*, p. 77-79.

300 Speech by Édouard Herriot at the general assembly of 3 June 1901, *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1901, n°3.

UP, its discourse on 'the' policy incorporates feminist concerns (such as the fight against prostitution) on the same level as other issues.

In the same vein, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello considers that the UP must place itself outside the religious field: "The UP must take a stand for the *a posteriori* spirit of science and philosophy, against the *a priori* spirit of religions, for truth against dogma, for free examination against the principle of authority³⁰¹". The President wants to expose to the UP the political and moral principles of the Republic (Declaration of the Rights of Man, French Revolution, Solidarism, Kantianism) which she presents as apolitical: they are "about" politics, not "the" politics. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello believes that, from a scientific point of view, all subjects can be dealt with at the UP: "all branches of human knowledge are susceptible to popularisation". Moreover, just because the audience is layman does not mean that it is not worthy of receiving secondary education: "The people have provided science with enough inventors of genius for us to expect as much attention and intelligence from them as from an average high school student. However, the speaker was aware of the pedagogical difficulties involved in adult education: "It is unfortunate that a lecturer [...] uses too technical a vocabulary; the lesson runs the risk of not being understood [...]. But neither should the lecturer descend, as it were, to the level of the "real". He is too low, he distorts his ideas by dint of transforming them.

This strictly didactic remark conceals a major question: that of the relationship that intellectuals should maintain with the workers' movement. Lucien Mercier rightly reminds us that as a meeting place for intellectuals and the working class elite, the UP symbolises the emergence of these two social groups in French society³⁰². Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello considers that their cooperation should be long-term at the UP, but she sees it above all as the reception, by the listeners, of knowledge coming from above: "It is during the whole of one's life that one can come to learn there: he who does not learn every day forgets: he who does not keep abreast of the discoveries of science soon lags behind his time; he who wants to have only serious opinions must unceasingly submit them to the test of discussion³⁰³".

B) Genesis of the UPL under the impulse of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's 1902 speech to the Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement was based on her experience in Lyon, which began at the end of 1899³⁰⁴. In the context of the Affaire, many workers' circles - in Vaise, Guillotière and Brotteaux - were looking for lecturers, and the headmistress of the Lycée de Lyon proposed founding an association to bring together intellectuals ready to respond to this demand for popular education. Of the 30 personalities invited to the preparatory meeting, 22 were present. The teaching world was

301 "Communication from Mme Desparmet-Ruello...", *Bulletin de la Ligue*, October-November-December 1902.

302 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914, op. cit.*, p. 12.

303 "Communication from Mme Desparmet-Ruello...", *Bulletin de la Ligue*, October-November-December 1902.

304 Minutes of the preparatory session of 9 December 1899, *Annales de l'UPL*, January 1900, No. 1.

overrepresented. Among others, two teachers from the Faculty of Arts, one teacher from the boys' high school and two teachers from the girls' high school came. There are four women. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was assisted by two of her colleagues from the lycée when she opened the meeting. According to her, the role of UP is to complement compulsory primary education, so the initiative logically falls to the secondary school teachers, with the support of their colleagues in higher education. She is also convinced that "women always have a place in the work of education, justice and dedication"³⁰⁵ ". Among the absentees who were excused from this first session were Appleton, a law professor, Beauvisage, an associate professor at the Faculty of Medicine, and Herriot, a professor at the Lycée Ampère³⁰⁶. In the weeks that followed, they joined the founding team of the UPL. They also became members of the municipal team when Augagneur was elected mayor in 1900.

As early as the December 1899 meeting, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello envisaged the creation of a Maison du peuple in Lyon, which would be the headquarters of the UP. She would like a room for talks and games, a library and a theatre. Visits to museums and scientific excursions in the countryside should also be organised. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello sets an example:

"Gentlemen, whatever difficulties we encounter [...] I hope that we will not be discouraged. I am never discouraged"³⁰⁷ ! "

At the end of the meeting, the headmistress of the school visited the municipal councillors of the Croix-Rousse, who offered her their support. A letter was also sent to anyone who might be interested in the initiative. Should the president sign the official letters in her name? I often hesitate, being a very small person in Lyon, to address an appeal to men in the highest positions. If we could put the names of the members of the Committee at the bottom of the appeals [...] it would give us more strength and authority. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello therefore proposed appointing a board with representatives from the three levels of education. She planned to give only one of the twelve seats to a worker.

The President hoped that the first associations to support the UPL would be the alumni associations. In her letter to them, she states that it was while attending the Congress of the Petites A in 1898 that she thought of creating a UP: "It was by listening to your delegates [...] that I understood how teachers [...], by uniting with the teachers, so admirable in their devotion but so overburdened with work, could help your associations to become [...] works that are truly useful to the intellectual development of workers and the social movement"³⁰⁸. "

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello is right to count on the participation of extracurricular organisations. Indeed, it is the president of the federation of associations that provides the UPL with its first seat. The UPL collaborates with other associations with which it sometimes shares some of its members. Thus, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, as well as Herriot, Augagneur and five other pillars of

305 Speech by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello at the inauguration of the Maison du peuple in November 1900, *Annales de l'UPL*, February 1901, No. 2.

306 Minutes of the meeting of 9 December 1899, *Annales de l'UPL*, January 1900, No. 1.

307 Minutes of the meeting of Saturday 13 January 1900, *Annales de l'UPL*, January 1900, No. 1.
308 "Open letter to the members of the school chapters", *Annales de l'UPL*, February 1901, n°2.

the UPL, are founding members of the Lyon section of the Ligue des droits de l'homme³⁰⁹. Consequently, when Charles Richet, vice-president of the French Society for Arbitration between Nations, came to Lyon in 1902, he was invited by both the Ligue des droits de l'homme and the UPL³¹⁰. During the centenary of Edgar Quinet celebrated in 1903, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello associated the League of Human Rights, the Rhône Pedagogical Union, the Cercle d'études sociales Étienne Dolet, the Société des amis de l'enseignement de Saint-Just, the Cercle populaire de la Guillotière, the Bourse du travail and the workers' unions with her initiative³¹¹.

Among these associations, the UPL is one of the largest. The *Annales* regularly published figures: for the month of February 1902, when the UPs were running out of steam nationwide, the UPL had a total of 1,953 "entries" at the various activities planned, with an average of 131 people per evening³¹². These figures confirm Lucien Mercier's observation: "Provincial universities are generally larger than those in Paris³¹³." While in the capital, each district had its own UP, in Lyon, it was within the UPL that various local sections were created, starting with the Croix-Rousse, the cradle of the initiative:

We knew [...] that there are, in this district so truly Lyonnais, intelligent workers [...] who have made the glory of this city [and] who are interested in things of the spirit. But these men only come down to the city for business concerning their trade; they like to find [everything] on their beloved plateau [...]. Well! We liked to decentralise, to come and create a centre of learning in the Croix-Rousse³¹⁴.

But not all the workers of Lyon could go to the Croix-Rousse hill. The UPL therefore created branches in Brotteaux, Perrache, Vaise and Guillotière. However, not all these branches were successful. The president of the UPL explained in 1902 that "the UPs succeed in areas where they meet a sedentary working class public³¹⁵". Although the initiative in Croix-Rousse was maintained until 1905, the attempt in Guillotière failed very quickly because the workers there were less sedentary and less attached to their neighbourhood.

The desire of intellectuals to get closer to the workers was a consequence of the awareness that the Affair had created. The president of the UPL considers that this crisis was salutary, because

we came out of that state of moral somnolence [...] to which we were allowing ourselves to be led, [we gave] a vigorous stroke to the left; [...] we had left

309 Emmanuel Naquet, *La Ligue des droits de l'Homme : une association en politique (1898-1940)*, thesis at the IEP of Paris under the direction of Serge Berstein, 2005, p. 131-132.

310 "Presentation of M. Richet", by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1902, n°4.

311 "Le centenaire d'Edgar Quinet à Lyon", *L'Aurore*, 26 February 1903.

312 See *Annals of the UPL*, July 1902, No. 4.

313 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914, op. cit.*, p. 75.

314 Speech by J. Desparmet-Ruello at the inauguration of the Maison du peuple, *Annales de l'UPL*, February 1901, No. 2.

315 "Communication from Mme Desparmet-Ruello...", *Bulletin de la Ligue*, October-November-December 1902.

the party of the counter-revolution become almost more formidable than a hundred years ago, we had let it, - forgive me this rather too scientific comparison, - like a mycelium, spread its network under the whole soil of France³¹⁶.

The intellectuals involved in the UPL had one thing in common: they were Dreyfus supporters. Édouard Herriot entered public life during the Affair, when he was a teacher at the Lycée Ampère. It is true that in 1898, the Lyon town hall entrusted him with a municipal literature course which was a considerable success, as were his future lectures at the UPL³¹⁷. But, according to Serge Berstein, "for Herriot to take the step into active politics, it took the shock of the Dreyfus affair³¹⁸". It was then "with the zeal of a neophyte³¹⁹" that he joined the UPL.

Like Dick May, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello is convinced that the difficulties of UP lie in the conference system. The UPL prefers to organise series of courses. Herriot took on a course in literary history and the history of political ideas. There are also courses in economics, law, science and public lectures. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello is also committed to the promotion of social art. The UPL therefore hosted several plays and concerts, as well as film screenings organised by M. Lumière³²⁰.

C) The UPL, a socialist initiative?

To summarise the spirit of the UPL, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello cites its three main orientations. In addition to being resolutely secular, education must be scientific and social:

Scientific, because it will show the methods by which the human mind arrives at the possession of truth; demonstration with the mathematical sciences; experimentation with the physical sciences; observation with the natural sciences. Social, for it will tend to show ideas under the influence of the times, institutions becoming liberal as ideas become free³²¹.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello considered that "social thought" should be the common thread linking all branches of education. Workers should be offered courses directly related to their social situation and daily concerns. But could the UPL be considered a socialist initiative? Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's speech is ambiguous. According to

316 Presentation of F. Buisson by J. Desparmet-Ruello, *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1901, n°3. The mycelium is the vegetative part of fungi, made up of filaments that colonise the soil.

317 In 1900, his course was the most successful with 220 listeners. *Annales de l'UPL*, February 1901, n°2.

318 Serge Berstein, *Édouard Herriot ou la République en personne*, Paris, Presses de la fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1985, p. 36.

319 *Ibid*, p. 38.

320 See Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's speech at the General Assembly of 3 June 1901, *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1901, n°3.

321 Speech by J. Desparmet-Ruello at the inauguration of the Maison du peuple, *Annales de l'UPL*, February 1901, No. 2.

In the social order, they contribute to the destruction of the detestable division of men into classes; they participate in the progressive abolition of what still remains in modern society of the archaic and feudal³²² ". UP shares with socialism the hope of the advent of a classless society. However, there is no question of this objective being achieved through class struggle: the UPs cannot be centres of revolutionary action since they "were founded [to] fight in the name of the *idea* against *force*". According to Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, the UPs

The UPL president joined Herriot when he declared in 1900: "Let us say loudly that a revolution is, at all times, the punishment of a country that has not wanted to evolve". The president of the UPL joined Herriot when he declared in 1900: "Let us say loudly that a revolution is, at all times, the punishment of a country that has not wanted to evolve."³²³ "

Can Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello therefore be described as a socialist, or is she more in line with the social nuance of radicalism³²⁴ ? In a letter sent to the mayor Augagneur in 1901, she rejoiced at the increase in the number of pupils in her school, saying: "The legend that people liked to propagate has been overturned! The socialist ideas of the headmistress do not harm the recruitment of pupils³²⁵ ". Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello therefore claimed to be a socialist and sometimes quoted Jaurès³²⁶. In 1903, she gave a lecture entitled "Le discours de Jaurès et l'Affaire Dreyfus" (Jaurès' speech and the Dreyfus Affair) after inviting the Dreyfus supporter Georges Lévy to the UPL in 1901 for a lecture entitled "Qu'est-ce que le socialisme? But if Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello sometimes used the term socialism in her speeches, she never defined it in detail. When she advocated a new type of theatre for the working classes, she declared that those "Those who are interested in the creation of the popular theatre are, of course, men who are in love with social reforms, followers of this new religion called *socialism*³²⁷ ". Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's socialism is therefore not based on Marxist ideology. It is first and foremost a reformism. As Emmanuel Jousse writes, "reformism [is] at the interface of socialism and the Republic³²⁸ ". For the president of the UPL, there was never any question of calling political institutions into question: it was necessary to accompany their evolution towards a social regime. And the workers must play their part in this.

This is why she invited the lawyer Louis Chazette to give courses on labour law. For the UPL president, it is natural that workers demand "a fairer distribution of the profits of [their] work³²⁹ "but this should not lead to revolution:

322 "Communication from Mme Desparmet-Ruello...", *Bulletin de la Ligue*, October-November-December 1902.

323 Speech by Édouard Herriot at the general assembly of 3 June 1901, *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1901, n°3.

324 See Mélanie Fabre, "Éduquer pour la République : Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, une intellectuelle au temps de Jaurès", *Cahiers Jaurès*, 2020/1-2, n°235-236, p. 115-139.

325 Letter to Victor Augagneur, 16 October 1901, 176WP051, Archives municipales de Lyon.

326 Paule Branzac, "Que peuvent espérer les Instituteurs et les Institutrices", *La Fronde*, 4 June 1903.

327 "À propos des cours de M. Renel sur le Théâtre populaire", *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1902, n°4.

328 Emmanuel Jousse (preface by Marc Lazar), *Les hommes révoltés*, *op. cit.*, p. 387.

329 Presentation of M. Chazette by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1902, n°4.

To be able to reason about all these things [...] you must have studied questions of labour legislation [...]. Then you will be able, in your political groupings, to distinguish between those who promise you what they can deliver and those [...] who promise you *more butter* than they can deliver [...]. You know how much those who are interested in your lot are anxious that you should obtain the eight-hour day; first of all the hygienists and economists who believe that "*excessive manual labour [...] leads to physical and moral exhaustion*" [...], and then we, the educators, who want everyone to have time to learn. Well! In the present conditions of work and given the competition from abroad, it is not possible to come to this urgently needed reform all at once [...].

When a socialist minister entered the government for the first time, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello called for confidence in the republican legislators, who undertook to reduce the working day to ten hours first. She dissuaded the workers from the revolutionary temptation. According to her, the workers had the means to peacefully reverse the balance of power with the employers in the world of work. Louis Chazette's course at the UPL enabled them to learn about trade unions, cooperative societies, the regulation of women's work, industrial accidents, as well as provident institutions and mutual aid societies. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello underlined the interest of this course and called the workers to action:

Form unions, and this is not only for men, but also for women, whose weakness is exploited to lower the wage rate [...]; form production [and] consumer cooperatives which will ensure that you receive natural and good quality foodstuffs paid at their real value and the sharing of profits at the end of the year [as well as] the means to fight unemployment, sickness and old age in the future.

In a final piece of advice to the workers, the president of the UPL declared: "you must act with the weapons that the law places in your hands". She put her advice into practice by trying in 1901 to create a popular bank at the Croix-Rousse. She also spread her mutualist precepts far from Lyon. Thus, when she travelled to Brittany in the summer of 1901, she discovered that a false mutual society had made great promises to fishermen in exchange for their savings. So she sent for the director of the *Journal de la Mutualité française*, who explained to the sailors how to set up their own self-managed mutual society³³⁰. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's socialism was thus reflected in a certain interest in the working classes, without adhering to Marxist doctrine. Although the director shared a violent anti-clericalism with the radical party, which was the basis of her political culture, she was, like Buisson, on the most left-wing fringe of radicalism.

330 *Journal de la Mutualité française*, 30 September 1901.

D) "Intellectuals who love you watch over you': paternalistic socialism

How was this interest in the working class expressed in Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's relations with UPL listeners? In the "Impressions d'une croix-roussienne" published in the *Annales de l'UPL*, a regular listener tells us that the president

"comes every day of class with her husband and children³³¹". She even calls her listeners "my friends³³²". When she introduced Louis Chazette, she portrayed an intellectual who, like her, was at odds with the class: 'He does not take the interests of the boss against the workers, although he certainly belongs to a bourgeois family'. For her, intellectuals "must not obey this bourgeois dilettantism which has sometimes pushed so-called young people *of the world* to come and parade on the stages of the UP. The people are not a toy to be played with: they have been abused too often not to be entitled to complete loyalty from now on.³³³" Without falling into a "bourgeois dilettantism", Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello nevertheless showed paternalism towards the workers. For example, she deplores the passivity of the Lyonnais worker, who always needs to be guided:

Even when he was ignorant, the Parisian worker had become aware [...] of the goal he must pursue. [In Lyon, people resigned themselves for a long time; the people of Lyon had to be reduced to a state of desperation, to starvation, for them to decide to complain, for the Croix-Roussien to *descend*. [In Lyon, [...] if the truly educational impulse had not come from a very small group of academics, we would still be watching - like Sister Anne - to see if the movement did not arrive³³⁴ !...

The conclusion is simple: without the action of intellectuals, the workers would not have taken the initiative to act in a political crisis in which they are accused of being uninterested. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's paternalism is also perceptible in her description of the role of intellectuals:

While all day long, [...] you manual workers live bent over your work, [...] intellectuals who love you watch over you, observe what is happening elsewhere [...] in the factories, in the mines and in the countryside where your comrades work. [...] They record the efforts they see them ready to make with you, so that the work of all of you ... gives you what you have a right to expect. [...] But as you do not have much time to devote to reading, as - admirable simplists - you like to get to the point quickly, ... for you they will prune the undergrowth, they will only present you with the very surface of things, they

331 Claudine Simple, "Impressions d'une Croix-roussienne", *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1901, n°3.

332 Presentation of M. Chazette by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1902, n°4.

333 "Communication from Mrs Desparmet-Ruello on the organisation of a UP in the provinces", *ELEC Bulletin*, October-November-December 1902.

334 Presentation of Charles Guieysse by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1902, n°4.

will make the thought so accessible, the reasoning so clear, that you will understand without difficulty and with your natural good sense you will quickly judge on which side the light is, where the truth and justice lie...

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's speech confirms Laurence Roulleau-Berger's observation that intellectuals consider the people "as children to be educated: it is there that they must play the role of pedagogues who love humanism³³⁵". Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, however, defends herself against any paternalism: "Do we want to direct you? Patronise you? Play at being bosses? I say to you in all sincerity. [...] We reserve for you a role that is very modest in appearance, but very great in reality.³³⁶" The workers were in fact responsible for the day-to-day running of the Maison du Peuple, which was inaugurated at the Croix-Rousse in November 1900. Like a good mother, the president declared: "We have decided to let you govern yourselves³³⁷". She gave out the good points: "You can declare yourselves satisfied; generally speaking, your management committee has performed the duties you have entrusted to it very well".

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's paternalism is also evident in her conception of the UPL as a replica of the school. As Nicolas Palluau puts it, it seems that in Lyon, school culture is the unsurpassed paradigm of popular education³³⁸. Students must conform to the model of the good student and be aware of their incredible opportunity:

Read the good books, which we will place in your libraries, follow the courses [...]. You will never know enough about which teachers you have the privilege of hearing! What a desire to be useful to you, to be useful to France, pushes them to devote their time, their knowledge, their words to you! [...] Read, listen, always have a notebook on the table. [...] Don't just come and doze in our rooms because it's hot³³⁹.

The headmistress of the high school is seen in the costume of the president of the UPL. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello seems little aware of the difference in living conditions between those who practice an intellectual profession and those who earn their living by working with their hands. Thus, when the lecturers retire from the UPL during the summer, she refers to the holidays "which academics need so much to heal their vocal organ, which is altered by the abuse of speech, through rest and special treatments³⁴⁰". Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello sometimes goes so far as to completely deny the

335 Laurence Roulleau-Berger, *Les intellectuels dans un mouvement social et culturel*, op. cit., p. 248.

336 "How the Maison du Peuple is managed and what spirit animates it", talk by Mme Desparmet-Ruello to the workers of the Croix-Rousse, *Annales de l'UPL*, February 1901, n°2.

337 "Extract from the speech of Mme Desparmet-Ruello, at the administrative assembly of the Croix-Rousse section", *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1902, n°4.

338 Nicolas Palluau, "Les "professeurs du peuple". Instituteurs et encadrement de l'éducation populaire (1896-1914)", in Carole Christen, Laurent Besse (eds.), *Histoire de l'éducation populaire 1815-1945*, op. cit., pp. 237-252.

339 J. Desparmet-Ruello, "Lettre ouverte aux sociétaires des amicales scolaires", *Annales de l'UPL*, February 1901, n°2.

340 "Extract from the speech by Mme Desparmet-Ruello at the administrative assembly of the Croix-Rousse section,

class oppositions: "Of the people, as M. F. Gregh says, we are [...] and it is up to you that nothing distinguishes us, making your intellectual culture as high as possible." Persisting in this denial of sociological reality, the president of the UPL is incapable of realising the incompatibility between everyday working-class life and the seriousness expected from listeners.

If Herriot recalls that the UPL's motto is not "Let's teach the people", but "Let's teach each other"³⁴¹ "It seems that the daily reality of the association is quite different. In Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's speeches, everything concurs in presenting the intellectuals as the bearers of a secular gospel for the workers, who must be won over to the Republic and turned away from revolutionary socialism. While a fraction of the socialists, embodied in particular by Georges Sorel, saw the UP as a place for the "gentrification" of proletarians by personalities whose class interests were opposed to their own, the president of the UPL endeavoured to preach the reconciliation of classes. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's confidence in the republican regime explains her aversion to all forms of revolutionary thought. According to her, at the time of Darwin, science demonstrated that it was reformism that allowed the perfectibility of species as well as societies: nature gave "revolutionary minds the admirable lesson of transformism, which insensitively brings about changes in worlds and beings in relation to their environments"³⁴² ". When the *Annals of the UPL* reproduced the words of an auditor - with no doubt a certain amount of reconstruction! - it is the reformist spirit that emerges from her experience at the UPL:

They are very good people, all these professors [...]; they do not try to deceive the poor world like certain politicians who are not content, in strikes, to push the workers to make legitimate demands but sometimes make them make such claims that if they were successful, production [...] would be absolutely compromised for the greater success of foreign competition; then it would be ruin for the industrialists, unemployment and misery for the workers³⁴³ !

This is how, in the pages of a UP newsletter, a worker argues to limit the demands of her peers because of the threat of foreign competition, a typical argument of the bosses! If some UPs have allowed the emergence of a "proletarian culture"³⁴⁴ "On the contrary, the UPL sought to transmit the culture of the elites to a working-class minority, which was used as a relay to the masses. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello thus declared: "You, the enlightened part of the people, help us to bring the light to the other part"³⁴⁵ ! "

341 Speech by Édouard Herriot at the general assembly of 3 June 1901, *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1901, n°3.

342 Speech by J. Desparmet-Ruello at the inauguration of the Maison du peuple, *Annales de l'UPL*, February 1901, No. 2.

343 Claudine Simple, "Impressions d'une Croix-roussienne", *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1901, n°3.

344 See Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Reberieux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914, op. cit.*, p. 12.

345 "Extract from the speech of Mme Desparmet-Ruello, at the administrative assembly of the Croix-Rousse section", *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1902, n°4.

Not only does the UPL participate in the diffusion of bourgeois culture, but it does so with paternalistic methods. It is clear that Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello corresponds to the model of the organic intellectual theorised by Gramsci and taken up by Patrick Cabanel. She is one of the intellectuals who are "the 'clerks' of the dominant group, intended [...] to ensure [...] the 'spontaneous' consent of the great masses [...] to the direction given to social life by the dominant fundamental group³⁴⁶. " The teachers, most of whom came from the new strata welcomed by Gambetta, were the new organic intellectuals of the regime: they disseminated the Kantian categorical imperative, the secular republican ideal and the rejection of the old Catholic influence on the nation. These organic intellectuals of the Third Republic were engaged in formulating and disseminating the values of the liberal bourgeoisie to the masses. In order to survey this "university clergy" - according to Thibaudet's expression - we should first of all look at the "professors, whether or not they entered politics and the radical or socialist parties, who were marked by Kantianism and pedagogy, spiritualism, Masonry, and the certainty that the Republic was the end and the crowning glory of the necessary historical evolution of France.³⁴⁷ " Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello fits this portrait perfectly. She is certain that it is through the instruction of the masses that the spirit of the Revolution will triumph definitively over reaction. She was also convinced that the republican regime was unsurpassable: it was the political achievement of the nation. Under its apolitical guise, the UPL therefore sought to divert the workers from the revolutionary idea. The intellectuals resorted to "*top-down*" pedagogical practices, relying on the dedication of an idealised elite and the polite listening of listeners considered as schoolchildren. In short, to use Jean-Paul Martin's formula, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was ready to support the workers' movement, "on condition that it did not result in a rupture or a diversion of the republican synthesis³⁴⁸ ".

E) Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello lecturer: "the bee in the hive

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello is a dedicated president of the UPL. She makes all the official speeches - parties, inaugurations - and is responsible for introducing the speakers before their conference. These introductions were often an opportunity for her to produce highly politicised speeches, as when she welcomed Louis Chazette for his labour law courses, Charles Richet, a pacifist figure, Charles Guieysse, the mastermind behind *Pages libres*, or Ferdinand Buisson, presented as a Dreyfus hero. But, in addition to her role as president, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello is also a lecturer and a scholar of the democratic era. She often evoked the debt owed by the educated to society: 'In their desire to do their new social duty, they came down from their vast platform, left their beautiful school where they were so well looked after, where everyone thought above all of themselves

346 Patrick Cabanel, "Les intellectuels protestants, des intellectuels organiques de la Troisième République?"

347 *Ibid.*

348 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914, op. cit.*

[...]. And these men have spread to the People's Universities³⁴⁹ ". Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was the most active speaker at the UPL, certain that she too had to act. In December 1900, of the 15 evenings organised, she hosted seven. At the time of her death in 1937, *La France* recalled that "her activity quickly spread beyond the walls of her school [because] she had an avidity for the apostolate to which she devoted all the leisure time her position allowed her³⁵⁰ ". Her hierarchy, circumspect, noted in April 1904 that she "went as far as Rive-de-Gier and Valence to give her lectures³⁵¹ ".

In 1900-1901, she gave a series of four lessons at the UPL in which she discussed the origins of the earth, the appearance of beings, the theory of evolution and the great geological periods. Claudine Simple, a regular listener at the UPL, remembers this programme:

It was Mme Desparmet herself who came to tell us where the world we inhabit comes from. On this subject we knew little more than what our catechism had taught us. [...] Thanks to the electric lamp, Mme Desparmet was able to project beautiful views of the sky. [...] She also told us about the struggles of the Church against those scientists who [...] went against the Bible, [...] those martyrs of the scientific faith³⁵².

True to her materialism, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello made her geology course an anti-catechism and presented the Church as the enemy of science. She regularly uses projections which play their part in the popularity of her lectures. In her thesis, Eunyoung Lee notes the success of this practice: "The use of projection views, which are more spectacular, corresponds to the perceived need to offer some sort of spectacle³⁵³ ". One can imagine the enthusiasm for Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's lecture on the cataclysm of Mount Pelee with projections in May 1902. In addition to the modernity of the use of slides, the speaker's pedagogical qualities were also appreciated, with the school inspector declaring in April 1899 that "as a teacher, [she] is very much appreciated" in her school³⁵⁴.

Following the example of her school leadership, the president of the UPL organised "off-site" courses. In the spring of 1900, she led botany and geology walks on Sundays. On 9 June 1901, she organised an expedition to Poleymieux, Ampère's birthplace near Lyon, and gave a talk on the scientist. The lecture was followed by a "fraternal banquet [...] where people from the most diverse backgrounds, members of the UPL and many Croix-Roussiens, municipal councillors, the teacher of Poleymieux, were present side by side, where [healthy gaiety] never ceased to reign³⁵⁵ ".

349 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "Les deux rêves", evening of 13 June 1901, *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1901, n°3.

350 *La France*, newspaper for women's information and action, 27 February 1937.

351 Career file of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, F/17/22067.

352 Claudine Simple, "Impressions d'une Croix-roussienne", *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1901, n°3.

353 Eunyoung Lee, *To the pleasure of knowing*, op. cit., p. 22.

354 Note of 3 April 1899, career file, F/17/22067.

355 *Le progrès*, 11 June 1901, quoted in *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1901, No. 3.

But Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, a woman of great literary and scientific culture, does not confine herself to interventions in her primary field of competence. She organised numerous public readings on various subjects. In December 1900, she read *Le Flibustier*, a comedy in three acts by Richepin. She returned to this experience when she spoke at the Third International Congress of Public Art in Liège in 1905:

Understanding that with the help of dramatic literature we would succeed in preoccupying minds with a number of new ideas, I inaugurated [...] readings of dramatic works. I read the most interesting scenes from the point of view of ideas. [...] I read alone; ... it would have been difficult for me to find men or women of good will who were free on the evenings when I was free myself³⁵⁶.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello did not limit herself to the theatre: she also read texts by Alphonse Daudet, Victor Hugo, Anatole France, Romain Rolland and Émile Zola. An admirer of the author of "J'Accuse", Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello also gave a series of twelve lessons entitled "Émile Zola and his work" between October 1902 and July 1903. When the president of the UPL became a professor of literature, she chose committed authors. In 1901-1902 she also organised 36 lessons in reading aloud. It must be said that she had a long-standing interest in rhetoric: in 1884, she was in charge of the diction class at the girls' high school. When she died in 1937, the newspaper *La France* recalled her oratorical talents: "[what she loved] was the interpretation by the soul of masterpieces of thought and true poetry; it was the means of moving the sensibilities to complete the demonstrations of reason³⁵⁷. "

During an evening organised at the UPL on 13 June 1901, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello even performed her own text entitled *Les Deux Rêves (The Two Dreams)*, in which she set the scene for the epic of the UP³⁵⁸. She also sang a duet with Mlle Comte, a student at the Conservatoire and at her high school. Her son Édouard, aged 17, reads a text by Sully-Prudhomme. Jeanne's husband was in charge of the electrical installation of the Maison du peuple: in the Desparmet family, the UPL was a family affair.

In addition to these literary, musical and theatrical evenings, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello offers readings with commentary that are much more directly political. For example, she reads a text by Renan entitled "Les services que la science rend au peuple". She also introduced listeners to the first of four lectures that Ferdinand Buisson gave in Geneva in April 1900, in which he explained the conflict between religion, morality and science in contemporary education. When the weekly *Pages libres* was created in January 1901, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello subscribed to it. She regularly drew articles from the magazine which were the subject of commented readings: this was the case for a text on the Boxer revolt in China and on workers' pensions.

356 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "Le théâtre populaire", *Actes du Troisième congrès international de l'Art public*, Liège, 15-21 September 1905, 4th section.

357 *La France*, newspaper for women's information and action, 27 February 1937.

358 See the report of the party in the *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1901, n°3.

But Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello has a weakness for feminist texts. For example, she read René Viviani's reflections on women in society and described great female figures, such as Mme Roland. She also produces a series of lessons entitled *Histoire de la femme*.

In a rather masculine movement, does the fact that the UPL is chaired by a woman mean that female speakers and listeners are better represented? In any case, the president shows her desire to break with the usual popular male sociability: "As we strongly desire that the mother comes to take her share of intellectual development, [...] we would dream of one more room in the popular house, where the young children would be looked after and entertained by young girls who would be happy [...] to collaborate in our work³⁵⁹." Does Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello have the audacity to think that her high school girls could participate in the UPL by looking after the children of proletarians? If a teacher like Henriette Wurmser was pressured because of her participation in the Mutuality of Saint-Quentin, one can imagine the folly of the idea of involving young bourgeois women in a circle of popular sociability on the part of a high school principal... Moreover, there is no proof that Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's idea was carried out.

Several women appear among the founders of the UPL, including two teachers from the girls' high school, Mrs Bourde and Miss Carillon. The latter, a history teacher, was a regular lecturer. She was in charge of the contemporary history classes, proposing twelve lessons to retrace the history of France from 1870 to 1900, covering in particular the Paris Commune, the attempts at monarchical restoration, the crisis of 16 May, Gambetta and the

363. These political history courses are part of a teleological vision of French history which demonstrates the resistance of the Republic to counter-revolutionary attempts. But is Miss Carillon up to the task? Her career record portrays her as an uncharismatic teacher, who finds it difficult not to dictate to students absorbed in note-taking³⁶⁰. Miss Carillon has probably not refreshed the already very academic atmosphere at UPL.

In 1901-1902, of the 19 regular speakers, only two were women: Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello and Denise Carillon. The trend is reversed when we analyse the festive evenings organised by the UPL. Thus, during the musical and literary evening of 13 June 1901, 10 of the 18 speeches involved women. These included literary declamations, songs and musical parts. Without fundamentally questioning the division between the scholarly skills reserved for men and the performing arts accessible to women, the UPL allowed a few female individuals to perform publicly.

F) "There are so many things to reproach Ms Desparmet-Ruello for": the administration and public opinion confront a committed civil servant

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello did not shirk the demands of exemplarity that her profession implied. The Inspector General wrote of her: "She has an upright character and good judgment

359 Minutes of the meeting of 9 December 1899, *Annales de l'UPL*, January 1900, No. 1.

360 Denise Carillon's career file, F/17/22778.

just [...]. She obviously has quite high moral and social concerns; one cannot but be grateful to her³⁶¹ ". But the intensity of her activity outside her school caused problems. In 1901, the inspector considered that, as president of the UPL, "[she] gives lectures and gets too agitated, so as not to compromise the interests of the school she runs³⁶² ". The following year, he wrote: "She seems more devoted to the Université Populaire which she created, and of which she is president, than to the school of which she is the director³⁶³ ". Did the creation of the UPL take Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello away from her school? It is likely that the Affair convinced her that popular education is a priority for democracy, at the expense of a secondary education that ratifies class inequalities. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's involvement in the UPL was therefore less a disavowal of her work as a secondary school headmistress - she continued to speak out about women's secondary education at the 1899 Secondary Congress, the 1900 Feminist Congress and in Camille Sée's journal - than an opportunity for strong politicisation. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello joined the Condorcet Society when it was founded in 1901. This assembly of left-wing intellectuals included Ferdinand Buisson, Alphonse Aulard, Jean Jaurès, Gustave Téry and Georges Renard. What they had in common was that they came from Dreyfusism and defended the secular spirit in secondary education. This involved questioning the regime born of the Falloux law and supporting teaching staff in their conflicts with the hierarchy. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello paid for her membership of the committee by being summoned to Gabriel Compayré, the rector of the Lyon Academy. Hostile to the fact that young girls benefited from the same education as men³⁶⁴ and reluctant to accept the Université populaire lyonnaise³⁶⁵ the man whom Pauline Kergomard called a "smoker³⁶⁶ "He was not at the forefront of the secular struggle either. On 10 February 1901, *La Petite République* painted a vitriolic portrait of him:

Gabriel Compayré [...] is a repentant Republican who spends his time flirting with nationalism and reaction. Not only does he rant in public against [the] professors of the University of Lyon who, during the Dreyfus affair, took sides in favour of justice [...], but he also opposes with sly ill will any work [...] of popular education in which the teachers [are] involved. This is how he put up the strongest resistance to the creation of a popular university which, moreover, has managed to do without his support and now has several hundred students³⁶⁷.

361 Note from the Inspector General, 8 November 1906 - career file F/17/22067.

362 Note dated 12 May 1901.

363 Note dated 13 April 1902.

364 See the first part of this thesis, Chapter 2.

365 Speech by Compayré, *Rentrée solennelle à l'Université de Lyon*, Lyon, Rey, 1900, pp. 49-52. He gave the 'official' University the missions that the UPL claimed.

366 Letter of 30 May 1896 to his son Jean, quoted in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.* p. 89. The term is also attributed to Charles Zévort.

367 "In the University - New exploit of Rector Compayré", *La Petite République*, 10 February 1901.

When she went to Gabriel Compayré's invitation to join the Condorcet committee, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello already had a heavy record with him concerning the UPL. The Rector summarised the content of their conversation to the Director of Secondary Education:

I called Mrs Desparmet-Ruello in my office to ask her if she was really part of the Condorcet Committee. She answered that she was. I then asked her if she thought that the place of a Headmistress of a Lycée was good in a committee from which men such as Léon Bourgeois and Brisson had withdrawn³⁶⁸. She remained silent. I insisted on knowing whether she had also resigned. She then told me that she had just written to M. Aulard, the committee organiser, to let him know that she was asking him to receive her for the reason that, living in Lyon, she could not render her services to a Parisian committee. After this conversation, Mr. Director, I [*consider*] that there is no reason to raise a new case. There are so many things to reproach Mme Desparmet-Ruello with - and [more] serious things - that it seems to me unnecessary to call her to order on this point alone³⁶⁹.

A supporter of the state's monopoly on education, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello belonged to the 'advanced' republicans who were accused of sectarianism by their opponents and disowned by an administration reluctant to see its officials expose themselves publicly. The 'affair' of the Condorcet committee is just one example of the tensions between Rector Compayré and Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello. The Inspector General considered the latter's removal "inevitable if the fight against the Rector³⁷⁰". Compayré complained in 1901 that the headmaster's husband "writes hateful articles in the bad newspapers of Lyon³⁷¹". The inspector confirms this: "Mrs. Desparmet's husband seems to play a certain role in this campaign led by the mayor of Lyon³⁷²". Henry Desparmet appears as a negative element in his wife's case. First, he is accused of living off his wife. Secondly, he expressed his anti-clerical, radical-socialist opinions in the newspapers. Jeanne and Henry Desparmet were the first supporters of Mayor Augagneur and his successor Herriot.

After reading Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's dossier, it is easy to understand her enthusiasm for the *Free Pages* investigation on the subject of the freedom that should be granted to teachers. For her, if the teacher's task is to train citizens, he or she must be able to exercise all his or her political rights and not be reproached for his or her opinions and their public manifestation³⁷³. But in doing so,

368 Léon Bourgeois and Henri Brisson resigned in December 1901 after opposing the committee's support for Gustave Hervé in his dispute with the Education Ministry.

369 Letter dated 28 December 1901, career file F/17/22067.

370 Inspector's note, 12 May 1901.

371 Note of 29 May 1901.

372 Inspector's note, 12 May 1901.

373 Presentation by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello of Charles Guieysse to the UPL, *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1901, n°3.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello did not only attract the distrust of her superiors. She alienated the conservative press in Lyon, which associated anti-intellectualism with misogyny:

The press has sometimes spoken of Mme Desparmets-Ruello [*sic*] [...]. It seems that she is an impetuous woman, and that she has never been able to seduce [...] the calm and severe interior of a high school, even a female one; [...] to occupy the leisure time that the taxpayers pay her dearly and for other purposes, she prefers the company of Mr. Augagneur and Mr. Appleton to that of her young pupils; they oblige her to show less restraint than the latter³⁷⁴.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello oversteps her rights as a woman, whose action should be in the domestic sphere - the quiet interior of her high school. Similarly, her morality - sexual? - is called into question when she spends time in the company of Augagneur and Appleton in activities without 'restraint' whose nature is concealed, but which 'seduce' her more than her school. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello is also attacked as a civil servant, since she is said to be involved in politics at taxpayers' expense. She was also accused of violating the principle of school neutrality, especially when she took part in the International Congress of Free Thought in Rome in 1904:

Mme Desparmet-Ruello [...] is going to represent I don't know what organisation [...]. God forbid that [she] should not be precisely at home among the antiquities of the Eternal City! But can we not fear that on her return [...] she will share with her young daughters her Impressions of the journey and of the congress in terms that are... free, and not very compatible with the neutrality of the school? How loud would the Masonic and official gentry cry out if some professor of our University were to take part one day, with great publicity, in a pilgrimage to Lourdes? He would simply be dismissed. Citizens, I ask for the dismissal of Mrs. Desparmet-Ruello, guilty of having taken part officially in a pilgrimage, in a ceremony of the cult of the religion of the Spirit... which consists above all in not having any³⁷⁵.

The *ad hominem* attacks against Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello can only harm her school. The inspector is sorry: "Instead of devoting herself entirely to her duties, she continues to give a large part of her time to causes to which she should remain a stranger.³⁷⁶ " How can it be explained that Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello remained at her post for so long, while others were moved or dismissed for less? From 1900 onwards, she enjoyed the support of the Lyon municipality. Doesn't *the Rappel républicain de Lyon* say that Édouard Herriot, a candidate for the municipal elections, was "nurtured and raised under the powerful wing of Mme Desparmet-Ruello³⁷⁷ " ? This

374 *L'Avenir*, 3 February 1904, career file F/17/22067.

375 Léon Borde, "À la conquête de Rome", *Le Rappel républicain*, 31 August 1904.

376 Note dated 16 March 1906, career file, F/17/22067.

377 "Chroniques journalières", *Le Rappel républicain de Lyon*, 10 April 1904.

Local political support counterbalanced the administration's defiance. But if she was not moved or dismissed, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was automatically retired in 1908, before she had asked for it. She received support from Édouard Herriot, the mayor of Lyon, but also from Francis de Pressensé, the deputy for the Rhône, when she asked for financial assistance while waiting for her pension to be issued. The latter declared that "Mme Desparmet-Ruello had rendered enough services to democracy, she had fought heroically enough in the troubled times we had just gone through in favour of the principles that had ensured the triumph of the Republic, so that the latter would not be cruelly ungrateful towards her³⁷⁸". The contrast between the discourse of the administration and that of the political world was never so strong as in 1907, when the prefect of the Rhône wrote to the minister to request that Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello receive the Legion of Honour:

Mme Desparmet-Ruello took a militant part in the so-called Dreyfusard movement [which] brought her violent hatred from the reaction. Timid republicans who would have had the duty to defend her left her to face all kinds of enmity. Misunderstood if not fought for 8 years by those who should have energetically supported her, Mme Desparmet-Ruello has today overcome the prejudices that her role in the affair had attracted to her, but the republicans think that the Government has sacrificed this director. It is important to disabuse them of this notion³⁷⁹.

Péguy would undoubtedly have seen in this letter an example of the transformation of disinterested Dreyfusism into a nepotistic reward machine... But Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was not decorated solely for her action at the time of the Affair. The same year that the administration complained about the low number of students at the school, arguing that the authoritarianism of a headmistress who was not very maternal and not very committed³⁸⁰ On the contrary, the prefect underlined Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's long-standing dedication to the cause of female education. He considered that she had "succeeded in ensuring the success of a girls' high school in an environment that was deeply resistant to secular education³⁸¹" where the Catholic bourgeoisie was very well established. In accordance with the wishes of her republican friends, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was finally made a Knight of the Legion of Honour on 17 July 1908. Like her appointment as honorary headmistress of the Lycée de Lyon, her Legion of Honour was a symbolic compensation for her premature retirement.

378 F. de Pressensé to the Minister of Public Instruction, 30 January 1909, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello file, F/17/23284.

379 Letter from the Prefect to the Minister of Public Instruction, 11 December 1907, F/17/22067.

380 The Inspector General wrote in 1907: "We are aware of Madame Desparmet-Ruello's faults [...]. The lycée continues to progress, but slowly, it is not 400 pupils, it is at least 800 that there would be [...] under the direction of [one] of our excellent headmistresses, those who concentrate all their activity within their lycée."

381 Letter from the Prefect to the Minister of Public Instruction, 11 December 1907, F/17/22067.

G) Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello on the decline of the UP

Involved in the UPL on a daily basis, how did Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello react to the decline of the UP movement? In 1904, she and her husband represented the UPL at the first national congress of the UP³⁸². With her authority as president of one of the largest provincial UPs, she assisted Gabriel Séailles in chairing the session on Sunday 22 May. She wrote a report on the UPL, which gives few details on its evolution in 1903-1904, the period during which the *Annales* ceased publication. We only know that factory visits were organised, as well as excursions to the ruins of Lugdunum, guided by an archaeologist.

A year later, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello went to the Third International Congress of Public Art in Liege. Faced with the overall failure of the UP, she praised the theatre as a method of popular education³⁸³ For men who are repelled by the serious and often arid teachings of science, there are the teachings [...] of the theatre of ideas, which dares to bring to the stage most of the problems posed by the new social conscience³⁸⁴ ". Even when performed by the most prestigious masters, the UP courses are unable to compete with the café-concerts and other circles of popular sociability. Only the theatre can "awaken thought, [...] enthusiasm and [...] give [the working classes] a sense of beauty with the idea of art". But this new theatre must respond to the aspirations of popular education. It is not a question of reviving the dramatic works produced by a society that is now obsolete. A good connoisseur of Brittany, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello does not agree with the popular theatre that is developing there: it borrows too much from sacred history. It was also necessary to break away from the traditional theatrical venues: "The people's theatre must certainly not resemble our cramped buildings, with corridors [...] that become darker and darker as one climbs up to the seats accessible to the less fortunate, to these buildings where people are crammed together in the winter in the most unfavourable conditions of hygiene. Taking the example of the initiative that Adolphe Ribaux, a Swiss author, presented to the UPL, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello spoke out in favour of an open-air theatre, which could be installed in the old open-air arenas, in order to hold a large number of spectators³⁸⁵. But the ideal, to begin with, would be to form a theatre company ready to travel anywhere. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello initially failed to do this in Lyon. However, she succeeded in getting a worker to take part in one of the UPL's parties by having him learn the male role in *La Muse et l'Ouvrier*. A pupil from the girls' high school gave her the line: "We were astonished at the progress which he performed during the rehearsals. He played the role very well, with accuracy and naturalness³⁸⁶ ".

382 See *Cahiers de la Quinzaine*, 1904, 5th series, n°20.

383 On this notion, see Marion Denizot (ed.), *Théâtres populaires et représentations du peuple*, Rennes, PUR, 2010.

384 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, 'Le théâtre populaire', *Proceedings of the III^e International Congress of Public Art*, op. cit.

385 "Adolphe Ribaux [...] occupies for his *Charles le Téméraire* the ancient Roman amphitheatre of Avranches", in Jean- Claude Yon (ed.), *Le Théâtre français à l'étranger au XIX^e siècle*, Paris, Nouveau monde éditions, 2011.

386 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, 'Le théâtre populaire', *Proceedings of the III^e International Congress of Public Art*, op. cit.

A few years after the foundation of the UPL, a troupe was finally set up: it was the Théâtre de l'Œuvre, a group of workers who met in the evenings to rehearse texts capable of interesting the workers. This troupe was supported by the UPL, which gave it small subsidies, as well as by intellectuals such as Lucien Descaves, Octave Mirbeau, and personalities from Lyon such as Charles Appleton, Édouard Herriot, Justin Godart and Odette Laguerre. The main stage on which the Œuvre performed was the UPL. A play was programmed there on the second Thursday of each month in 1904 and 1905.

Although Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was keen for workers to participate in the production of a social theatre, this did not prevent her, as Lucien Mercier wrote, "from reflecting a hierarchy, with the valorisation of good culture, that of the elites, and [...] the negation of popular culture³⁸⁷". Indeed, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello is faithful to her conviction that the working classes must be able to appreciate the culture of the elites and not seek to promote their own culture. The UPL President is pleased with the effect that theatre has on working-class people. She paid tribute to Adolphe Ribaux's initiative: "the best educational results had been achieved through these performances: improvement in accent, gait and dress, and above all a taste for studying history and reading". For Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, the theatre must be the crucible of a new man, shaped by intellectuals. By questioning the effectiveness of an overly scholastic instruction in the form of lectures in favour of a much more playful teaching thanks to the theatre, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello did not bring about a real revolution in the objectives of popular education: it was in no way a question of promoting a proletarian culture, as *ouvriérisme* would do a few decades later, but rather of inculcating the values of the republican bourgeoisie into the working classes.

The decline of the UP movement led Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello to question the pedagogical practices of the UPs and to renew her thinking on popular education. She was present at international congresses where debates on popular education took place. She often draws on her experience in the UPL when she speaks there. This was the case, for example, when she spoke at the Fourth International Congress of Public Art held in Brussels in 1910, where she made recommendations concerning the creation of secular open-air schools³⁸⁸. The UPL's experience nourished its thinking on education for a long time, but also more broadly on democracy.

387 Lucien Mercier, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les universités populaires, 1899-1914, op. cit.*, p. 177.

388 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "L'école dans la nature", *Actes du quatrième congrès international de l'art public*, Brussels, 1910.

Conclusion of Chapter 4

The popular education movement that emerged in the wake of the Affair prompted several women teachers to leave their schools. Some were not content to simply put down their chalk and take to the podium. They became orators in a process that combined the desire to pass on knowledge with activism. They expose themselves publicly and gain a high profile. These spaces of popular sociability are also places of socialisation in political networks.

Driven by a conception of their vocation that went beyond their teaching profession, they felt an urgency to act and placed a hope - no doubt disproportionate - in the emancipating and reconciling virtues of education. They are in fact the heirs of a political culture more compatible with republican solidarity than with revolutionary socialism. They criticise class society and its segregated school system and see popular education as a means of bringing society together.

Without taking on the role of lecturers, several act in the shadows and organise initiatives aimed at adults, but also at teenage girls, in order to change the Republican doxa, for whom, as Jean-François Condette reminds us, "popular education has [for a long time] been a matter for men, from the school to the regiment, via the polling station³⁸⁹". The commitment of these women intellectuals to women's education extended beyond the walls of the school: they brought the "women's issue" to the debate on popular education.

These women are part of a new generation of democratic intellectuals who seek to make their intellectual baggage, whether medical, scientific or literary, available to the less educated. They apply their pedagogical skills to a lay public. In this endeavour, they are often more successful than higher education pundits, whose inability to adapt to their audience is reported by observers. Although women are rare on the podium, those who do make an impression, especially when they are careful to blend in with the 'feminine' qualities expected of them by their audience: to be accepted, they must not disturb the gender order.

For many of these intellectuals, often from middle-class backgrounds, the popular education movement of the early twentieth century also provoked an awareness of the depth of the gap that was tearing the nation apart. This is sometimes accompanied by a questioning of the vanity of purely educational action in such a social context. The failure of the movement leads them to think of popular education as something other than a replica of the school system, without this leading to concrete successes. In any case, the fact that the UPs have run out of steam does not mean that their commitment to this "war of the two Franks" has come to an end.

389 Jean-François Condette, "De l'école au régiment". *Le réveil de l'éducation populaire républicaine (1894-1897)*", Carole Christen, Laurent Besse (eds.), *Histoire de l'éducation populaire 1815-1945, op. cit.*, pp. 221-236.

PART THREE:

**GIRLS' EDUCATION, A BATTLEFIELD FOR WOMEN
IN THE 'WAR OF THE TWO FRANCES'**

(1896-1914)

Chapter 5

The religious education of girls in the test of modernity :

**Catholic intellectuals and secular school activists in the
controversies of the end of the century**

(1896-1901)

Introduction to Chapter 5

Between the 1880s and 1914, the secular school and the Catholic school were built on a logic of mutual competition, which nourished the thinking of both sides. In this respect, the peak of the "War of the Two FRENCHS"¹ In this respect, the peak of the "War of the Two FRENCHS" during the Dreyfus Affair, and then in the combative period that followed it, rekindled the controversies that had already begun at the time of the school laws. The education of girls appeared to be a major battleground between the two France.

This question was initially a bone of contention among Catholics. Indeed, the publication of the *Nouvelle éducation de la femme dans les classes cultivées* by the Viscountess of Adhemar in 1896, and above all the publication of *Les Religieuses enseignantes* in 1898, a work written by Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur, caused a stir. Never has a book written by a militant of the secular school attracted as much attention as those of these two Catholics, which are real bestsellers, but above all, successes of scandal. Mme d'Adhémar and Mère Marie du Sacré-Cœur, convinced that the secular school had taken a serious lead over the Catholic schools for girls, argued for a reform of denominational education, in particular by questioning the instruction provided by religious congregations. The analysis of their discourse as well as the study of their career paths allows us to test the notion of the intellectual in a Catholic context. These two women evolve in a very different environment from those who defend the secular school: the Church is a very hierarchical institution, where the word of the laity is subordinated to that of the clergy, and where the entry into the public debate of a nun is, to say the least, unexpected, as the latter has taken a vow of obedience and humility.

By asserting that secular institutions provided young girls with a more serious education than Catholic establishments, by following the logic of the Ralliement and by calling on Catholics to take a new look at women's relationship to knowledge, Mme d'Adhémar and Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur contradicted the line taken by the main Catholic press organs, which despised the new educational institutions and showed their hostility towards the new regime and the social and cultural changes that accompanied it.

The controversy launched by *Les Religieuses enseignantes* did not remain confined to the Catholic world. The intellectuals who defended the secular school seized on it either by hailing the triumph of their ideas within the Church itself on the subject of the intellectual emancipation of women, or by seeing in it the striking proof of the archaism of Catholic teaching, confessed by its own believers. The controversy was not confined to the writings of Mme d'Adhémar and Mère Marie du Sacré-Cœur: at the same time, several texts, and in particular works of fiction, fuelled a counter-attack that targeted the secular school by putting public schoolteachers as well as Sevrians and Fontenaysians under fire. Pen battles followed in which the supporters of secularism defended public education. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello summarised the situation in *La Femme nouvelle*:

¹ Émile Poulat, *Liberté, laïcité, La Guerre des Deux France et le principe de la modernité, op. cit.*

After having been reserved for educational journals for a long time, educational issues have entered the domain of the general press. [...] In response to this curiosity, novelists [...] have taken it upon themselves to portray [...] teachers, schoolteachers and schoolmistresses. [...] All, or almost all, wanted to create a work of combat. [...] All these works were very successful for the very reason that they did not have the disinterested character of literary works, because they translated into concrete form the daily polemics about the teaching staff².

The question of schooling, and *a fortiori* that of girls' education, was a major battleground in this "War of the Two FRENCHS". At the turn of the century, Catholic education and secular education, which influenced each other, could not be treated in isolation. The next two chapters therefore propose a few side steps into the Catholic world to take another look at the secular school and its intellectuals.

In this chapter, we will first analyse the careers and discourses of Mme d'Adhémar and Mère Marie du Sacré-Cœur, asking whether they can be considered as Catholic intellectuals. It will then be shown that the controversies to which they gave rise on the subject of female education constituted a space conducive to female intellectual expression by studying the reception by militant secularists of proposals emanating from Catholic ranks.

I- Is there a place in the Church for intellectuals? The Viscountess of Adhemar and Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur, two dissident voices in favour of the democratic education of young girls

In a book published in 1909 in which she recounts the "affair of Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart", the viscountess Marie-Blanche-Angeline d'Adhémar³ reports a speech by Cardinal Mathieu: "In France there is always an *affair* which divides honest people, and which is exploited by others; [...] in this country, which is said to be indifferent in matters of religion, religious warfare rages permanently, and [...] all too often Catholics have excelled in shooting each other.⁴ "

2 Paule Branzac, 'Livres nouveaux': review of *L'Évadée, La Femme nouvelle*, 1^{er} February 1905.

3 For an analysis of the relationship between the viscountess and her director of conscience, see Caroline Muller, *La direction de conscience au XIX^e siècle*, *op. cit.* More sporadically, we come across Mme d'Adhémar in Hélène Charron (preface by Rose-Marie Lagrave), *Les formes de l'illégitimité intellectuelle*, *op. cit.*; Florence Rochefort, "La revue *la Femme contemporaine*, quel féminisme catholique?" in Bruno Dumons and Anne Cova (eds.), "Women, Gender and Catholicism. New research, new objects (France XIX^e- XX^e centuries)", *Chrétiens et Sociétés*, n° 17, 2012, pp. 117-130.

4 Quoted by the Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice: la Mère Marie du Sacré-Cœur, de 1895 à 1901*, Paris, Bloud, 1909, 440 p., p. 6.

The scandal triggered by the publication of *Les Religieuses enseignantes* in 1898 is one of these fratricidal affairs⁵. This internal controversy in the Catholic world brought to light two camps that clashed over the appropriateness of reforming the education of girls. The aim here is to analyse the way in which the issue raised by the school laws had a knock-on effect on the Catholic world. It was not until the 1904 law, which withdrew the right to teach from the congregations, that female education became a subject of debate among Catholics. Some believers considered that the revolution that shook up public schools required a rethinking of education within the Church. Others, on the other hand, take the position of rejecting school laws and falling back on a secular model of education. Faced with these traditionalist positions, it was two women who launched the controversy. The Viscountess of Adhemar and her friend Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur argued for the need to reform old institutions that were ill-prepared for modernity. It is a question of analysing the way in which they carry a dissident word within an institution as hierarchical as the Church. Can two women, one of whom is a nun, be "personalities sufficiently independent of the ecclesial apparatus to play the role of a critical body⁶ " ?

Mme d'Adhémar, who came from Protestantism, became a Catholic after a spiritual and intellectual journey with her director of conscience, Abbé Frémont. She became involved with Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart in 1898, and in 1909 she became her biographer and rehabilitator. For the image of the nun was tarnished by this controversy. As a nun, Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur was at the opposite end of the spectrum from public action, yet she mobilised all the resources at her disposal to make her project a reality. She illustrates Monique Haicault's definition of *agency*, which consists of "finding freedom in a margin of manoeuvre to be deployed in the face of prescriptions, particularly those of gender⁷. " How do two women become Catholic intellectuals, through a reflection on women's education, despite the weight of constraints in the Church?

A) High schools, nurseries for freethinkers? Secondary education for girls as seen by the Société générale d'éducation et d'enseignement

The Société générale d'éducation et d'enseignement regularly addressed the issue of secondary education for women in its newsletter in the twenty years following the Sée law. At that time, it established itself at national level "as the moral leader of the resistance to the policy of secularisation⁸ ". It was composed of legitimists, Orleanists, Bonapartists and

5 On this case, see Françoise Mayeur and Jacques Gadille (eds.), *Éducation et images de la femme chrétienne en France au début du XX^e siècle*, Lyon, L'Hermès, 1980; Émile Poulat, *Liberté, laïcité, La Guerre des Deux France et le principe de la modernité*, op. cit.; Rebecca Rogers, *Les bourgeoises au pensionnat*, op. cit.

6 Étienne Fouilloux, "'Catholic intellectuals'? Réflexions sur une naissance différée", *Vingtième siècle, revue d'histoire*, n°53, January-March 1997, p. 13-24.

7 Monique Haicault, "Around agency. A new paradigm for gender research", *Rives méditerranéennes* [Online], 41 | 2012, online 23 February 2012, accessed 30 September 2016.

8 André Lanfrey, (preface by Françoise Mayeur), *Les catholiques français et l'école (1902-1914)*, op. cit. , p. 140.

a few who rallied to the Republic. From 1880 onwards, "its ranks were filled with dismissed magistrates, members of the former staff of the moral order"⁹. The SGEE played a leading role in the "school quarrel" reactivated by the arrival of the Republicans in power in the early 1880s.¹⁰ When the Ligue de l'enseignement - the SGEE's *alter ego* in the secular camp - took on the mission of developing secular patronages in 1895, Gabriel Alix, a jurist and professor at the Catholic Institute, saw it as a new stage in the age-old struggle against Catholicism: "The war on Christian childhood continues concurrently with another war: the war on Christian women. The one and the other are, in short, only two aspects, two different faces of the war made on God"¹¹. " For him, the Camille Sée law was quite simply the work of the devil:

We know too well by what means he led the nascent humanity into a first and lamentable revolt against the Creator: to make man fall, he seduced woman. The process was too successful to be forgotten [...]. This is why we should not be surprised to see it used again today, 7 or 8,000 years after it was first employed by the Spirit of Evil, [...] by its followers and continuators.

In the eyes of the contributors to the *Bulletin de la SGEE*, Christian women were the last bastion against the secularisation of French society; they were therefore a prime target for secular laws. Gabriel Alix describes female education without God as follows: "the twenty-year-old girl, [...] learned and free-thinking, Muscovite and cosmopolitan, [...] this being of the third sex"¹² seemed to the French legislator the ideal [...] of the young girl"¹³. The author raises the spectre of Russian students, who are described as supporters of the destruction of the state, religion and the family. Gabriel Alix sees the Camille Sée law and the Ferdinand-Dreyfus law authorising divorce in 1884 as the same undertaking to destroy the Catholic family, devised by two state Jews¹⁴.

Even more than Gabriel Alix, the Reverend Father Lescœur was at the forefront of the attacks on the Sée law from the *Bulletin de la SGEE*. In an article from 1884, he considered that "the establishment of girls' lycées and colleges is the highest expression of the radical antagonism, [...] now official [...] between Christian teaching and free-thinking teaching"¹⁵. He studies the prize-giving speeches made in the very young colleges to portray them. It will come as no surprise that he selected that of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, so much so that she embodied the hated free-thinking in the eyes of Catholics. In her speech, the director

9 *Ibid*, p. 139.

10 We use the term '*reactivated*' because the Duruy Law can be considered as a first episode of this

This is a "school quarrel" about women's education.

11 Gabriel Alix, "Les lois opportunistes et l'éducation de la femme", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, August 1895.

12 On this notion, see Laure Murat, *L'invention du troisième sexe, Sexe et genre dans l'histoire culturelle (1835-1939)*, thesis under the direction of Christophe Prochasson, EHESS, defended on 11 September 2006.

13 Gabriel Alix, "Les lois opportunistes et l'éducation de la femme", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, August 1895.

14 On this notion, see Pierre Birnbaum, *Les fous de la République, op. cit.*

15 L. Lescœur, "L'éducation secondaire des jeunes filles et la question des examens", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, August 1884.

would have praised the new education "which will make the same sun shine, the same reason, for both sexes". Louis Lescœur concluded: "You have just heard the true commentary on the Sée law, made officially, publicly, by the headmistresses of secondary schools". If Louis Lescœur was able to quote from prize-giving speeches, it was because he was a faithful reader of Camille Sée's journal *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, from which he drew arguments. He noted that pupils' papers corrected by their teachers were reproduced in it, which he disapproved of: "From the hands of the headmistress, [the journal] passes into the hands of the older pupils who sometimes see their homework reproduced there, accompanied by notes given by the teachers, which is not conducive to the modesty of either of them¹⁶."

The spectre of the freethinker was thus added to that of the pedant. This was the fear expressed by one of the contributors to the *Bulletin de la SGEE* in November 1884, when he analysed the report on the women's agrégation drawn up by Eugène Manuel, president of the jury. The author of the article concludes from the criticisms made by the Inspector General that the future female teachers of the girls' lycées are of a poor level, and that they could enrich Molière's comedies by making beautiful archetypes of the *Femmes savantes* and the *Précieuses ridicules*¹⁷. The intellectual mediocrity of these young women would not prevent them from soon becoming "little pedants". In the absence of any religious instruction, one must expect even worse: "Poor *learned* girls, how exposed they are to becoming foolish virgins! Their virtue will be no more solid than their judgement, and it is to be feared that they will not be satisfied with being ridiculous. Numerous articles present girls' high schools or the ENS de Sèvres as antechambers of debauchery. The study of science, for example, is said to lead young girls down a slippery slope. Thus, while Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello complained about the superficiality of scientific education for girls, Louis Lescœur did not understand why a discipline that was so unfeminine was taught in these "Nurseries of freethinkers [maintained] at the expense of the State¹⁸". In this regard, here is the dialogue between a ten-year-old schoolgirl and her father reported by the jurist Arnold Mascarel:

My child, what part of science will you study next year? - Daddy, we're going to study *man* (!)". And, in fact, the textbook put in the hands of this child presents, [...] supporting illustrations, the entire male skeleton, the skull, the thorax, the abdomen, the femur, the tibia, and the rest¹⁹...

After tackling the natural sciences, Arnold Mascarel deplored the fact that mathematics was part of the curriculum. In contrast to Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, who justified this subject by its practical applications, he wrote: "for young girls who will only have to use

16 L. Lescœur, "Les lycées et collèges de jeunes filles en 1885", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, November 1885.

17 Ch. Clair, S. J., "Les femmes savantes et la République", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, November 1884.

18 L. Lescœur, "Les lycées et collèges de jeunes filles en 1885", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, November 1885.

19 Arnold Mascarel, "Secondary education for girls - the need for curriculum reform", *Bulletin of the SGEE*, July 1896.

It's just a little bit more complicated to set up their house accounts than it is to set up their house accounts, isn't it? [*sic*]. Finally, he gives examples of literary essays that he himself would not be able to answer: how could young girls make an intellectual effort that an adult is incapable of?

B) A democratic and Catholic education for young girls: the project of the Viscountess of Adhemar

The line followed until the beginning of the XX^e century by the SGEE regarding the education of girls was not unanimously supported by Catholics. In an institution where, as Céline Béraud reminds us,

In the same way that "the discourses produced by clerics on 'woman' or femininity, that is to say by men on women, are very numerous"²⁰ "Some women believers contest their arguments. Jacques Gadille mentions them when he analyses the diffusion of the legacy of Dupanloup, a bishop who, from the Second Empire onwards, favoured better education for women. In his study of the chain of transmission of his ideas, the historian finds almost only female links: it is above all women who want to make the prelate's innovative ideas bear fruit"²¹. This was the case with Jeanne Leplatre, who was looking for ways to build a third order of teachers while maintaining a correspondence with Netty du Boÿs, the spiritual daughter of the bishop of Orléans. The latter was in contact with the Viscountess of Adhémar, who was herself very close to Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur and later to Lucie Félix-Faure Goyau. They all militated in favour of a reform of women's education in the Church. Jacques Gadille notes that their initiatives arose independently of each other, but ended up converging, proof that the need for reform was widely shared.

Born in 1849, the Viscountess of Adhemar was brought up in Avignon in the Calvinism of her mother,

"cold, dry, *terrible* religion, which frightened him"²² ". In 1871, at the age of 22, she married a cousin her own age, Viscount Olivier d'Adhémar. When, in 1883, at the age of 34, she shared a train journey with the young Abbé Frémont, she engaged in a discussion with him that lasted until the cleric's death in 1912. Mme d'Adhémar, dissatisfied with the religion of her childhood, declared a few months after this meeting that she had felt Catholic at heart for five years"²³. Accompanied by the abbot in her aspiration to become Catholic in order to break with "doubt and uncertainty"²⁴ "and to fulfil her "strong desire for the Eucharist"²⁵ "In June 1884, despite her family's opposition, Mme d'Adhémar abjured Protestantism. Her husband, until then not very religious but of Protestant tradition, supported her in her decision. He converted in June 1900.

20 Céline Béraud, "Quand les questions de genre travaillent catholicisme", art. cit.

21 Jacques Gadille, "La transmission de l'héritage", in Françoise Mayeur and Jacques Gadille (eds.), *Éducation et images de la femme chrétienne*, op. cit. , p. 69-73.

22 Confession written by Mme d'Adhémar on the eve of her conversion, in Mme d'Adhémar, Georges Frémont, *Histoire d'une conversion, correspondance de M. l'Abbé Frémont avec une protestante, 1883-1884*, Paris, Bloud et Glay, 1914, 337 pp.

23 Diary entry by Abbé Frémont, 14 December 1883, in *Ibid*, p. 31.

24 Diary of Mme d'Adhémar, note of 3 November 1883, in *Ibid*, p. XII.

25 Diary of Mme d'Adhémar, note of 18 November 1883, in *Ibid*, p. XXII.

Dissatisfied with her own education, Madame d'Adhémar invested a great deal in that of her four children²⁶ and made the education of girls her battle horse from the 1890s onwards. She was cautious about the lycées created by the Sée law. In a book published in 1900, she considered that French society was threatened "by the proud virago or the foolish peccor [...] formed by official neutrality²⁷". For her, the religious neutrality that the supporters of public education boast about is "the deliberate infecundation of the spirit²⁸". After being forgotten during the nineteenth century, girls' education would be institutionalized in the worst of contexts: it is when "The libertine spirit and morals are spreading like a leprosy through all the ranks of society [that] in France, the unification of education is officially carried out: from now on, it will be rationalist for both men and women²⁹". It was therefore outside the religious framework that girls became emancipated, for the worse: "We do not emancipate, we dismiss. [...] As soon as it is organised, women's education is frightening³⁰". When attacking school neutrality, Mme d'Adhémar did not only attack the absence of religious instruction: she considered that the new dogma of secularism infiltrated all subjects. For example, schoolgirls no longer know how to recognise the trace of God in history and are taught a new morality, which is supposed to replace Christian morality. The viscountess shared the anxieties of the Catholic world about the free-thinking schoolgirl, but she did not make the same recommendations as the SGEE to overcome the competition that state education was bringing to bear on Catholic education.

Madame d'Adhémar advocated the introduction of a "democratic education" in the Church, i.e. "oriented towards the future and accepting the changes that have occurred in [...] present-day society³¹". This is the only definition she gives of the term "democracy", which is nevertheless a central concept in her thinking. The viscountess was one of the Catholics who rallied to the new regime. For her, it is by accepting the new society that Catholics will be able to re-Christianise it, not by fighting against an unstoppable fundamental movement. Women - who were more devoted to the Church than their husbands - could not be excluded from this enterprise of rechristianisation.³² - cannot be excluded from this enterprise of rechristianisation. But the latter could only really fulfil their role as evangelisers if they were willing to be strongly instructed. Yet Mme d'Adhémar accuses some of her co-religionists of maintaining an archaic education for girls, totally at odds with the demands of society at the end of the XIX^e century: in convents, girls receive an "aristocratic education [...] oriented towards the past and [which] seeks to evade or stop the changes that have been occurring in life for the last hundred years³³". Is the union between the democratic spirit and the Catholic faith therefore impossible? Mme d'Adhémar also notes that emulation with the University has distracted

26 Letter from Mme d'Adhémar to Abbé Frémont, 29 January 1884, in *Ibid*, p. 65.

27 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *La femme catholique et la démocratie française*, Paris, Perrin, 1900, 316 p., p. 171.

28 *Ibid*, p. 168.

29 *Ibid*, p. 15.

30 *Ibid*, p. 19.

31 *Ibid*, p. 3.

32 See Claude Langlois, "Toujours plus pratiquantes". La permanence du dimorphisme sexuel dans le catholicisme français contemporain," *Clio. Histoire' femmes et sociétés* [On line], 2 | 1995, <https://doi.org/10.4000/cli0.533>.

In seeking to imitate state institutions and prepare their pupils for the various certificates, free schools would forget their religious vocation. The principle of neutrality in education would therefore work even where it is highly reprobated. When she made this observation, the viscountess was perhaps influenced by the work of Firmin Cournot, a defrocked priest, author in 1894 of *Un pensionnat de frères sous la Troisième République*. In this book, the author states that because of the official programmes to be prepared, religious teaching is relegated to the background in the teaching congregations: "So you cry out against the secular state; in reality, for the last ten years you have been partly secularised³⁴ ".

Lucid about the weaknesses of Congregational education, especially for girls, the viscountess sought ways to build a democratic and Catholic education, which she felt did not exist either in convents or in secondary schools. In order to have the principle of democratic education accepted within the Church, she relied on the injunctions of Leo XIII in his bull *Inter sollicitudines*, published in 1892, in which he enjoined Catholics to accept the Republican system. Although Mme d'Adhémar never uses the term 'Republic', which is probably too closely associated with a hated government, she considers that democracy is not in any way antithetical to Catholic faith and dogma: had not the aspiration to democracy been revealed in all its purity at the dawn of Christianity, when the first Christians had come together in hiding to live in an equality that no society had ever achieved before them? "Is not the Gospel the very text of the democratic code³⁵ ? "

When the viscountess calls for a 'democratic' education, she places herself in the category of Catholic intellectuals defined by Jacques Julliard as modernists³⁶. According to him, these intellectuals "were born out of the discord that existed between the Church and democracy³⁷ ". In this gap that appeared at the Revolution and grew throughout the XIX^e century, many Catholics presented themselves, on the contrary, as the "guardians of the besieged citadel, who thought that it was not during the assault that work should be undertaken in the building³⁸ "This is the traditionalist current, which is in the majority, and which "has for itself the great battalions of Catholicism, and even more so its leaders³⁹ ". But at a time when the Church's positions were being shaken by the introduction of secularism in the school system and by the secularisation of society, Mme d'Adhémar refused the attitude of idealising the past. Despite her noble title, she corresponds to the portrait Jacques Julliard paints of modernists, "who see Catholicism as a house to be rebuilt on new foundations⁴⁰ ". For Mme d'Adhémar, one of the unavoidable aspects of this modernity is that of women's education, which she refuses to consider, like the traditionalists, as a dangerous product of the contemporary world. But the term 'modernist' is, at

34 Quoted in André Lanfrey, *Les catholiques français et l'école (1902-1914)*, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

35 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *La femme catholique et la démocratie française*, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

36 Jacques Julliard, "Naissance et mort de l'intellectuel catholique", *Mil neuf cent*, n°13, 1995, p. 5-13.

37 *Ibid.*

38 *Ibid.*

39 *Ibid.*

40 *Ibid.*

early XX^e century, the emblem of a heterodoxy officially condemned by the Pope in 1907. The viscountess therefore prefers to speak of 'democratic education', not 'modern' education. The terminology of 'democrat' is more in keeping with the politics of the Ralliement.

When Mme d'Adhémar calls on her fellow believers to accept democracy, this does not mean that she herself adheres unreservedly to the Republic. She advises women, for example, to stay away from universal suffrage, which she sees as a dangerous instrument that delivers the country to the excesses of the mob. She is not above criticising the secular feminist movement, which demands equal rights for women and men. On the contrary, she praises Christian feminism for the wisdom of its demands. However, unlike a large part of the Catholic world, this 'democratic' viscountess accepted the emergence of

She welcomed the "new strata" and the political and social role they were to play in the country. For example, she welcomed the expansion of the clientele of convents, which should not remain aristocratic institutions. Mme d'Adhémar condemns, for example, nuns who refuse to "the young girls whose parents have a shop sign"⁴¹ "In other words, girls from the commercial classes, whom the old Catholic institutions, through a reflex inherited from the Ancien Régime, despised. According to Mme d'Adhémar, it was useless to try to "avoid the democratic fusion of classes": it was necessary to accept it and to dedicate oneself to the work of Christianising society through young girls, whatever their background. Attached to a vanished world, the convents, "by persisting, would encounter truly insurmountable obstacles. The old system succeeds only with a caste; the caste no longer exists"⁴² ".

Despite these concessions to the new social structure of the country, the term 'democracy' remained largely class-oriented for the Viscountess of Adhemar. Her first book, *Nouvelle éducation de la femme dans les classes cultivées* (*New Education for Women in the Cultivated Classes*), published in 1895, was aimed at young girls from the social elite from which she herself came. In this work, Mme d'Adhémar developed the project of founding an Institute of Ladies of the Christian Preceptorship, a sort of normal school in which the teachers who would educate the girls of the elite in their homes would be trained. Coming from the aristocracy, it was in this class that Mme d'Adhémar brought her ambition to offer girls a strong and Christian education. She was convinced that it was by bringing the political and social elite back to Catholicism that the secularisation of society could be halted.

Prepared as early as 1893, this work was unreservedly approved before publication by Mgr d'Hulst, the rector of the Catholic Institute, who was convinced of the importance of women's education in the renewal of the Church in France. But the latter was rather an exception. Mme d'Adhémar notes that apart from Abbé Frémont and Mgr d'Hulst, the question of women's education did not arouse any concern in the Catholic world. For example, when she visited Cardinal Richard to offer him her book, he "declared himself perfectly satisfied with the

41 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *La femme catholique et la démocratie française*, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

resources as well as existing methods⁴³ ". When it came out, Madame d'Adhémar's work found a large readership. It was republished at least four times until 1909, but it caused a debate when it was first published. The viscountess remembered this five years later, when she published her second book, which she hoped would raise fewer "ignorant [or] slanderous polemics⁴⁴ ! ".

In 1895, when she published *Nouvelle éducation de la femme dans les classes cultivées* (*New Education for Women in the Cultured Classes*), Mme d'Adhémar met with hostility from the ladies of the Sacred Heart convent, who felt defamed by the work, which was not very sympathetic to Congregationalist teaching⁴⁵. The *Bulletin de la SGEE* adopted an ambiguous position: Charles Huit, who wrote the review, considered that the book was suitable for reflection but was "not equally worthy of praise⁴⁶ ". He is particularly disturbed by the chapter entitled 'Dogmatics of Love', where the viscountess encourages the preceptresses to address the sexual education of their pupils, considering that ignorance is not a good guardian of virtue. This concession to the spirit of the age was not to Charles Huit's taste. These criticisms did not prevent the viscountess from receiving the 1897 prize of the Académie des Sciences morales for this book. She also received an offer to direct an educational institute, which she declined⁴⁷. As Caroline Muller writes, the publication of this book "suddenly propelled her [...] into the sphere of intellectual debate⁴⁸ ".

A democrat without being a republican, a feminist without claiming the title, a modernist while refuting this epithet, the Viscountess of Adhemar walked a fine line, oscillating between submission to the tradition of the Church and aspiration to its modernisation. Her personal journey partly explains the originality of her thinking in a Catholic world that left little room for women's voices before 1904⁴⁹. How did a Protestant aristocrat become a Catholic intellectual?

C) From conversion to activism: the construction of a Catholic intellectual

The activism of the Viscountess of Adhemar in favour of the education of young girls can perhaps be explained by her zeal as a convert. This is what her director of conscience, Abbé Frémont, sensed when he wrote to her on 22 September 1884, a year after meeting her: "[your baptism brought] holy tears to my eyes, at the thought that as an apostle in your turn, you were going to bring back to our divine Master so many dear souls, so worthy of Him⁵⁰ ". The relationship between Abbé Frémont and Mme d'Adhémar can be considered from the beginning as an intellectual companionship. Thus, from their

43 *Ibid*, p. 57.

44 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice*, *op. cit.*, p. 2. On the reception of *Nouvelle éducation de la femme in the educated classes*, see Rachel Marie Wimpee, *Reactionary or Modern? The Devote in Fact and Fiction in Late Nineteenth-Century France*, New York University, New York, 2011.

45 See Caroline Muller, *La direction de conscience au XIX^e siècle*, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

46 C. Huit, "Mélanges et notes - Compte-rendu de la *Nouvelle Éducation de la Femme dans les classes cultivées*, par la comtesse d'Adhémar", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, May 1896.

47 Caroline Muller, *La direction de conscience au XIX^e siècle*, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

48 *Ibid*, p. 233.

49 See Chapter 6, II- Reconfiguration of free secondary education and the emergence of a new generation of Catholic intellectuals.

50 Quoted by the Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Histoire d'une conversion*, *op. cit.* , p. 335.

In the first exchanges, Mme d'Adhémar undertakes to read the Abbé's work on the relationship between the Church and the State, but warns that she will not criticise it: "the question you address must captivate every Christian, [but] is no less of an order in which a woman's mind cannot make a judgement⁵¹. " Mme d'Adhémar reproduces the gender stereotypes that she herself has integrated and doubts her competence on these issues.

Close to Mgr d'Hulst, Frémont evolved in the ranks of liberal Catholicism. A supporter of the new regime, he asserted that the great challenge of contemporary society lay in harmonising Christianity with the triumphant democracy. He summarised his work as follows: "1° It is necessary for the Republic to separate itself from positivist and free-thinking doctrines; 2° It is necessary for Christianity to renounce its subservience to the monarchical ideas of the past⁵². " The viscountess did not dare to react after reading the work: "I am very borrowed, not being used to writing, even less used to analysing⁵³. " However, she exclaims: "how bold your conclusions are!

Nevertheless, Mme d'Adhémar took up the political thought of Abbé Frémont in the works she published later. She was very wary of the royalist and Catholic milieu with which she associated and which she considered to be "imbued with narrow, egotistical ideas, and above all with a spirit of absolute exclusivism which does the greatest harm to the interests of religion". She joined the Roman Church and opposed the political and social conservatism of some of her fellow believers.

While Abbé Frémont analyses the relationship between church and democratic society from a global perspective, Mme d'Adhémar takes up the question by studying it through the prism of gender. Frustrated by the inadequacy of her own education - in contrast to the generally accepted idea that Protestant women are well educated⁵⁴ -She is convinced that science can only serve faith, for two truths cannot harm each other⁵⁵. On the basis of this observation, she deplores the intellectual withdrawal to which women are subjected. She looks back at her own training:

At the age when I could and wanted to learn, my parents only half allowed it [...]. At that time, only modern languages and decorative arts were allowed for girls. [As I grew up,] I applied myself to learning with an unknown ardour. [...] This late taste for study, so passionate, was considered unusual in a young girl. I got nothing, not even books. [...] Then all my courage fell. I sank into myself, overcome in my idleness by an incurable sadness⁵⁶.

Mme d'Adhémar's real access to knowledge only came when she reached adulthood, in a trajectory largely comparable to that of Clarisse Coignet. Born into a very privileged environment,

51 Letter of 6 November 1883, quoted in *Ibid*, p. 3.

52 Letter of 22 November 1883, in *Ibid*, p. 11.

53 Letter of 17 November 1883, in *Ibid*, pp. 8-9.

54 Gabrielle Houbre, "Demoiselles catholiques et misses protestantes : deux modèles éducatifs antagonistes au XIX^e siècle", *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*, vol 146, January-February-March 2000, pp.49-48.

55 Letter of 9 May 1884, quoted in Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Histoire d'une conversion, op. cit.* , p. 160.

56 "Fragments de la vie de Mme d'Adhémar", a document required to prepare for her conversion, quoted in *Ibid*, p. 213.

Both were educated at home by private teachers. Neither attended school or the convent. Once married, neither needed to work for a living. Clarisse Coignet and Mme d'Adhémar both took advantage of the leisure offered by their situation and the liberal spirit of their husbands to educate themselves in a partially self-taught manner. They were also both lucky enough to come across a male figure who encouraged their thirst for knowledge and guided them along the path of learning. Clarisse Coignet, for example, was introduced to philosophy by Alexandre Massol, who invited her to contribute to *La Morale indépendante*, while Mme d'Adhémar was supported by the Abbé Frémont, who made her read his works, sermons and favourite authors. From her very first letters, the viscountess asked the abbot to be her director of studies as well as her director of conscience: "It is necessary, however, that I educate myself in order to be able to defend Catholic dogmas; I want to make a complete and thorough study of them, and I ask you to direct me in this study⁵⁷. "

The abbot is enthusiastic about his correspondent's intelligence: "I have a religious presentiment that the one of us who could benefit most from this exchange of thoughts will not be you, but me.⁵⁸. " Like Massol with Clarisse Coignet, Frémont immediately senses the intellectual skills of the viscountess. He treated her as an equal, reread and corrected the drafts of his first book, and in return asked her to comment on the sermons he was about to deliver. It is thanks to this intellectual collaboration that Mme d'Adhémar is introduced into the upper echelons of Catholicism. She could not do without the support of a man of the cloth in her endeavours. The words of Pius IX, spoken in the 1950s, are valid for the Church at the turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries: 'There never was, [...] there never will be in the Church a legitimate magisterium of the laity withdrawn by God from the authority, guidance and vigilance of the sacred magisterium⁵⁹ ". A lay person - in the sense of a non-cleric -, and *a fortiori* a lay woman, cannot express himself publicly on questions relating to the clerical institution without first obtaining the endorsement of ecclesial authority. Abbé Frémont's support for the viscountess thus explains why Mme d'Adhémar was able to embark on a career as a writer.

It was thanks to him, for example, that she was able to submit her manuscript to Mgr d'Hulst, rector of the Catholic Institute. In December 1896, Father Frémont even devoted one of his sermons to the education of women in the educated classes and called on his flock to make a donation for the creation of the Institute of the Ladies of the Christian Preceptory that Mme d'Adhémar wished to found. Moreover, when in 1909 the viscountess devoted a book to the controversy that tore the Catholic world apart around the project of Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart in 1898-1899, it was Father Frémont who wrote the preface, to attest to the veracity of the facts reported by his protégée.

Belonging to a generation born in the first half of the XIX^e century and to a privileged social class where female leisure was the rule, Clarisse Coignet and Mme d'Adhémar were

57 Letter of 2 January 1884, quoted in *Ibid*, p. 44.

58 Letter of 26 November 1883, quoted in *Ibid*, p. 20.

59 Quoted by Étienne Fouilloux, "Catholic Intellectuals"? Reflections on a deferred birth", art. cit.

They have become intellectuals without having exercised, strictly speaking, an intellectual profession. They confirm the observation made by Marie-Christine Kok-Escalte in her reflection on female intellectuals: "in order to be able to carry out their activity, certain conditions must [...] be fulfilled: they must be freed from the management of daily life, have time, leisure and money [...]. Being intellectual means first of all *being able to do*⁶⁰". But while Clarisse Coignet, through her contact with an atheist Freemason, detached herself from all institutionalised religion, the viscountess took great strides towards conversion. The former became a militant of secularism, the latter its detractor. Thus, when Mme d'Adhémar looks back on her childhood, she remembers the torments of what was a 'neutral' education:

I had two teachers, both free thinkers; then, for my religious instruction, I received lessons from a pastor [...] seduced by rationalism to the point of painfully admitting the divinity of Christ [...]. He concluded his vague teaching by advising us to seek our faith in the exercise of free examination⁶¹.

It was in reaction to this education, which had instilled in her the "secret leaven of doubt"⁶² It was in reaction to this education, which would have instilled in her the "secret leaven of doubt", that Mme d'Adhémar set herself the goal of contributing to the Catholic education of young girls. After her conversion, she thought of founding a boarding school that would apply her ideas. Abbé Frémont instead encouraged her to write a book of advice⁶³. But on this question, Dupanloup had already been an undisputed authority for 30 years: would it not be presumptuous to claim to complete his work? The viscountess nevertheless embarked on the task. Unlike Dupanloup, she wrote as a Catholic who had rallied to the Republic, who was ready to make concessions to the spirit of the times, and who was determined to see women play a role in the new society.

The originality of Mme d'Adhémar in the Catholic intellectual world of the late nineteenth century is striking. Born outside the Catholic Church, very attached to her Protestant sociability, for her, Catholicism was not "a kind of *state of nature*⁶⁴ "that she would have "found at birth in [her] genetic heritage⁶⁵". On the contrary, for Mme d'Adhémar, Catholicism was 'an intellectual question which is not a matter of passive acceptance, but of personal commitment⁶⁶'. Perhaps there is something of Protestantism left in the viscountess's Catholic commitment? Although she condemned free examination - given the complexity of the biblical text, she said she could not do without a competent authority - her entry into Catholicism was an intellectual and reasoned approach based on the reading of sacred texts.

60 Marie-Christine Kok-Escalte, "Féminisme et sémiotique : les intellectuelles en France, un engagement spécifique ?", *Modern and Contemporary France*, n°1, 1994, p. 21-33.

61 Letter of 9 May 1884, in Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Histoire d'une conversion*, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

62 Letter from the viscountess' husband to Abbé Frémont, 12 February 1884, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 81.

63 Letter of 17 July 1891, quoted by Caroline Muller, *La direction de conscience au XIX^e siècle*, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

64 Jacques Julliard, "Naissance et mort de l'intellectuel catholique", *art. cit.*

65 *Ibid.*

Mme d'Adhémar is thus frightened that her reason might disapprove of the heart's choice: "I am afraid to learn, I am afraid of controversy, for if it were possible that the result of my research would lead me to conclude that Catholicism is not the truth, I would be the most unhappy.⁶⁷ " She always remains faithful to her maxim, which appears in italics in her text: "One must know what one believes⁶⁸ ". Moreover, the very first question the viscountess asks the abbot after their meeting is a Protestant reflex: "What independence is left to the faithful in the Church⁶⁹ ? " The scruples of conscience that mark her conversion betray her formation in Protestantism.

In his thesis on the conversions of intellectuals to Catholicism between 1885 and 1935, Frédéric Gugelot makes several observations that are echoed in the viscountess's journey. On the one hand, he states that "in each case, a priest was the instrument for the completion of [the intellectuals'] spiritual journey. He ensures their doctrinal formation and prepares the final acts of their conversion. It is a man they meet, rarely the institution⁷⁰ ". Secondly, Frédéric Gugelot stresses the importance of the relationship to the text among these converts: they "are in line with the return to the Gospels perceptible after 1860, but are clearly ahead of the practice of the Church which, until the middle of the XX^e century, makes sparing use of Scripture⁷¹ ". This scholarly approach to religion is reflected in Mme d'Adhémar's desire to allow women to cultivate themselves: they must 'know what they believe' in order to respond to doctrines that undermine their faith. The viscountess followed in the footsteps of Dupanloup, who declared that "an ignorant woman, even a pious one, is a useless soldier in the divine battle⁷² ".

If being an intellectual means feeling a "responsibility in the order of thought⁷³ "then there is no doubt that the viscountess falls into this category. In her 1895 book, she says that getting published is her duty: "The soul that is governed by strong beliefs is no longer free not to act; [...] action seizes it sooner or later⁷⁴ ". For Mme d'Adhémar, it would be a mistake not to make her reflections known and not to propose remedies for the evil that was eating away at the Church, especially as "25 years of maternal practice" had made her familiar with educational issues. From a theoretical point of view, she follows in the footsteps of Dupanloup, describing herself as an adept of the "apostolic use of the educated woman". While claiming her heritage, she seeks to update it: 'Our work is not the writing of a meaningless and idle paraphrase. It deals with themes that have not yet been addressed by anyone. From the very first pages of her book, the viscountess presents herself as a liberal Catholic: it is necessary to "accept the

67 Letter of 2 January 1884, quoted by the Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Histoire d'une conversion*, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

68 Letter of 30 November 1883, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 22.

69 *Ibid.*

70 Frédéric Gugelot, *La conversion des intellectuels au catholicisme en France, 1885-1935*, Paris, CNRS éditions, 2007, 559 p., p. 158. The viscountess does not figure among the 150 intellectuals studied.

71 *Ibid.*, p. 81.

72 Quoted by Jean-Louis Desbordes, "Les écrits de Mgr Dupanloup sur la haute éducation des femmes", in Françoise Mayeur and Jacques Gadille (eds.), *Éducation et images de la femme chrétienne*, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

73 According to the formula of Abbé Berrar, the first adviser of the Catholic Centre for French Intellectuals in 1966, quoted by Étienne Fouilloux, "Catholic Intellectuals"? Réflexions sur une naissance différée', *art. cit.*

74 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, "Avant-propos", *Nouvelle éducation de la femme dans les classes cultivées*, Paris, Perrin, 1896, 292 p., p. V-XII. All the following quotations come from this foreword.

...]; to emancipate youth on a large scale; [so many] eminently liberal solutions [...] the only ones likely to adapt education from now on to the needs of those who do not want to abdicate anything from modern progress or from Christian dogmas. If Mme d'Adhémar dares to take up her pen, it is only because she is fighting for a cause that is beyond her: "It is for God that we are working, may God help us!

A taste for independent thought; the support of a liberal priest who was aware of the failings of the Church; the certainty that knowledge could only strengthen the faith; the zeal of the neophyte: all of these elements explain the support that Mme d'Adhémar gave to Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur in the scandal that the latter unleashed with her book *Les Religieuses enseignantes et les nécessités de l'apostolat* (*The Teaching Nuns and the Necessities of the Apostolate*) in 1898. In it, the nun spoke of the advance of the lay school over the teaching congregations, which were incapable of providing their teachers and pupils with knowledge worthy of the name.

D) A École normale supérieure for nuns: the project of Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur

Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur, whose real name was Adrienne Laroche, was born in 1859. She joined the Company of Marie-Notre-Dame by entering the house in Issoire in 1879 and taking her vows three years later⁷⁵. This congregation was founded by Jeanne de Lestonnac at the beginning of the XVII^e century and was dedicated to the education of young girls. Organised in autonomous houses, it did not depend on a general superior. Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur was an exception to this, since she had held the brevet simple since 1876 and the brevet supérieur obtained in the following years, at a time when many nuns were content with the letter of obedience.

Struck by the mediocrity of the instruction of the nuns in charge of teaching the young girls, Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart conceived the project of founding a normal school for the congregations. As the congregations with a general superior had a great deal of autonomy and their own internal formation, Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart wanted to open her normal school to the small congregations, which, like hers, were dependent on the authority of a bishop. The reform was all the more urgent because since the 1880s, the State had been training high quality teachers at Sèvres and Fontenay who were capable of offering serious competition to the congregations:

All the girls' lycées and colleges are headed by women who have graduated from the State's higher education institutions with the degrees of professor, agrégée, doctor⁷⁶ It is certain that we are notoriously behind, that the struggle is becoming difficult, that it will be impossible tomorrow, that the State may decree compulsory degrees for teaching and that, on that day, we will not be ready. [Our influence becomes null and void. For the children, for the families, we are backward⁷⁷.

75 This information is taken from Françoise Soury-Lavergne, *L'Œuvre éducative de Jeanne de Lestonnac (1556-1640), caractère spécifique de son projet*, thesis directed by Pierre Zind, defended at Lyon II in 1984, p. 458.

76 Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart exaggerates the situation: state teachers are not doctors.

77 Quoted by the Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice*, *op. cit.* , p. 43.

The nun is not kind to the congregations, which, according to her, have formed the generation that brought the authors of the secular laws to power. Instead of creating Christian women, the convents had lost all influence on society and were unable to prepare young girls for the life that awaited them. The latter would lose all religious feeling in the years following their release from the convent. This was due to the refusal of the nuns to evolve with the times: "most of them [...] are as alien to the customs and needs of their country as they are to the customs and needs of the Chinese Empire⁷⁸". Mme d'Adhémar justifies the tone⁷⁹ used by her friend: "The reformers are not in the habit of praising what they want to correct: they blame it, that is their role; they do not show any leniency, that is their tactic⁷⁹". The nun therefore advocated the creation of a "École normale supérieure" which could compete with Sèvres and Fontenay by providing nuns with high-level studies. This would then offer Catholic families the assurance of a secondary education worthy of the name in the convent, where young girls would be protected from the throes of free thought, where religious instruction would have its place, and where the Catholic faith would permeate all programmes. Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart said that she wanted to return the convents to the role of intellectual centres they once had. They cannot be reduced to being sanctuaries of prayer. She insisted on the need to differentiate more clearly between the contemplative orders and the teaching orders, whose timetable, dedicated to long orations - seven hours a day in the Congregation of Mary of the Virgin Mary - did not leave enough time for study.

The Archbishop of Avignon gave Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur his support and lifted the rule of She then went to Paris, gathered a committee of liberal Catholics and published the first of her two books, which she had composed in the convent, in the spring of 1898. She then went to Paris, gathered together a committee of liberal Catholics and published the first of her two works in the spring of 1898, which she had written in the convent. She then went to the Normal School of the Ladies of Saint Andrew, which in Belgium was the model for the school she wanted to found. The school in Bruges trained both nuns for primary education and others for nursery schools, the French equivalent of which was the école maternelle. Each nun kept the habit of her order and joined her own congregation after having completed the four years of formation in Bruges. Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur's desire to mix novices from different congregations in the same normal school on this model did, however, arouse opposition in France. It is true, as Françoise Mayeur reminds us, that "each religious family is jealous of its pedagogical traditions⁸⁰". The congregations feared that, trained in this way, future nuns would lose the spirit of their order. Mme d'Adhémar turns this argument on its head: "it would have been more exact and frank to admit that [the nuns] would lose the *spirit of the past* in order to adopt *that of the present*, because basically the whole question is summed up in two words⁸¹".

78 Quoted in *Ibid*, p. 44.

79 *Ibid.*, p. 135.

80 Françoise Mayeur, 'Towards a Catholic secondary education for girls at the beginning of the XX^e century', *Revue d'histoire de l'Église de France*, tome 81, n°206, 1995, pp. 197-205.

81 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice*, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur, like Madame d'Adhémar, was convinced that, as far as the education of girls was concerned, the nuns maintained an archaic model. Is the nun's criticism representative of the national situation? If Dupanloup had already criticised the teaching of convents, which he had described as too "frivolous", it remains difficult, according to Françoise Mayeur, "to know to what extent the criticisms made by Marie du Sacré-Cœur were justified, at least for all the congregations⁸²". In the absence of a serious study of teaching congregations in the XIX^e century, it is difficult to assess the teaching they provided: was it only primary, or could it be described as secondary? Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart's portrait of it is in any case incriminating. In a letter to Abbé Frémont, she wrote that in convents, apart from a few rare exceptions, it is believed that the devil invented women's education⁸³. This recalls the article in the *Bulletin of the SGEE* which considered that the devil had always tempted the woman with the fruit of knowledge to make the man fall⁸⁴. Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart opposes this rereading of Genesis with her own:

God resolved [...] to give man a companion *like himself*; a companion endowed with intelligence, sister to his intelligence [...]! In the divine concept, the identity was so complete that God wanted a unique creation for these two beings. From the man he took the woman. [Their union is not hierarchical, it is harmonic⁸⁵.

To this justification of women's right to intellectual life is added a litany of "learned" saints, which Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart enumerates in order to show how knowledge is a sure rampart against error. Like Mme d'Adhémar, she is convinced that God is truth and therefore does not need darkness to reign. Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart wanted to make nuns with an enlightened conscience.

E) Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur, the eponymous heroine of Mme d'Adhémar's work: the personalisation of a controversy

In 1909, in her book on Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart, Mme d'Adhémar assumes her role as a direct witness to the affair and as an activist on the side of the reformers ten years earlier. However, without using the term, she also presents herself as a historian. Abbé Frémont, who signs the preface, confirms this: "Your book is not a book of *doctrine*, but a book of *history*⁸⁶." The abbot vouched for the "scientificity" of his protégé's work. It must be said that Mme d'Adhémar's text is based on numerous historical documents such as

82 Françoise Mayeur, 'Towards a Catholic secondary education for girls in the early XX^e century', art. cit.

83 Letter of 4 October 1896, quoted in Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice, op. cit.*, p. 73.

84 Gabriel Alix, "Les lois opportunistes et l'éducation de la femme", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, August 1895.

85 Quoted in Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice, op. cit.*, p. 334-335.

86 Abbé Frémont, Letter to the viscountess dated 24 December 1908, used as a preface, in *Ibid*, p. III.

correspondence and press articles. Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart died accidentally in 1901, and Mme d'Adhémar is the custodian of her archives and her memory.

The context in which Mme d'Adhémar's book was written was not insignificant: in 1909, the congregations had been victims for eight years of the law on associations, which had established a regime of exception and led many nuns to leave France⁸⁷. Mme d'Adhémar thus considered that it was "appropriate to present to Catholics [...] a great figure of a nun, at a time when unbelief, sitting in the councils of the nation, has closed the convents⁸⁸". It should be added that since 1904, a law has forbidden congregations to teach. For Mme d'Adhémar, this demonstrates *a posteriori* the justness of Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur's struggle and the existence of "zealous and far-sighted Catholics [ready] to raise the level of women's education⁸⁹". For Mme d'Adhémar, the situation in the country required that witnesses to the controversy speak out without delay. Her book is the first full account of the case. It is nonetheless a plea for the cause defended unsuccessfully by Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur.

The viscountess' book is entitled *Une religieuse réformatrice: la mère Marie du Sacré- Coeur, de 1895 à 1901*. As the chronological limits imply, this book is not a biography, since it concentrates on the last six years of the nun's life, which correspond to the time of the scandal and to the period when Mme d'Adhémar knew the nun personally, since she came into contact with her in the spring of 1896. The book relates a common past shared by the viscountess and the nun. While Mme d'Adhémar's book could have been entitled *Le scandale des "Religieuses enseignantes"*, the author deliberately chose to give it the name of the nun at the origin of the affair. While hagiographies of the superiors of religious orders were legion in Catholicism in the nineteenth century, the viscountess's work in no way falls into this category. Mme d'Adhémar's portrait of Mère Marie du Sacré- Coeur does not appear among the biographies of nuns studied by Claude Langlois⁹⁰ nor in the study by Gérard Cholvy⁹¹. The story of the nun of Issoire is in fact quite different from these works of edification which are usually intended for internal use within a congregation. Mme d'Adhémar's work is intended for the general public; it does not reproduce the codes of the hagiographic genre; it presents Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart as a personality independent of any congregation, proposing a reform on the scale of the whole Church. Mme d'Adhémar emphasises the qualities of the nun which are the opposite of those emphasised in the hagiographies. It is for her dynamism, her audacity, her non-conformism and her ability to defy a hostile hierarchy that the viscountess praises Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart.

87 See Christian Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations*, *op. cit.* and Patrick Cabanel, Jean-Dominique Durand (dir.), *Le Grand Exil des congrégations religieuses françaises, 1901-1914*, Paris, Cerf Histoire, 2005.

88 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice*, *op. cit.*, p. IX.

89 *Ibid.*, p. VII.

90 Claude Langlois (preface by René Rémond), *Le catholicisme au féminin : les congrégations françaises à supérieure générale au XIX^e siècle*, Paris, Cerf, 1984. Claude Langlois' study focuses on congregations with a general superior, which is not the case of the congregation of Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur.

91 Gérard Cholvy, *Le XIX^e siècle, "Grand siècle" des religieuses françaises*, Perpignan, Artège, 2012.

She remembers their first meeting: "I felt I was in the presence of a personality such as I had not yet encountered in the convents. [She was truly an educator and an apostle.⁹² " The profile of this nun contrasts with that of the superior of the convent of Issoire, whose "uncertain mind was frightened by any new perspective, and [whose] troubled soul passed from confidence to fear every time the conversation left the realm of feeling to enter that of ideas⁹³ ". During the scandal triggered by her book, Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur found refuge with Mme d'Adhémar, who declared: "I saw her live, under my roof, an average of 18 hours a day⁹⁴. "

By placing the nun at the heart of her story, Mme d'Adhémar gives a story to a woman condemned to have none. Rejected everywhere after her work was condemned by the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars in Rome in 1899, Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur is no longer remembered by French Catholics. For many, she is to be classed with the Loisy and other modernists who betrayed the institution. The viscountess's text therefore aims to rehabilitate a personality who was banished from the Church. From the very first pages of her book, Mme d'Adhémar reminds us that although Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart was condemned by many French bishops and by a Roman institution, the Pope had initially given his blessing to her project in April 1898, and that he continued to support the nun during a personal meeting in May 1899. Moreover, the nun's text had initially been given the *imprimatur*, i.e. official permission to be published, by the Archbishop of Avignon, after Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur had been refused by the Archbishop of Clermont. With little room for manoeuvre in such an institution, Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart persevered at every obstacle placed in her way. For many of her detractors, this was a condemnable attitude, as the role of a religious sister was to submit to decisions coming from above.

To counter this type of accusation, which was crystallising at the time under the label of modernism, Mme d'Adhémar, at the beginning of her book, dissociates herself from this current, defined by the Pope in 1907 as an insubordination to clerical institutions. The preface that Abbé Frémont wrote for the book is very clear on this point: "Neither you nor I are modernists. Neither you nor I dispute the objective and historical value of the grounds of credibility on which the Catholic faith rests. Have I not refuted some of the errors of Abbé Loisy, the great sweller of biblical modernism⁹⁵ ? " Not only did Frémont condemn Loisy's theses, but he did so in the salon of the Viscountess of Adhemar during several conferences between January and March 1908. Is it not the common lot of reformers to have to reassure people of their orthodoxy? For there is sometimes a fine line between liberal Catholics and modernist thinkers. If modernism, as defined by Étienne Fouilloux, consists in

92 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice*, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

93 *Ibid*, p. 61.

94 *Ibid*, p. 110.

95 Abbé Frémont, Letter to the Viscountess dated 24 December 1908, used as a preface, Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice*, *op. cit.* p. IV.

In order to "present the Christian message in a manner compatible with the state of current knowledge"⁹⁶ "In this respect, Abbé Frémont and the Viscountess of Adhemar could rightly be accused of modernism, which they were quick to refute at every turn.

Initially part of an internal debate within the Church, the struggle of Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur was so well publicised that it extended far beyond this sphere. With her 1909 book, Mme d'Adhémar completed this movement: the history of the nun became a page of national history. By placing the personality of Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart at the centre of her account, Mme d'Adhémar reproduces the original pattern of the controversy, in which the enemies of the project sought to discredit its initiator. The *Bulletin de la SGEE* thus considered in 1899 that the nun had used the pretext of her project to escape the constraints of confinement: "It seems that [Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur] ran mostly around the world, that is to say at least in France and Belgium, as well as in Switzerland"⁹⁷ ". By exposing herself in this way, the sister contravenes one of the most fundamental rules of the religious state, that of withdrawal from the world and individual self-effacement. The criticism published in the *Bulletin de la SGEE* by Albert d'Herbelot highlights the discrediting procedures used against a woman who claims to be advertising her intelligence. When Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur published, a year after the *Religious Teachers*, another much more moderate work under the title *La Formation catholique de la femme contemporaine*, the critic considered that it was "a book that is still rather pretentious and full of self-contentment", all of which are unacceptable faults in a woman, and *even more so* in a religious. Albert d'Herbelot denies the right of a nun to adopt an intellectual posture - this is a sin of pride - and to express herself on subjects too high for her competence.

If critics focus on the personality of Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart, it is because she was forced, despite herself, to expose herself personally. Thus, Mme d'Adhémar reports that after having prepared an *Appeal to the Catholics of France* with a committee of lay people and ecclesiastics, intended to be sent to the country's bishops, the nun was forced to sign it alone, despite her protests: "The laity have entrenched themselves behind the bishops, the bishops behind the cardinals, and respect for the hierarchy has left me without support."⁹⁸ "

Mme d'Adhémar focuses on the nun in her book because her life story itself is a testimony to the inadequacies of congregational education. Mme d'Adhémar reports, for example, a surprising conversation she had with the nun:

I said to him one evening: "Do you read, at least sometimes, to rest?"

- But [...] where would I have found the time to read, and who would have given me books?

96 Étienne Fouilloux, "Catholic Intellectuals? Reflections on a deferred birth", art. cit.

97 A. d'Herbelot, "Les Religieuses enseignantes", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, April 1899.

98 Quoted by the Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice*, op. cit. , p. 127.

What a light this answer throws on her literary work! - She had read nothing; she knew nothing of the great productions of the human mind⁹⁹ !

Mme d'Adhémar explains the weaknesses of the nun's text by the insufficiency of her education. Moreover, written in a hurry in the convent when the nun was temporarily exempt from certain obligations of daily life, her manuscript was then reread by many advisers who annotated it, which had the effect of making the argument even more confused than before. Mme d'Adhémar concluded her argument by writing:

Let us say it frankly, Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart had no talent; [...] she had genius. [When she took up her pen in her cell, she did not think of the crowns of the academies or of literary glory. She had only one concern, the salvation of souls and the glory of God. The oblivion, which is perhaps reserved for her book, will not reach the vital ideas that she spread, so true is it that the content takes precedence over the form¹⁰⁰.

After showing the ability of the nun to develop skills that were stifled in her cloistered life - asserting a personal, even dissident, thought, mobilising a network, setting up a press campaign, producing a book intended to be read by the general public - Mme d'Adhémar ends her portrait of Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart by reminding us that she never acted in order to put herself forward. Her fame was only an accident. Even more than for a laywoman, the idea that a nun could have wanted to exist publicly is unacceptable, even in the eyes of a writer involved in social debates like the Viscountess of Adhemar.

II- Secular and religious women teachers at the heart of controversy: controversy as a space for female intellectual expression

Faced with the scale of the controversy that followed the publication of *Les Religieuses enseignantes*, the historian Émile Poulat exclaimed: "Why this tempest in a glass of water, this enormous disproportion between a narrowly defined project and the agitation it provoked to the point of motivating a judgement by the highest Roman authorities¹⁰¹ ? " The idea here is to mobilise the notion of controversy to analyse the media coverage given to this work: the conflictual process

99 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice*, op. cit, p. 69.

100 *Ibid*, p. 71.

101 Émile Poulat, *Liberté, laïcité. La Guerre des Deux France et le principe de la modernité*, op. cit. , p. 273.

makes it possible to reveal the internal power relations within a group and to clearly show the internal cleavages that are invisible in periods when the consensus is not broken¹⁰².

While religious history has been interested in the tensions that the affair of the *Religious Teachers* raises within Catholics between a modernist and a traditionalist tendency, the reception of this text among the defenders of secular education has not been studied. However, this affair is not only a matter of religious history, it is also an object for intellectual history. Interested in the questions raised by the nun, many intellectual supporters of the secular school took up the pen to comment on her text. They appropriated the practice of the critical account, which was often more accessible to them than the article of opinion, and made it an instrument in the controversy: at the end of the XIX^e century, the account "sometimes constituted a far more effective critical weapon than the article of doctrine¹⁰³". Controversy offered its actresses the means to build a stature as intellectuals: after Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur, who in spite of herself played the role of "agitator[rice] of ideas in society¹⁰⁴". After Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart, who unwillingly played the role of "agitator of ideas in society", the activists of the secular school in turn entered the battle of representations and made their voices heard.

The controversy surrounding the training of women teachers went beyond the book by Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur: three other texts fuelled the debates on this question at the same time. In 1897, *the Revue des deux mondes* published an article on lay women teachers which caused a stir. Melchior de Vogüé's *Les morts qui parlent* (1899) and Gabrielle Réval's *Les Sévriennes* (1900) criticised the Fontenay and Sèvres teacher training colleges, provoking a wave of indignation on the left. After having won the admiration of Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur, the intellectuals trained by the secular school were targeted by violent attacks. They took up their pens to respond. The controversies that shook the media world on the subject of girls' education between 1898 and 1900 thus provided a space for women to speak out.

A) "An affair that divides honest people... The reception of the Teaching Nuns in the Catholic world

While promoting her own book published in 1895, Mme d'Adhémar was invited by Georges Goyau, a liberal Catholic specialist in Church history, to make contact with Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur. Mme d'Adhémar set aside her project for an Institute of Ladies of the Christian Preceptory to support the nun's project.

102 Cyril Lemieux, "À quoi sert l'analyse des controverses?", *Mil neuf cent. Revue d'histoire intellectuelle*, 2007/1, n°25, p. 191-212.

103 Laurent Mucchielli quoted by Hélène Charron, (preface by Marie-Rose Lagrave), *Les formes de l'illégitimité intellectuelle, op. cit.*, p. 34.

104 This is how Etienne Fouilloux defines intellectuals, in "'Catholic Intellectuals'? Réflexions sur une naissance

différée", art. cit.

Like Mme d'Adhémar, Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur first secured the support of Bishop d'Hulst, who declared in 1895 that the work she was undertaking was necessary¹⁰⁵. Aware of the shortcomings of Congregational education, he had already founded higher classes for girls with the Ladies of the Assumption. However, he was wary of the reaction of the large congregations, who would feel their prerogatives were being attacked by the creation of a national normal school, and he encouraged the nun to contact the superiors and the bishops first of all. But in 1899 Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur could only report five adhesions from Superiors General, whereas at that time France had more than 200 congregations, most of which were devoted to teaching¹⁰⁶. Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur nevertheless succeeded in gathering the support of 17 bishops, while encountering strong opposition, such as that of the Archbishop of Paris.

While she was planning to launch a press campaign to give visibility to her project, Mgr d'Hulst dissuaded the nun from writing in the *Libre Parole*, which she had planned to request. For his part, he agreed to sponsor the work, but refused to direct it, as he was too busy with the Catholic Institute. Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur could not count on his support for long: Mgr d'Hulst died in November 1896. Mme d'Adhémar was convinced that if he had lived, the controversy would not have taken this form: "[He] would have condemned the odious methods used against the reformer, and he would have become an avenger when calumny dared to attack a defenceless nun worthy of all respect¹⁰⁷. " After the death of Bishop d'Hulst, Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur sought support among liberal Catholics. With Mme d'Adhémar, she visited the publicists Jules Lemaître and François Coppée, trying to win over as many Catholic writers as possible to her cause. She also obtained the help of Georges Fonsegrive, director of *La Quinzaine*, a magazine that was to disappear in 1907 with the modernist crisis. In *La Quinzaine*, he defended the nun by quoting a text by Mgr d'Hulst: "It must be admitted that if the young girls breathe a Christian atmosphere in [the convents], if they work there with more care than elsewhere on their education, the teaching itself needs to progress there¹⁰⁸ ".

But when this article was published in August 1898, the controversy had already been going on for several months. On 25 May, Bishop Turinaz of Nancy refuted in *Le Correspondant* the idea that the congregations were losing ground to secular education. He considered the Congregational teachers to be entirely worthy of their mission and confirmed the prediction of Abbé Frémont in his preface to *Les Religieuses enseignantes* when he wrote: "Will anyone deny the relative inferiority of the methods [...] in our religious boarding schools, for the education of women? - Yes, I know they will, just as in another sphere they denied, for 25 years, [...] the certain future of the

105 Letter of 8 August 1895 from Mgr d'Hulst to the nun, quoted by the Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice*, *op. cit.*

106 Claude Langlois, "Aux origines de l'enseignement secondaire catholique des jeunes filles. Jalons pour une enquête. 1896-1914", in Françoise Mayeur and Jacques Gadille (eds.), *Éducation et images de la femme chrétienne*, *op. cit.* p. 84-85.

107 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice*, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

108 Quoted in *Ibid*, p.22.

Republic .¹⁰⁹. " Unlike Father Frémont, Bishop Turinaz expressed his distrust of overly ambitious education for young girls, considering that their primary role was to become housewives. Because Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur mentioned coeducation in the United States, the Bishop of Nancy accused her of wanting to turn French girls into Amazons, in the image of the Americans. She was then accused of Americanism, a liberal movement born in the United States and condemned by the Pope in early 1899.

The Société générale d'éducation et d'enseignement, faithful to the line it had been following since the vote on the Sée law, also set to work. Three articles appeared in its bulletin. In July 1898, d'Herbelot reproached Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart for her indiscretion: the difficulties encountered by the Catholic Church should not be brought out into the open. He goes further: "Our author continues the examination of conscience... of others"¹¹⁰. " He accuses the nun of having made unjustified accusations about other sisters. Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart is condemned for having defied the rules governing her status, for having gone from introspection, which is the rule for women of her state, to extroversion, an unnatural behaviour for a religious. Whereas Bishop Turinaz condemned the nun for Americanism, Albert d'Herbelot accuses her here of feminism, considering that she seeks to put the education of young girls on the same level as that of boys. For him, this would be "a violation of natural laws, [...] a violation of the plan and designs of Divine Providence, which created man and woman, not to struggle against each other [but] to complement each other by uniting and associating their faculties". The *Bulletin of the SGEE* also denounces the admiration which the nun expresses towards Sèvres and Fontenay. The role of a nun is certainly not to flatter the University in this way, still less to call for its imitation. Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur recommended that the University's programmes be applied in the Congregational Normal School that she wished to open. In fact, it would be impossible to create from scratch a common programme that would be agreed upon by the different congregations that would entrust their novices to this normal school. The University's programme had the advantage of being already established and of allowing preparation for the various competitive examinations. For Albert d'Herbelot, this desire to imitate the University was disastrous: "The licence, the agrégation, all these diplomas which can only be obtained at Sèvres, should we therefore give them up? [Our wives and daughters can do without the doctor's cap, and as for the nuns, the cornette is certainly the headdress that suits them best.

It is therefore around the General Society for Education and Teaching that the consensus was established against *Les Religieuses enseignantes*. The bishops of Tours, Blois, Clermont and Troyes sent their congratulations to the association, and the journal *Études*, directed by the Jesuits, approved the text by Albert d'Herbelot¹¹¹. Ten years later, the Viscountess of Adhemar recalled the central role played by the SGEE in the campaign to discredit Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart: she

109 Abbé Frémont, preface to Mère Marie du Sacré-Cœur, *Les Religieuses enseignantes et les nécessités de l'apostolat*, Paris, X. Rondelet, 1898, p. XXI.

110 A. d'Herbelot, "La question des religieuses enseignantes", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1898.

111 Anonymous, "Mélanges et notes - la question des religieuses enseignantes", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, August 1898.

considers that the speech given by Keller, vice-president of the association, at its general assembly in May 1898, "gave the watchword for the hostile attitude which was, from then on, in Paris and in the provinces, that of reactionary Catholics¹¹²".

On the strength of its scandalous success, the book was published seven times. Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur, who had found refuge with Mme d'Adhémar, received 1300 articles from the *Argus de la presse* quoting her book in the daily press. She responded in her preface to the fifth edition, which was subsequently published in booklet form. She refutes the *ad hominem* attacks made against her and responds to the reproach of indiscretion: what is serious is not that the failings of the congregations are known to the public, but that they exist without being fought. Controversy is an apprenticeship for her in the art of combat. The scandal forced Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart to publicly expose her disagreements with her opponents: since it was a question of convincing a large audience, it became necessary to "master the means of convincing and mobilising the public by argumentation and the production of proof¹¹³". These are all skills that the nun never developed in her initial training.

Faced with divisions in the French episcopate over the *Religious Teachers*, the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars censured the book in March 1899. Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur, torn between her desire to persevere in order to save her project and the need to submit to conform to the rules of Catholicism, withdrew her book from the market, even though it had not been officially placed on the index. However, she is no longer in a position to re-enter a convent, preceded as she is by her reputation. During an interview on 18 May 1899, the Pope assured her of his support and dispensed her from common life, while authorising her to keep the religious habit. She then founded the Institut Sainte-Paule in Paris, where she prepared young girls for teaching examinations by offering them a high level of instruction in a strongly Catholic environment. To found this establishment, Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur received donations that would have been sufficient to create a normal school for nuns if she had obtained the approval of the clergy¹¹⁴. This school ensured her material existence in the last years of her short life, since, already weakened by illness, she died in 1901, crushed by a car at the age of 42. At the time of its foundation in 1899, the Institution Sainte-Paule had already enabled the best pupils to prepare for either the higher certificate, the baccalaureate or the licence, the nun having obtained the assistance of renowned teachers¹¹⁵.

The account of these facts is not sufficient to explain the scandal that greeted the work of Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur. Why did Mme d'Adhémar's work not meet with the same distrust? According to the viscountess, the answer lies in the nun's desire to address "democratic classes". As much as Mme d'Adhémar's project for the 'cultivated classes' is acceptable, since it only aims to consolidate the 'cultural capital' of the aristocracy, the desire to offer young girls from the 'new strata' a secondary education

112 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice, op. cit.*, p. 117.

113 Cyril Lemieux, "À quoi sert l'analyse des controverses?", art. cit.

114 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice, op. cit.*, p. 119.

seems to contravene the social order. According to Mme d'Adhémar's reading, it is therefore because the nun's project accommodates democracy and recognises the right of all young girls, whatever their origin, to a secondary education, that the Catholic hierarchy and press, for the most part guided by 'aristocratic' thinking, cry wolf. The religious conservatism of the traditionalists was thus joined by their social conservatism:

So much noise on a subject which seems to interest exclusively religious congregations proves to what extent intellectual culture, where it is likely to draw women into the democratic current, [triggers] the violence of those [...] who have admitted her to the high classes with the ulterior motive of sequestering her there¹¹⁶.

If, more than Mme d'Adhémar, Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur attracted the wrath of Catholics, it was also because, unlike the viscountess who spoke as a laywoman and proposed a project concerning private teachers, she spoke as a religious and denounced the inadequacies of the whole of Congregational education. In so doing, as in any controversy, she put to the test "the capacity of a community of peers to resolve *by its own protocols* the dispute that had arisen within it¹¹⁷". By introducing her reflections into the public space, the nun betrays her camp. The *Bulletin of the SGEE* writes thus:

What should most open the eyes of the promoters of the normal school project [...] is the sudden and ill-contained joy of our adversaries. No sooner had the book [...] been made known than M. Camille Sée's [review] hailed it as 'the most terrible indictment of convent teaching. A secular writer would certainly not have dared to draw a picture of the intellectual degradation of the Congregational houses such as that presented by this author, whose competence and good faith are not debatable'.¹¹⁸.

By criticising the book in this way, the polemicists paradoxically participate in its publicity. Consequently, an arbitrator must put an end to this controversy: it is through the reprimand of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars that what Cyril Lemieux calls the "reconfinement of the controversy, which is inseparably a reaffirmation of sovereignty¹¹⁹".

116 *Ibid*, pp. 90-91.

117 Cyril Lemieux, "À quoi sert l'analyse des controverses?", art. cit.

118 Anonymous, "Mélanges et notes - la question des religieuses enseignantes", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, August 1898.

119 Cyril Lemieux, "À quoi sert l'analyse des controverses?", art. cit.

B) "a case that divides honest people... and is exploited by others": the Religious teachers, a boon for secular school activists

Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur suspected that her clear-sightedness about the progress of women's education in the university would get her into trouble. In a letter of 1896 to Abbé Frémont, she expressed her fear of having praised the great secular schools too much. He replied:

Do not appear as a revolutionary and sharply critical woman. [...] The writings remain, and yours must not be a stumbling block¹²⁰. [...] Do not publish it until you have seen it over and over again, for all the truths [...] it contains would delight [...] the adversaries of the Church. They would immediately seize upon it to justify all their school measures for the past 25 years, and this is not the aim you are pursuing¹²¹.

The nun and the abbot are right to be concerned: *Les Religieuses enseignantes* is a godsend for the secular camp. Mme d'Adhémar considered the positive coverage of the book in republican newspapers such as *Le Temps* and *La République française* as well as in Protestant-inspired periodicals such as *Le Journal de Genève* and the *Revue chrétienne* to be a great misfortune¹²². The secular pedagogical press also made the most of the book.

A month after its publication, the *Revue pédagogique* published an anonymous critical review. The author considered the book to be in good faith, although it contained the usual attacks on the Godless school. However, he wrote: "the testimony given in favour of our schools and our teaching staff is such that we could not wish for a better one from our friends¹²³". Like most reviews in the left-wing press, this article consists largely of direct quotations from the book in which the nun deplores the weakness of Congregational education and praises the quality of instruction in public girls' schools. The author of the review concludes by expressing several reservations about what *Les Religieuses enseignantes* had to say: for example, it would not be enough for nuns to be better trained to compete with the public school. Catholicism would first have to be convinced of the relevance of female education. If Catholics merely concede girls a right to education out of pure political calculation, they will never compete with the lay principals, teachers and schoolmistresses who "have faith in their work, [who] believe that female education, considered in itself, is good and salutary". Finally, for the *Revue pédagogique*, in spite of all the efforts made by the nun, it is impossible for instruction in the convent to compete with public education: "[T]he spirit of liberty and tolerance is what we are most proud of, it is perhaps also what is most difficult to borrow from us.

120 Letter of 3 December 1896 quoted by the Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice, op. cit.* p. 73.

121 Letter of 28 December 1896, quoted in *Ibid*, p. 74.

122 *Ibid*, p. 194.

123 C., "Le livre de Mme Marie du Sacré-Cœur", *Revue pédagogique*, June 1898.

L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles also devoted an article to the work. This review was published in July 1899, and unlike that of the *Revue pédagogique*, it is less interested in the nun's words than in her reception in the clerical press. Paul Souday describes his joy at possessing a copy of the book, which had been withdrawn from sale after its condemnation in Rome. Not without irony, the Sèvres professor considers himself privileged: "Yes, everyone wants it, especially the ecclesiastics, since this book was condemned by Rome¹²⁴ !" Without analysing the text itself, Paul Souday summarises the preface that Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart wrote in the fifth edition to respond to the criticisms. Many of these criticisms result from a confusion with the book of Madame d'Adhémar. For example, she never advocated reading Balzac, Renan or Michelet, and she never addressed the "dogmatics of love", having taken a vow of virginity. Finally, she did not 'travel the world' and only came to Paris to work on her work. Paul Souday himself responds to the attacks on the nun's lukewarm devotion: "what struck me at first, when I read her book [...], was on the contrary its intransigence and fanaticism". The anticlerical tone of the article reaches its peak when the author writes that "the obvious purity of her intentions should have earned Mme du Sacré-Coeur [...] the indulgence of the Catholic world: it was absolutely useless to her, even with the Jesuits, who teach, however, that the morality of an act depends only on the intention.

The *Revue universitaire* also reserved a review for *Les Religieuses enseignantes*. It entrusted the review to Mathilde Salomon, who set to work in September 1898¹²⁵ and saw her article published in February 1899. A deep anti-clericalism is present in her comments. Mathilde Salomon is uncompromising towards Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur. For the director of the Collège Sévigné, the nun deserves neither the applause of the freethinkers nor the indignation of the devout Catholics: "Far from deviating from the traditions of the Church, she devoutly follows them. Of these traditions, what is the first? To direct souls and consciences 'for the great glory of God'.¹²⁶ " Mathilde Salomon is not fooled by the turnaround in the Church regarding the education of girls and despises those for whom "yesterday's error has become today's truth":

To raise the education of girls, who needed it so much, was to "outrage French women" who were perfect without having learned anything. Where better to find than the ancient convents, so skilled at piously cultivating the holy ignorance of girls, at keeping it intact for life, without disturbing their white nullity by useless studies?

Mathilde Salomon also denounced the bellicose tone of Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur, who called for the ruin of secular works - philotechnical courses, oratories - which the nun said had been founded only to turn young people away from religion. Mathilde Salomon

124 Paul Souday, "Mme du Sacré-Cœur et la presse cléricale", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, July 1899.

125 From what she writes in her diary.

126 Mathilde Salomon, "Struggle for life", *Revue universitaire*, February 1899.

It is not appropriate to ask a nun to believe in the possibility of salvation outside the Church. Mathilde Salomon protests against the idea implied everywhere that Catholics have the prerogative of virtue. Just because a teaching is secular does not mean that there is no dedication or moral authority: "The idea that there might be some disinterested love of good at the source of [secular] works seems never to have penetrated Sister Marie's mind or conscience. Mathilde Salomon, although a representative of free education (she signs as director of the Collège Sévigné), takes advantage of her criticism of the *Religious Teachers* to write a plea in favour of the institutions founded by the State some twenty years ago. The conclusion of her text deserves to be reproduced:

[The nun] attributes the superiority of "her enemies" solely to their programmes, without seeing [...] that these enemies have an ideal, different no doubt from that of the convents, but not without beauty and grandeur. Sister Marie does not give "her enemies" any faith. This is her great mistake. First of all, the devoted women to whom the State entrusts the education of young French women, they have faith in their work [...]. They do not begin by stating the axiom that they alone possess the truth and that outside of it one can only find darkness and perdition. [When they speak of religion, [...]] they try to show what is beautiful and great about each religion [...]. If tolerance, still so completely unknown among us, ever becomes established in people's hearts, it is to this education that the world will owe peace [...]. The success of [Fontenay], a success such that its opponents can only think of copying it, is not only due to the methods [but] to the powerful feeling of their dignity, of their responsibility, of their ability to work usefully in the great work of social progress, which the pupils of Fontenay have taken with them from their school in order to make their teaching live.

Mathilde Salomon presented Catholic and secular education as irreducibly opposed in their principles. In a text written around 1906, however, she was more conciliatory towards Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart, whom she called an "intelligent woman" who had understood that women's education was on the way out of the hands of Catholics¹²⁷.

While the *Revue pédagogique, L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles* and the *Revue universitaire* spoke of the work, *La Fronde* was not left out. In September 1898, a less regular contributor to *La Fronde*, Mme Louis Castel¹²⁸ devoted three articles to the book. Not very lucid about the social segregation that was exercised in the University by the division between the primary and secondary orders, she accused the congregations of reserving quality teaching for certain classes and mocked the nuns "who brought up the next bourgeois, [...]".

127 Draft of a text on secondary education for girls written after the 25th anniversary of the first girls' high schools.

Personal papers of Mathilde Salomon.

128 We have no information on her.

and getting richer every time their door opens in front of a trembling, well-endowed novice... well endowed¹²⁹. " According to the slinger, it was by seeing their classes empty that the nuns were converted to the values of the University, "intellectual education" and the development of the "own personality" of the young girls. Convinced that Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur's book was proof of the triumph of feminism, which "penetrates the most closed enclosures [...] like air that is breathed, invisible and subtle", she considered that this current of ideas had killed the "medieval nun" to make way, in the person of Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur, for the "modern nun".

In his preface to *Les Religieuses enseignantes*, Abbé Frémont agrees with Mme Louis Castel, considering feminism as a "pressing reality [in which] the most vital interests of the Church are now involved¹³⁰". Abbé Naudet, who wrote the foreword to the same book, went further than many secular feminists:

The providential mission of the woman is to be a wife and mother, but this mission does not destroy the personality; for, before being a wife, before being a mother, the woman is *herself* [...]. To bring her up solely with a view to her husband and children is [...] an error and an injustice [which], inherited from pagan Rome, have passed into current opinion and into the spirit of our French civil code; they are no better for that¹³¹.

Mme Louis Castel approves of these words and is pleased with the conclusion that Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur gives to her work, in which she has the audacity to want a nun to be someone. However, she is sceptical about the effects of the book in the Church of France:

Some bishops applauded the energy of this revolutionary and encouraged her in her plans for pedagogical and moral reform of the teaching convents. But I strongly believe that they will be in the minority among the French clergy. They tremble at the memory of Lamennais, Hyacinthe Loyson and Victor Charbonnel¹³².

Pauline Kergomard follows Mme Louis Castel in evoking *Les Religieuses enseignantes* in *La Fronde*. She found in the work of Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur confirmation of the attacks she had been making for 20 years against the teaching nuns. Far from condemning the author of the book, she was on the contrary pleased to see the emergence among Catholics of ideas similar to her own: "Starting from opposite points, following opposite routes, having nothing in common but our sincerity, Mme Marie du Sacré-Coeur and I arrive at the same formula. For new times, women need a new education¹³³ .

129 Mme Louis Castel, "Une religieuse féministe", *La Fronde*, 2 September 1898.

130 Abbé Frémont, "Préface", *Les Religieuses enseignantes*, *op. cit.* p. XVII-XXI.

131 Foreword by Naudet to *Les Religieuses enseignantes*, *op. cit.* p.VII.

132 Mme Louis Castel, "Une religieuse réformatrice", *La Fronde*, 4 September 1898.

Louise Debor, a specialist in educational issues in *La Fronde*, devoted a joint article in 1898 to the work of the Viscountess of Adhemar and that of Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur. She praised "the sincerity, conviction and innovative boldness¹³⁴" of both books. She supports Mme d'Adhémar on the subject of the necessary sexual education of young girls by calling for She said that she could "distinguish prudishness from modesty". As for Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart, Louise Debor praised her courage in claiming the right to "free scientific and philosophical curiosity" and wished success "to the intrepid nun". However, like Mathilde Salomon, she considered that no effort on the part of the Church would bring her up to the level of secular education:

The clerical spirit will not soon be modelled on the scientific spirit [...]. The Church is the declared adversary of Science [...]. If she were to renounce her vow of obedience and ignorance and adopt the method of free examination, she would no longer be the Roman Catholic Church but a shameful and bastard Protestantism.

In addition to these anti-clerical accounts, there are several indictments of convent education. Olympe Gevin-Cassal¹³⁵ Olympe Gevin-Cassal, inspector general of the children's services and a contributor to *La Fronde*, published an article in 1899 in the *Revue de morale sociale*¹³⁶ an article in which she used the writings of Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur to denounce the principle of cloistered boarding schools. She criticised the "houses cautiously closed to the secular world¹³⁷" which she described as "clerical prisons". She salutes the "all too intelligent Madame Marie du Sacré-Coeur", whose audacity disturbed the established positions and who was forced to make amends and renounce her projects. For Olympe Gevin-Cassal, it is the whole system of cloistered education that must be eliminated:

Religious education employs all the means in its power to make women dependent. It acts systematically on her nerves and imagination, circumvents her reason with a special narcotic [...]; then, at ease, models her brain in the way Chinese matrons bind the feet of their newborn daughters to prevent, in the future, any escape: to our poor girls, it is the brain that Rome cripples. [...] All these crimes have gone on too long. It is not a question of removing this or that citadel of iniquity which has caused more scandal than the others: it is a question of abolishing cloistered education.

133 Pauline Kergomard, "À travers l'éducation, l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles", *La Fronde*, 24 September 1898.

134 Louise Debor, "L'enseignement clérical", *La Fronde*, 9 November 1898.

135 On her, see Geneviève Lefort, (preface by Linda Clark), *L'Éducation des mères, Olympe Gevin-Cassal, inspectrice générale de l'enfance (1859-1945)*, Rennes, PUR, 2011.

136 On this journal, see Anne R. Epstein, 'Gender and the Creation of the French Intellectual, the Case of the *Revue de Morale sociale*, 1899-1903', in Sarah A. Curtis, Kevin J. Callahan (eds.), *View from the Margins: Creating Identities in Modern France*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2008, pp. 218-250.

In *Les Religieuses enseignantes*, Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur denounces what Olympe Gevin-Cassal describes as "narcotism", i.e. the numbing of the personality. Instructed by nuns for whom self-effacement is the most important virtue, the young girls are not put in the presence of the "solid characters"¹³⁸ "Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur attributed to the teachers at Fontenay and Sèvres.

Following the same logic as Olympe Gevin-Cassal, the very anti-clerical headmistress of the Lycée de Lyon took advantage of the scandal of the *teaching nuns* to attack the entire Congregational system and demand its abolition in 1902: "As for the 'good sisters', their intellectual mediocrity is so great that one of them could not help but recognise the superiority of the lay mistresses and outline the project to create a Congregational Fontenay"¹³⁹ .

While most secular school activists use the work of Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart to show the insurmountable divergence between the Catholic and secular systems of education, Denise Billotey, a headmistress of a normal school, is an exception. On the contrary, she considers the convergence between the nun and the free-thinking intellectuals in the field of female education to be a sign of the times. This is what she declared at the Congress of Primary Education in 1900, where she quoted Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart at length:

The final aim of all our care [...] should be to create in women an individuality, [...] to teach them early on to think for themselves [...]. We do not preach disobedience against parents, teachers or husbands; we preach moral freedom, the autonomy of souls¹⁴⁰ .

Denise Billotey's choice to take up Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart's formula according to which knowledge should not be an instrument of revolt against parents, teachers and husbands, is emblematic of the connivance between secular and Catholic morality. Although defenders of secularism and supporters of Catholicism present their morality as opposed to that of their opponents, the reality is less Manichean. Thus, Anne Martin-Fugier considers that when secularists respond to Catholics, it is not to propose other values or other roles for women. Far from wanting to change morals, the Republic wants to make women virtuous: 'Thus the issue at stake in the polemic - women - is at the same time, paradoxically, the point on which the opposing parties are basically in agreement. What applies to Catholics and laymen applies equally to feminists and their opponents.'¹⁴¹ . "

138 Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur quoted by Mme Louis Castel, "Une religieuse féministe", *La Fronde*, 3 September 1898.

139 Paule Branzac [Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello], "La liberté d'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 17 November 1902.

140 Speech reproduced in the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*: Mlle Billotey, "À propos de l'éducation morale des jeunes filles", January 1901 (here, the author quotes Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur).

141 Anne Martin-Fugier, *La Bourgeoise*, *op. cit.* , p. 9.

There is one thing that all the intellectuals who spoke about Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart had in common: Mathilde Salomon¹⁴² Mathilde Salomon, Pauline Kergomard, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Mme Louis Castel, Louise Debor, Denise Billotey and Olympe Gevin-Cassal adhere to the overall purpose of the book. Faced with the secularists, who form a block and use the book as a weapon, the Catholics, on the contrary, are divided, and their division plays into the hands of the secularists. As Louise Debor writes, the scandal "had for us the advantage of attesting once again to the 'hatred of enlightenment and progress' [...] which distinguishes the clerical spirit¹⁴³". It is this systematic association between the Church and obscurantism that most dismays Mme d'Adhémar. In her 1909 book, she writes:

The enemies of the Church have eagerly taken note of the opposition to the creation of the École normale supérieure for nuns, and they have not missed this fine opportunity to impute to the Church, which has been the instigator of all the progress accomplished on earth for 18 centuries, the responsibility for anti-progressive demonstrations [...] which have momentarily triumphed since they have obtained a specious rebuke from on high. [...] The reactionary force, ... if it has been one of the obstacles to the upward march of progress, does not in any way incriminate the Church. It only indicates that the Church cannot march fast because it is represented by human elements subject to the infirmities of human nature¹⁴⁴.

C) When "the pupil of the good Mr Pécaut" enters literature: portrait-charges against Fontenay and responses from Fontenaysiennes

As the scandal surrounding the book by Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart proves, the Écoles Normales Supérieures of Sèvres and Fontenay were admired by some and mocked by others. This was true from the time of their foundation, but the two schools were even more in the spotlight between 1897 and 1900. In 1897, Maurice Talmeyr wrote a pamphlet in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* entitled "Les femmes qui enseignent" (Women who teach); in 1899, Michel de Vogüé, an academician, painted a vitriolic portrait of Fontenay in his book *Les morts qui parlent (The Talking Dead)*; and finally, in 1900, Gabrielle Réval, herself a former student of the ENS, published *Les Sévriennes (The Sevrians)*, which was a major topic of discussion.

In his article published in 1897 in *La Revue des Deux Mondes*, Maurice Talmeyr, who had been trained by the Jesuits and was a member of the anti-masonic league, portrayed female lay teachers as "scientific and literary *perverts, rhetoricians*, species of doctoresses and students of dilettantism¹⁴⁵". In this text, anti-feminism meets anti-intellectualism. The use of neologisms (rhetorician, doctoress) aims to show the decadence that would represent

142 This is not the case with his 1899 text, but it is the case with his 1906 text.

143 Louise Debor, "L'enseignement clérical", *La Fronde*, 9 November 1898.

144 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice*, *op. cit.*, p. 94-97.

145 Maurice Talmeyr, "Les femmes qui enseignent", *La Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1^{er} June 1897.

This "modernity" so much vaunted by the secularists. Cerebral exaltation", unless it is calmed by marriage or entry into religion, would be absolutely harmful to young girls.

It is not surprising to learn that one of the first to defend women teachers was Ferdinand Buisson. A few months after the publication of Maurice Talmeyr's pamphlet, the former director of primary education devoted an article to it in the *Revue pédagogique*. In it, he was astonished at the "complacent hospitality" offered to this text by "the oldest and, as they say, the most 'authorised' of the reviews published in France¹⁴⁶". It must be said that in 1885, it had 26,000 subscribers¹⁴⁷. The historian Thomas Loué considers it to be the most important of the French journals¹⁴⁸. It is not so surprising to see Talmeyr's pamphlet published there: the journal has been directed since 1893 by Ferdinand Brunetière, a conservative academician who confirms the journal's tendency to be "anxious about the rise of democracy in French society¹⁴⁹". In the words of Thomas Loué, "the elitism, the posture of resistance and the entry into Catholicism¹⁵⁰" of the journal at the end of the XIX^e century undoubtedly explain the favourable reception given to this text, which attacks the democratisation of access to knowledge for women as well as the new model of the lay teacher competing with that of the religious teacher.

Sèvres and Fontenay are particularly damaged by Talmeyr. After allegedly visiting Sèvres, the author finds little to accuse the institution of, apart from the proportion of Protestants and Israelites among its students. Sévriennes and Fontenaysiennes are described as a new intellectual proletariat: the young graduates are condemned to die of hunger, unless they are protected in high places. Buisson retorts:

Rest assured, souls quick to pity. If these positions of teachers and directors of teacher training colleges and higher primary schools seem to you to be "still modest positions", with their salaries of 2,000 to 5,000 francs and accommodation, you should know that, among the "women who teach", this fate seems to be the most enviable, and that there are more than 30,000 women teachers who live on less, [...] without begging for pity from anyone¹⁵¹.

Ferdinand Buisson responds to the common obsession of conservatives with the democratisation of access to diplomas, since, according to Roger Chartier, 'the theme of the overproduction of graduates [is] consubstantial with conservative thought¹⁵²'. Ferdinand Buisson, after insisting on the value of the positions offered to Fontenay women, could not, however, deny the

146 F. Buisson, "Les femmes qui enseignent et la "Revue des Deux Mondes", *Revue pédagogique*, July 1897.

147 Jean-Claude Yon, *Histoire culturelle de la France au XIX^e siècle*, Armand Colin, Paris, 2010, p. 170.

148 Thomas Loué, 'L'inévidance de la distinction. *La Revue des Deux Mondes* face à la presse à la fin du XIX^e siècle', *Romantisme*, 2003, n°121, pp. 41-48. *La Revue des Deux Mondes* is the subject of his thesis defended in 1998 under the direction of Alain Corbin.

149 *Ibid.*

150 *Ibid.*

151 F. Buisson, "Les femmes qui enseignent et la "Revue des Deux Mondes", *Revue pédagogique*, July 1897.

152 Roger Chartier, 'Espace social et imaginaire social, les intellectuels frustrés du XVIII^e siècle', *Annales ESC*, No. 2, March-April 1982, pp. 389-400.

It is a fact that the majority of lay women teachers live in a precarious economic situation, but rejects the idea that women's work is by nature a downgrading.

Talmeyr's main attacks were on the lack of religious instruction in the training of new female teachers. The best example is Fontenay, where the pupils live in the legend of their teacher Pécaut, who, every morning, "exhilarates their minds about their mission as citizens and educators, their role as priestesses of instruction¹⁵³". The Fontenaysiennes were deluded, but did not possess the true faith capable of instilling in them the self-sacrifice necessary for this profession. Ferdinand Buisson compares Talmeyr's arguments to the procedures of *La Croix* and the *Gazette de France* in sustaining unfounded slanders about the morality of young graduates, who would be obliged to please "people without morality, even though they themselves are forced to be honest while being able to have only a baseless morality¹⁵⁴". Moreover, whereas the nun would teach by vocation, the teacher would choose this profession by caprice, without a spirit of sacrifice and without a sense of duty. According to Buisson, these new intellectuals, far from being analysed by Talmeyr on the basis of a real investigation, are the object of a "portrait-charge [...] or rather [of] an *a priori* development of the type that one has made of them *a priori*¹⁵⁵".

Ferdinand Buisson's text is based on quotations from Talmeyr's article: the prose of the *Revue des Deux Mondes* does not need to be challenged by an argued discourse, it is sufficient in itself to demonstrate to the readership of the *Revue pédagogique* the ineptitude of the criticisms aimed at the new female teachers. The only challenge that Buisson can make to the article is the observation, made by Talmeyr, that 2,700 women teachers are still working without any diploma. He considered this to be the consequence of a policy of favouritism towards laywomen, who, on condition that they did not go to mass, were offered posts that were denied to licensed nuns. These 2,700 unlicensed teachers were in fact the remainder of the nuns who, before the 1881 law, had the privilege of the letter of obedience. Buisson recalled this fact and protested: "It was necessary, in connection with 2,700 nuns whom our fierce school laws allow to practice without a licence, to find a way of throwing mud at the republican regime".

In June 1898, Miss Price, who had been a teacher of modern languages at the Rouen Normal School for two years, published a defence of Fontenay. Her text was first published in the *Review of Reviews*, before the committee of the *Revue pédagogique* reproduced it in its pages. Miss Price had not been a pupil at Fontenay but, having attended the normal schools, she had seen the extent to which the female staff bore the imprint of the school: "the distinguishing mark of the school was precisely that enthusiasm and moral ardour whose absence the author of a recent study deplores so keenly¹⁵⁶". Miss Price contrasted Talmeyr with the work of Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart: "even the enemies of secular education recognise the effectiveness of the instruction given there".

153 Maurice Talmeyr, "Les femmes qui enseignent", *La Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1^{er} June 1897.

154 Quoted by F. Buisson, "Les femmes qui enseignent et la "Revue des Deux Mondes"", *Revue pédagogique*, July 1897.

155 F. Buisson, "Les femmes qui enseignent et la "Revue des Deux Mondes"", *Revue pédagogique*, July 1897.

156 Miss Price, "L'école de Fontenay jugée par une Anglaise", *Revue pédagogique*, June 1898.

Miss Lauriol, a former pupil of Pécaut, wrote in the *Bulletin des Fontenaysiennes* to defend the secular teachers. She considered Talmeyr's article to be nothing but a persiflage, which she summarised as follows: "Neither women, at least those who belong to secular society, are suitable for teaching, nor is teaching suitable for women¹⁵⁷". She then unravels Talmeyr's slander, point by point.

Two years after Maurice Talmeyr's "Les femmes qui enseignent", Viscount Eugène-Melchior de Vogüé, a conservative and Catholic academician, revived the fight against Fontenay. He published a novel entitled *Les Morts qui parlent*¹⁵⁸ which first appeared in six episodes in *La Revue des Deux Mondes*. In it, the author portrayed a former Fontenay pupil: some passages in his key novel - in which the character of Pécaut is recognisable - constituted full-scale attacks on the Fontenay School. The controversy began in March 1899: Pierre Pécaut, the son of the deceased Félix Pécaut, as well as Ferdinand Buisson, signed open letters in the press to defend the director of studies at Fontenay against Vogüé's attacks¹⁵⁹. For his part, the academician considered that he was not accountable because his work was a fiction. He accuses his detractors of politicising his novel: "I suspect a lot of politics hidden under this strange pretence, the restoration of the crime of lèse-majesté against the most innocent joke, as soon as it is addressed to the only form of mind, to the only group of intangible men in France¹⁶⁰". A Fontenaysienne reacted anonymously in *Le Siècle*, ironically thanking the great lord Vogüé for having "deigned to know that we existed, we commoners, obliged to earn our bread and dispense with waiting for it from the good pleasure of others¹⁶¹". Another anonymous teacher in *Le Temps* reproached the academician for having turned his novel into a campaign of defamation against Fontenay, against Pécaut, and, more broadly, against secular women teachers:

Your alleged portrait - shall I say *type*? - of Fontenay's pupil is not only slanderous; it is [...] *historically* false. [...] The spirit of this century is no longer, is it not, that of blind belief and forced submission. And that is precisely what you are displeased about. As a gentleman, you resent the invading democracy; as a man, you mock women who want to be independent¹⁶².

These women who acquire intellectual and economic independence are indeed portrayed by Vogüé as demi-mondaines. In *Les morts qui parlent*, Rose Esther has left teaching to become an artist. Protected by an influential member of the right

157 S. Lauriol, "Au sujet d'un article récent", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1897.

158 Eugène Melchior de Vogüé, *Les morts qui parlent*, Paris, Plon, Nourrit et Cie, 1899, 383 p.

159 See in particular *Le Temps* of 12 March 1899.

160 Quoted by R. A. [Rachel Albert], 'Au jour le jour - Une héroïne de M. de Vogüé', *Le Temps*, 15 March 1899.

161 R. D., 'To Mr. Marquis de Vogüé', *Le Siècle*, 11 March 1899.

162 A teacher at the École normale, 'Réponse à M. de Vogüé par une ancienne élève de Fontenay', *Le Temps*, 19 March 1899.

One evening, as a member of parliament, she received a visit from a socialist deputy. She tells him about her years in Fontenay, the love she had for the gentle dreamer Pécaut, who captivated her with his sonorous formulas:

It was a kind of intellectual hashish, received at the hands of a prophet in whom we had faith. Why did I become disgusted with it so quickly? [The light varnish of Calvinism is applied to us for a moment; it soon peels off, the true spirit of our fathers reappears. Mine did not become mouldy in the syrup of secular religion that our master was stirring up for us; I took the measure of the good man and my enthusiasm went away with his power of persuasion¹⁶³.

After saying this, the young woman approaches the MP and drops her Fontenay notebooks into the fire. When, lustfully, she found herself in the MP's arms, she whispered to him "Take me". Vogüé concludes: "He did what the pupil of the good M. Pécaut asked.

Rachel Albert, who has just graduated from Fontenay, offers an explanation of this passage in *Le Temps*¹⁶⁴. By referring to the heroine as 'the pupil of the good Mr. Pécaut' at the moment when she engages in acts considered immoral, the author would have the reader conclude that there is a causal link between Rose Esther's sexual behaviour and the training she received at Fontenay. Rachel Albert condemns these insinuations.

Ferdinand Buisson chose to write in *Le Siècle* in response to Vogüé. To the argument that a work of fiction should not concern itself with morality, he opposes the effective role that such a novel plays in collective representations. According to him, it is precisely because Catholics cannot provide evidence of the immorality of the secular school that they use fiction as a weapon. What right does Vogüé have to pour out his venom on an institution that is above suspicion? "It is the right of a gentleman who enjoys himself¹⁶⁵". Buisson refers the author to his noble title: true to his lineage, Vogüé is a man of the past militating for the old world in this 'war of the two Franks' which is above all a war of images:

Fontenay, notebooks of morals, lectures by M. Pécaut", these are words that all the beautiful world was unaware of and that now they will no longer separate from a boudoir scene [...]. It will no longer be spoken of in front of the young girls of the world without an equivocal smile. [...] And that will be all they will know, these good Frenchwomen, about M. Pécaut and his work.

Although none of the protagonists in this controversy explicitly mentions the national context, it should be remembered that in the midst of the Dreyfus affair, Vogüé portrays a heroine of confession

¹⁶³ Eugène Melchior de Vogüé, *Les morts qui parlent*, *op. cit.* p. 159-160.

164 R. A. [Rachel Albert], 'Au jour le jour - Une héroïne de M. de Vogüé', *Le Temps*, 15 March 1899.

165 Quoted in *L'Aurore*, 13 March 1899, under the heading 'Le Gentilhomme de Vogüé'. Buisson's letter was apparently published in *Le Siècle* of 9 March 1899 - the article in *Le Siècle* of 11 March 1899 refers to Buisson's article 'which *Le Siècle* published the day before yesterday' - but this text is hopelessly untraceable.

Jewish. It shows her falling into the arms of a socialist deputy named Elzéar Bayonne, of Judeo-Protestant stock¹⁶⁶. When Vogüé considers that he is the victim of the wrath of the secularists because he has attacked "the only group of intangible men in France", is he not referring to the Dreyfusards? Furthermore, when she insists on the presence of Protestant and Jewish teachers in the normal schools, is the anonymous Fontenaysian who answers Vogüé in *Le Temps* not trying to underline how much secular education is a school of tolerance at a time of anti-Semitism¹⁶⁷ ?

In addition to these protests by former Fontenaysians, there is the one by Marie Baertschi, which is undoubtedly the most scathing, and which appeared in *L'Aurore*, a Dreyfusard daily. Unlike Rachel Albert, who signs her name R. A., and the two other anonymous teachers at the Ecole Normale, Marie Baertschi signed her full name and even left her postal address visible, as if to indicate that she was ready to continue the discussion. It must be said that she had already publicly exposed herself by co-signing in January and November 1898 an open letter to Zola and the petition in support of Picquart in the same daily¹⁶⁸. Having already crossed the barrier of public commitment under her own name, Marie Baertschi spoke on behalf of her colleagues in Fontenay and did not mince her words:

I am only one of the most ignored of the many students of the École normale supérieure de Fontenay-aux-Roses, but I would be a coward if I did not protest with all my might against the unworthy slander which it has pleased M. de Vogüé to pour out on M. Pécaut. Thank God! such rubbish only sullies its author and a figure like that of M. Pécaut shines too high, for all the mud contained in the soul of this M. de Vogüé to succeed in splashing him¹⁶⁹.

Two days later, a journalist from *La Paix* took up Marie Baertschi's text and concluded: "being blown by a woman is hard¹⁷⁰".

D) A Sevrier against Sèvres: the scandal of the novel by Gabrielle Réval

The texts by Maurice Talmeyr and Eugène-Melchior de Vogüé against Fontenay added *ad hominem* criticisms of Pécaut to the ritual canvas of the immorality of the Godless school. The polemic replayed a conflict whose camps and arguments had been clearly defined since at least the 1880s. But the hardest blow dealt to the supporters of the republican school was undoubtedly the one that came from their own camp during the publication, in 1900, of the first novel by

166 Patrick Cabanel discusses these oppositions between characters in *Juifs et protestants en France, les affinités électives, XVI^e-XXI^e siècle*, Paris, Fayard, 2004, pp. 119-120.

167 A teacher at the École normale, 'Réponse à M. de Vogüé par une ancienne élève de Fontenay', *Le Temps*, 19 March 1899.

168 In *L'Aurore*, "Lettre ouverte à M. Zola", 17 January 1898; Pétition en soutien à Picquart, 30 November 1898.

169 "Le Gentilhomme de Vogüé", *L'Aurore*, 13 March 1899.

170 A. Cérons, "Chronique - Pour M. de Vogüé", *La Paix*, 15 March 1899.

Gabrielle Réval, *Les Sévriennes*. A former student of the École normale supérieure, the author, while claiming to pay tribute to the institution, paints a more than equivocal portrait of it, since the students are presented with their desires for love and their professional ambitions, in an in-between position between the light-hearted girls and the learned women.

In April 1900, Pauline Kergomard expressed her disappointment with this novel in *La Fronde*. She described it as anti-feminist and considered it to be the culmination of the work of defamation aimed at the great female schools of the Republic: "the Ollendorff bookshop has just published a volume which is not at all inferior in malice to the articles of M. Talmeyr, or in perfidy to the novel by M. de Vogüé¹⁷¹". The novel follows for three years the course of a class of Sevrier women under the direction of a Mme Jules Favre frozen in her stoicism and incapable of humanity. According to Pauline Kergomard, two of the male teachers would, if their actions were true, deserve to be dismissed. The administrative staff and the students were a "band of individuals devoid of a sense of duty, grotesque, without morality, without even dress. The Inspector General expressed her astonishment:

And the author is a woman! She is a former Sevrier! [...] I do not understand. I see in *Sevrieries* nothing but an indictment of the house; of a dead woman who was a distinguished woman of mind and heart [...] Against the culture of the female mind, that is, against its emancipation. [...] Against the culture of the female mind, that is, against its emancipation. [...] I therefore see in it a work of clerical reaction similar to that which was attempted against Fontenay.

Not surprisingly, *the SGEE Bulletin* is rubbing its hands:

When it is one of the most brilliant students of Sèvres who recounts what she has seen and heard, what she herself has done and seen practised before her eyes [...] there is reason to rejoice, far from being saddened, at the appearance of these volumes which are so instructive, and let us add, so piquant and pleasant to read. [...] They are pure novels, she does not hide it: but these novels are the setting for pictures of perfect accuracy¹⁷².

Partisan rhetoric makes it possible to affirm in the same sentence one thing and its opposite. In exactly the same way that the militants of the secular school reproduced passages from the work of Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart over and over again, the *SGEE Bulletin* quotes extracts from another traitor to her camp. The 'risky and somewhat naughty' passages are all the more delicious. If Louis Lescœur entitled his article "L'État mère de famille", it was to show how much the virtue of young girls was in danger at Sèvres, a huge boarding school where, lacking the moral rigour of the nuns, the pupils dreamed of kissing their teachers' hands. In short, if the nuns are acting as mothers,

the State is more than incompetent in the matter.

171 Pauline Kergomard, 'Un roman antiféministe', *La Fronde*, 10 April 1900.

172 L. Lescœur, "L'État mère de famille", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, December 1901.

The Ecole Normale Supérieure de Sèvres, described as a "school of free feminine thought", is presented by Louis Lescœur as an agent of social decadence. It was accused of training rationalist "professors" with no religious references and of flattering female pride. The author agrees with Gabrielle Réval when she states: "Mme de Maintenon's work was limited to the French nobility, and also limited in time, while Sèvres, on the other hand, casts its influence over all classes¹⁷³." Not only does the teaching at Sèvres undermine the religious foundations of Catholic France, but it also challenges the entire social order: "Whether we admit it or not, the girls' high schools lead to the socialist idea, by helping to liberate women by emancipating their brains. Sèvres became emblematic of the entire educational work of the Third Republic. Thus, Louis Lescœur states that "the book of the *Sévriennes* confirms, in every respect, the vainly contested accuracy of the character attributed by M. de Vogüé to the teachings given to the young girls of Fontenay-aux-Roses by M. Pécaut¹⁷⁴."

The new France imagined by Mme Jules Favre, Félix Pécaut and Camille Sée was the France against which the antidreyfusards were fighting. Their rhetoric is clearly perceptible in Louis Lescœur, who reminds us that the founder of secondary education is

at the same time Jewish, radical and free-thinking. Is he a Freemason? Probably; but, even if he is not listed among the children of Hiram, [his speech is a proof,] among a thousand, of what is obvious to everyone today, I mean the close affinity that unites Semitism and Freemasonry.

In response to these attacks, Camille Sée decided to publish in his journal *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles* the diary written at Sèvres by Marguerite Aron during her studies. The text first appeared anonymously in serial form from 1901 before being published in book form by Alcan in 1912. In a preface to the book, the former Sevrier quotes the letter she wrote to Camille Sée on 5 January 1901, which explains the conditions of publication of her story:

You have accustomed us to consider the Review you direct less as *your* Review than as *ours*. [...] That is why, despite their reluctance to be seen in the light of day, these pages of my *Diary* came to you, as if by themselves. [...] One day last summer [...] I showed them to you. It was at a time when many people, in the world of the Press and in that of the University, were stirring about a novel that its title: *Les Sévriennes* had announced itself as a document on the École de Sèvres and on the women who prepare themselves for life there¹⁷⁵.

173 Gabrielle Réval quoted by L. Lescœur, "L'État mère de famille", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, December 1901.

174 L. Lescœur, "L'État mère de famille", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, December 1901.

175 Marguerite Aron, *Le Journal d'une sévrienne*, Paris, Alcan, 241 p., p. 2.

Convinced that Marguerite Aron's text offered a striking denial of Gabrielle Réval's work, Camille Sée decided to make it public, while respecting the anonymity demanded by the author. This is why a former Sevrier rejoiced in 1912 to have finally discovered the woman behind the story:

Le Journal d'une Sévrienne" has a civil status; it is not the fruit of a whim of the imagination [...]. It is a book lived [...]. [In 1901] some people went so far as to write to M. Camille Sée, to ask him [questions] [about the anonymous author]. His discretion was invincible. [...] I was one of those spurned correspondents¹⁷⁶.

Marguerite Aron presents her text as a work of truth to be contrasted with the fiction of Gabrielle Réval, her colleague turned writer¹⁷⁷. She makes the publication of her text a duty to Mme Jules Favre, who was for her a spiritual guide. Marguerite Aron remembers that it was when she was watching over the body of the director of Sèvres that she understood the value of her story:

I was alone, and I had my familiar paperwork in front of me, scattered on my table. I began to look at them. A few hours before, they had all the insignificance of *present* things; here they had the serious, "irrevocable" value of things *past*. [...] Vaguely moved by the feeling of the great moral heritage of which this death bequeathed me my share, I leafed through them in silence, and, finding myself there, I began to copy the fragments into a notebook¹⁷⁸.

With Marguerite Aron's text, Camille Sée responded in her review to Gabrielle Réval and the *Bulletin de la SGEE*, in the same way that Buisson used the *Revue pédagogique* to respond to the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, or that the intellectuals in *La Fronde* and the *Revue universitaire* praised the republican school by quoting the work of Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur.

Conclusion of Chapter 5

This chapter analyses the controversies surrounding the education of young girls, an area that emerged at the turn of the century as a battleground between the defenders of secular schools and the militants of Catholic education. Each of the opposing camps was aware of the

176 B..., "Le Journal d'une Sévrienne", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, February 1912.

177 However, as Michelle Perrot reminds us, there is 'nothing less transparent than an autobiography, made to seal as much as to reveal', 'Introduction', in Philippe Ariès and Georges Duby (eds.), *Histoire de la vie privée*, *op. cit.* p. 11. The term 'sealing' is very appropriate to M. Aron's approach to his Sevrierian memories.

178 Marguerite Aron, *Le Journal d'une sévrienne*, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

political, social and religious implications of girls' education in the medium and long term in a context of de-Christianisation of the country and the establishment of the Republic.

In order to place the works of Mme d'Adhémar and Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur in their context, it was necessary to analyse the way in which the innovations in women's education were received since the 1880s. The analysis of the *Bulletin of the SGEE* showed the violence of the rejection of these innovations by a part of the Catholic world. The audacity of Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur's text is all the greater.

Unlike the intellectuals studied so far, this nun has only a limited education, is not used to writing, is not originally part of any intellectual network, is confronted with very heavy constraints due to her condition and has no recognised status within the institution in which she evolves. She speaks only in the name of her empirical knowledge of the congregations and because of the faith that inhabits her. However, she embodies a form of dissent in an institution that does not tolerate dissent and can be considered an intellectual because of her ability to raise debates and her combativeness. It is not insignificant that her biography comes from another Catholic woman, Mme d'Adhémar: not only is she the person who knew her best at the time of the controversy, but it also testifies to the importance for the nun of having a strong female support at a time when she was the object of *ad hominem* attacks because of the transgression represented by her speaking out. Mme d'Adhémar and Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur, although coming from very different backgrounds, shared the same objective - the re-Christianisation of France -, the same frustration - a lack of education in their youth -, the same concern - the victory of the secular school -, and the same diagnosis - the need for Catholics to deal with democracy.

If the scandal of the *Religious Teachers* gave great notoriety to Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart and, to a certain extent, to Madame d'Adhémar, most of the intellectuals whose voices counted on the side of the secular school also became involved in the controversies relating to the instruction of girls, which constituted a fertile ground for them to speak. Indeed, these activists defend their institution and their own existence as products of the secular school and as teachers.

The turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries saw these issues leave the circles of the initiated and enter the public domain, notably through texts published in major journals or through books of fiction. In this "War of the Two Franks", which was above all a war of images, the question of girls' education created polemics and scandals, and each time, as Émile Poulat wrote, it was "the whole press, secular and denominational, [that] came into action. The same against the same, once again, waiting for the next one."¹⁷⁹ " The Combit laws, which led to a reconfiguration of Catholic education for young girls, re-launched this mechanism.

¹⁷⁹ Émile Poulat, *Liberté, laïcité, La Guerre des Deux France et le principe de la modernité*, op. cit, p. 272.

Chapter 6

**Women as actors in the reconfiguration of girls' education :
a new emulation between state and free schools (1901-1914)**

Introduction to Chapter 6

In a context of polarisation in French society following the Dreyfus affair, and then the laws of 1901 and 1904 which created an exceptional regime for congregations and prohibited them from teaching, the debate on female education was particularly invested by women. Secular school activists took advantage of the fact that separation was on the political agenda to demand the complete secularisation of teaching staff in state girls' schools, where many nuns still worked. They also defended a more radically secular policy in the training and recruitment of female state teachers, accusing the ruling Republicans of having made too many compromises with Catholics since the "new spirit" policy introduced by Eugène Spuller in 1894. In addition, several activists jumped on the debate surrounding the Falloux law - which had authorised the existence of free schools since 1850 - to demand a "secular monopoly" and deal a fatal blow to denominational schools.

But the events of the beginning of the century also mobilised the energies of women in the Catholic ranks. While several mass movements enabled Catholic women to take over the public arena to defend free schools, the 1904 law, which led to the disappearance of teaching congregations, provided the conditions for the emergence of new Catholic intellectuals. Several women set about creating a new type of female secondary school, which, a few years after the publication of *Religious Teachers*, carried out the reforms demanded by Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur. They promoted an education that was both intellectually ambitious and resolutely Catholic. Led, among others, by Louise Desrez, a school principal, Madeleine Daniélou, an associate professor of literature, and Hélène Liégeois, an associate professor of history, the free secondary school for women that was born from the ruins of the congregations presented a very different face from the one that the nuns had embodied until then.

While the Separation announced a triumph for the secular school, against all expectations, the balance of power was reversed in the years that followed. The Catholic school demonstrated its ability to renew itself, while public education showed its inertia. Thus, while the Collège Sévigné was the first to open a baccalaureate preparation course for girls in 1905, the schools of Louise Desrez and Madeleine Daniélou followed suit in 1906 and 1907. At the same time, there was increasing criticism of the girls' lycées, which, having been set up to offer disinterested education, did not meet the expectations of their public. The teachers and headmistresses of the girls' lycées, supported in particular by feminist activists, questioned this model inherited from the Sée law. The threat posed by the free schools to the lycées by preparing them for the baccalauréat and integrating classical culture into their curriculum renewed the internal debate within the Education Ministry, which had already begun with the reform of male secondary education leading to the creation of the "new baccalauréat" in 1902.

The religious neutrality of the school is an unavoidable point of disagreement between Catholics and secularists. Everywhere, the education of girls is thought of less for its own sake than

as a

an instrument in the service of broader ambitions: on the one hand, the aim was to re-Christianise society through women; on the other, the aim was to convert women to the Republic, the regime having found them against it at the turn of the century¹. But this opposition conceals deep internal disagreements in each camp about the role that women were called upon to play in the society to come. À the Belle Époque, Catholic Catholic education and the model secular model influence each other. The aim is therefore to compare the debates on the education of girls within t h e Church and within the ranks of the secular school.

To do this, we will first analyse the desire of many intellectuals to 'secularise the secular' in the context of the separation of Church and State. We will then study the reconfiguration of free education after the 1904 law, which gave rise to a new generation of Catholic intellectuals. Finally, it will examine the debate initiated by secular school activists on the preparation of the This was done in the context of increased competition with free schools.

I- Schools at the time of Separation: intellectuals in the Republican front

The years preceding the Separation of 1905 were an opportunity for debate on the concept of secularism. According to the chronology proposed by Jean Baubérot, a first threshold of secularisation was reached with the French Revolution, when the State no longer imposed any religious doctrine. The second threshold, reached in 1905, makes faith a private matter². If we apply such an approach to schools, we can speak of a first secularisation threshold at the time of the school laws³This was followed twenty years later by a second stage which corresponded to the shock of the Dreyfus affair and preceded the Separation of 1905. Controversies then multiplied around the role of the public school as an instance of politicisation, concurrently with the denominational school. Secularism in schools was at the centre of the "conflict of the two Franks", which Jean Baubérot defines as the play of "two active minorities, [...] 'clerical' and 'anticlerical' [who] tried to obtain for their own benefit a break with the logic of the first threshold and proposed two divergent visions: France, the 'eldest daughter of the Church' (Catholic); modern France, the daughter of the 1789 Declaration of Rights⁴ ".

Although historiography has long minimised the role of women in this conflict, they were active both in the Catholic ranks and among the freethinkers⁵. The Ligue patriotique des Françaises, for example, brought together Catholic women who took up the school battle:

1 Catholic women mobilised against Republican candidates in the 1902 legislative elections.

2 Jean Baubérot, *Histoire de la laïcité en France*, Paris, PUF, 2013, p. 71-88.

3 On this first threshold, see Jean-François Condette (ed.), *Éducation, religion, laïcité (XVI^e-XX^e siècle) - continuités, tensions et ruptures dans la formation des élèves et des enseignants*, Villeneuve d'Ascq, Institut de recherches historiques du Septentrion, 2010, 552 p.

4 Jean Baubérot, *Histoire de laïcité en France*, *op. cit.*

5 When discussing the politicisation of women around secularism, historians focus more on Catholics than on

freethinkers.

they oppose a state that is prepared to force them to send their children to "schools without God"⁶. They refuse the confessionalisation of the Catholic religion, which Yves Déloye defines as "the process by which religious beliefs become private opinions in a secularised society open to religious pluralism"⁷. If Catholic women mobilised, it was in reaction to the offensive of the freethinking minority, which campaigned to 'secularise the secular'. The 'advanced' republicans rejected the Ferryist accommodations of the 1880s and the compromises of the 'new spirit' of the 1890s in terms of secularism in schools. They demanded the repeal of the Falloux law, which had enshrined the existence of free schools since 1850.

The aim here is to look at the role played by secular school activists in this second stage of secularisation of the school: how do they introduce into the debates on school secularism the "women's question" that had been ignored until then? If they acted in favour of the public school against the mobilisation of Catholic women, it would be wrong to believe that the school war was being played out between two monolithic camps: on the contrary, we must be aware of the complexity of the positions in each camp⁸. On the contrary, we must be aware of the complexity of the positions in each camp. In the anticlerical Republican front, the solution of a state monopoly was not unanimous: many activists remained attached to the freedom of education.

Like their male counterparts, female intellectuals individually identify with certain shades of republicanism whose diversity is apparent beneath the apparent unanimity of the defence of public schools. But unlike male intellectuals, they collectively claim the particularity of their conception of school secularism by insisting on the necessity of a gendered approach: the Republic cannot win without integrating women. If we analyse the

When we look at the "war of the two France's" through the double prism of gender and education, we cannot fail to notice that at the dawn of the XX^e century, the school question is also a women's issue.

A) A secular school independent of political power: Clémence Royer's proposal

The movement to challenge the freedom of education began at the turn of the year 1897-1898, when the radical press became very offensive. In September 1898, the Grand Orient put the repeal of the Falloux law on the agenda⁹. It was in this context that Clémence Royer took up the debate in *La Fronde*. The Dreyfus affair acted as a trigger:

The events in progress highlight a fact [...]; it is that for a hundred years the moral unity of France has been broken, [...] that the nation contains two

6 See Magali Della Sudda, *Une activité politique féminine conservatrice avant le droit de suffrage en France et en Italie: socio-histoire de la politisation des femmes catholiques au sein de la Ligue patriotique des Françaises (1902-1933), et de l'Unione fra le donne cattoliche d'Italia (1909-1919)*, thesis defended at EHESS in 2007 under the direction of Laura Lee Downs and Lucetta Scaraffia. See also the work of Bruno Dumons on this subject.

7 Yves Déloye, *École et citoyenneté - L'individualisme républicain de Jules Ferry à Vichy : controverses*, Paris, Presses de la fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1994, p.28.

8 Jean-François Condette, "Introduction - Forming the Christian, educating the citizen. Questioning the obvious to

better free ourselves from it", in Jean-François Condette (ed.), *Education, religion, laïcité, op. cit.* p. 3-34.
9 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914, op. cit.* pp. 359-360.

hostile peoples, almost two incompatible races which will end up exterminating each other in a violent crisis in which France may perish. The remedy for the evil is to remove the cause, and the cause [...] is the duality of its public education¹⁰.

Clémence Royer recognises herself in a France driven by the rational principles of science, heir to the Enlightenment and the Revolution. According to her, this France is politically under-represented: "If votes could be weighed instead of counted, the scales would tip on its side without wavering. She contrasts this enlightened fringe with the France of the masses, "Panurge's herd ready to follow its rams to the drowning". It is this "old theocratic France" that Clémence Royer has been confronted with since the beginning of her career as a woman of science, which partly explains the violence of her anticlericalism¹¹. According to her, only the 'unity of rational education' would enable France to break the deadlock. For school neutrality and the coexistence of two schools is a deplorable compromise:

The so-called revealed doctrine of the Church [...] and the traditional doctrine of modern science [...] can be summed up in two sets of logically contradictory propositions. So that the truth of one leads to the falsity of the other. A choice must be made. Between these two doctrines, a neutral teaching is no longer possible¹².

However, Clémence Royer does not conclude that a state monopoly is necessary. For her, "secular science is [...] not free, as long as it depends on the government¹³". On this point, she agreed with Ferdinand Buisson, who was wary of the consequences of a monopoly: the centralisation of teaching by the State would run the risk of a reverse clericalism, of a State creed, and could even be turned against secularists in the event of a change of political majority. What would happen to the school if the clerics came to power¹⁴? In order to avoid any political instrumentalisation of the school, Clémence Royer suggests handing over its management to the teaching profession itself: "Only those who know can teach; only those who teach are competent to distinguish those who know¹⁵". Clémence Royer goes further. Rereading Montesquieu, she states that any state must be made up of not three, but four independent powers: the legislative, judicial, executive and teaching powers. The education of the masses is indeed an imperative duty for a country of universal suffrage.

Clémence Royer then thought about the creation of this teaching power, master of its programmes and recruiting itself. She considered that the 100,000 lay teachers and

10 Clémence Royer, "La tribune - Le pouvoir enseignant", *La Fronde*, 12 February 1898.

11 See Geneviève Fraisse, *Clémence Royer, Philosophe et femme de sciences*, Paris, La Découverte, 2002.

12 Clémence Royer, "L'enseignement neutre", *La Fronde*, 25 March 1901.

13 Clémence Royer, "La tribune - Le pouvoir enseignant", *La Fronde*, 12 February 1898.

14 See Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, *op. cit.*, p. 392.

15 Clémence Royer, "La tribune - Le pouvoir enseignant", *La Fronde*, 13 February 1898.

She sees no reason to exclude women. She saw no reason to exclude women: "there would be no danger in giving women equal rights: and the opinion of women is not to be disdained in the education of youth, provided that they are sufficiently enlightened". In addition to these teachers, the nation's intellectual elite was made up of doctors, agrégés and licenciés, secondary and higher education teachers and students at the grandes écoles. Eligibility for the National Council of Public Education, the new decision-making body, would be reserved for the most highly qualified. Congregationalists would be excluded from this teaching pyramid.

Against the Church, which she described as "very attached [...] to the freedom of ignorance"¹⁶ "Clémence Royer argued in favour of compulsory education for children in strictly secular, scientific and rational schools. She protests against the argument of the freedom of the father of the family invoked by Catholics to counter the plans to secularise education. Clémence Royer points out the hypocrisy of the Church, which "made such a good deal of [the freedom of the father of the family] when it seized the children of the Huguenots and forcibly rebaptized them. For Darwin's translator, giving the father of a family the freedom to have his child educated by religious people was to recognise his 'right to make a moron of his child'. These articles were the target of the misogynist author Han Ryner, who turned his words on their head by writing in the early XX^e century that *La Fronde* was a "convenient tribune"¹⁷ " for Clémence Royer, an "organising and tyrannical" genius to whom he

"It is necessary to have a single, all-powerful state education, a scientific orthodoxy.

The intellectuals who expressed themselves in *La Fronde* all questioned this freedom of the father of the family, which justified the existence of a public school, usually denominational, alongside the public school. Maria Vérone, like Andrée Téry¹⁸ Maria Verona, like Andrée Téry, considered that the child's right to be protected from his parents by the State was superior to the father's right to bring up his child as he saw fit: "If it is right to respect the freedom of fathers, it is even more necessary to defend the freedom of children even against their parents"¹⁹ ". Pauline Kergomard uses irony to describe the despotism of a State that imposes on a father the obligation to register his child's name in the civil register, to have him vaccinated and educated: "Poor father deprived of the freedom to expose his child to smallpox; forced to preserve him from [...] ignorance"²⁰ ". She mocks the criticism levelled at the French teaching state, "created on the ruins of clerical school institutions"²¹ " which, as Philippe Savoie reminds us, "had to face in the XIX^e century a permanent trial in moral illegitimacy, even in tyranny"²² . "

For Clémence Royer, parents must be able to introduce their children to their religion, but children must also be able to renounce or change their religion. These fundamental freedoms are

16 Clémence Royer, "L'enseignement neutre", *La Fronde*, 25 March 1901.

17 Han Ryner, *Le Massacre des amazones*, Chamuel, Paris, s.d. [around 1900], 300 p., p.226.

18 Andrée Téry, "L'école républicaine", *La Fronde*, 12 February 1900.

19 Maria Vérone, "L'abrogation de la loi Falloux", *La Fronde*, 30 June 1902.

20 Pauline Kergomard, "Le "monopole" universitaire", *La Fronde*, 9 February 1900.

21 Philippe Savoie, "The original characters of the history of the French teaching state, XIX^e-XXth centuries", *History of Education* [Online], n°140-141 | 2014, online 31 August 2014, accessed 29 June 2020. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/histoire-education/2762>.

preserved in its project of rational teaching. Clémence Royer simply called for the confessionalisation of the Catholic religion, i.e. the end of the social and political power of the Church and its relegation to the sphere of the intimate²³.

Clémence Royer's desire to create a teaching power alongside the executive, legislative and judicial powers was part of a context in which intellectuals were being mobilised precisely against the executive, the legislature and the judiciary in order to win the Dreyfus cause. The philosopher claimed the ideal of a Republic of "abilities": she was suspicious of universal suffrage and the place it gave to the ignorant masses. Like Madeleine Pelletier, studied by Joan W. Scott, Clémence Royer believed "in a meritocracy of intellectuals, in the superiority of the intelligentsia over the docile masses²⁴". She was suspicious of a democracy that displayed its dysfunctions at the time of the Affaire. In the face of the crisis, however, she did not call for a reform of political institutions, but rather for the transformation of the school: it was this institution that appeared to be a real vector of political and social change.

B) The Secondary Education Survey: "Women are not consulted

Clémence Royer's reform proposal preceded by a few months the launch of an enquiry into secondary education by the Chamber of Deputies at the end of 1898. The republicans were concerned about the increase in the number of students in free schools. In secondary education, Catholic education was close to parity with the secular sector. It was in this context that a parliamentary commission headed by Alexandre Ribot was organised, which also set itself the objective of modernising public secondary education. It met 38 times between 17 January and 27 March 1899 and received extensive media coverage²⁵. The commission's work resulted in three proposals: the Rabier proposal aimed to ban teaching congregations; the Levraud proposal suggested re-establishing the university monopoly; a third proposal, defended in particular by Minister Leygues, advocated giving access to the civil service only to former pupils of public education. It was combined with the obligation of a training period in a public institution for pupils educated in private schools²⁶. These proposals apply exclusively to male secondary education.

On 20 November 1899, Maria Pognon, president of the French League for Women's Rights, published an article in *La Fronde* with a revealing title: "Enquête sur l'enseignement

23 On this issue, see Yves Déloye, *École et citoyenneté, op. cit.*, p. 28.

24 Joan W. Scott, *The Paradoxical Citizen, op. cit.* pp. 171-172.

25 See Antoine Prost, "De l'enquête à la réforme. L'enseignement secondaire des garçons de 1898 à 1902", *Histoire de l'éducation* [En ligne], 119 | 2008, online since 01 January 2013, accessed 19 April 2019. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/histoire-education/1843>.

26 See Jean-Michel Chapoulie, *L'École d'État conquiert la France, Deux siècles de politique scolaire*, Rennes, PUR, 2010, p. 224. See also Yves Verneuil, *Les Agrégés, op. cit.* p. 174-182. A course prior to the agrégation was introduced in 1888, but it lasted only 10 days. From 1904 onwards, this course was strengthened along the lines of Lavissee's proposal to the Ribot commission: it lasted a year with lectures on pedagogy and experience in a lycée under the supervision of a teacher. From then on, a certificate of training was required in order to take the agrégation exams.

secondary - women are not consulted²⁷ ". The Commission in fact carries out its consultations exclusively with representatives of male secondary schools²⁸. It collected questionnaires that were distributed in secondary schools and heard 200 personalities:

When these gentlemen have read all this, [...] I am afraid they will not be much further ahead than before, as to the real causes of what is troubling them. Will they allow me to give them some good advice? [...] Let them ask the mothers whose sons have been transferred to another establishment why the Lycée or Collège does not appeal to them for their children. [...] Ah, gentlemen, how many times must it be repeated to you that the future of France is in the hands of women; that their hidden power is a hundred times more dangerous than their publicly recognised and admitted power.

According to Maria Pognon, if the women of the French bourgeoisie send their sons to the brothers, it is precisely because the Republicans leave them by the wayside while the Church extends its arms to them. The rebel calls on the legislators:

[You] who have pitifully opened a few girls' high schools, instead of spreading them everywhere in profusion, [...] you have let [the woman] wear out her youth [...] making novenas to obtain the return of a king, and you are astonished that, now a woman, she does not love the Republic and that, pampered by the good Fathers, she sends her sons to them at the same time as she entrusts her daughters to the nuns who raised her.

For Maria Pognon, the members of parliament made a mistake in their strategy by convening a commission of enquiry into boys' schools: it was by founding girls' schools that they would combat the clerical peril. La frondeuse points out the fundamental error of the republicans: unable to understand the importance of a reflection on women, they condemn their reforms to failure in advance, since, as Clémence Royer writes, "for a hundred years, women have been the Penelope who has been undoing the revolutionary work²⁹ ".

Pauline Kergomard also used the argument of the hidden power of women. Too attached to the Church, French women would hinder the educational work of the Republic: "Municipalities are opposed to secularisation. And why do they oppose secularisation? Because the mothers of families get their husbands to vote against them.³⁰ " The theme of power

27 Maria Pognon, "Enquête sur l'enseignement secondaire - On oublie de consulter les femmes", *La Fronde*, 20 November 1899.

28 Jean-Michel Chapoulie writes: "the commission envisaged dealing with female secondary education at a later date, and Leygues introduced into his presentation of the reform a section on female education that was almost devoid of content. This absence shows the low social importance recognised for this type of education, [...] even though it had a formula that was less dependent on the past than that of male education", in *L'École d'État conquiert la France*, *op. cit.* p. 236.

29 Quoted by Geneviève Fraisse, *Clémence Royer, Philosophe et femme de sciences*, *op. cit.*

30 Pauline Kergomard, "La loi d'enseignement devant la Chambre", *La Fronde*, 23 November 1899.

The notion of the occult nature of women is surprisingly common in the writings of feminists. It was used by the Republicans to justify the eviction of women from the political sphere from the French Revolution onwards. In his manifesto for banning women from learning to read in 1801, Sylvain Maréchal wrote: "Women no longer know how to read, and will no longer offer us the rich cross-section of these female diplomats, who from the depths of the boudoir [...] dispose of empires³¹". Against the insidious power of a perverse femininity associated with the Ancien Régime, many nineteenth-century thinkers instead based the republican regime on male rationality and the exclusion of women. The feminists' use of the theme of women's hidden power is thus an example of the reversal of a misogynistic argument. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello also takes up this theme and points out the contradictions of the Republican discourse:

By habit of considering women as a negligible quantity, [...] the defenders of republican society have aimed above all at taking the child who will become a man, a voter. [The effort] in favour of women has been [...] less considerable. The failure of certain secondary schools and the growing prosperity of convents [...] were hardly noticed. Women remained the lot of the congregation. They were right to be content with this. The woman brought up in a convent sends her daughters to the convent and her sons to the Jesuits [...]. And the husband - frequently a former pupil of the Lycée, a supporter of secular education [...] - may protest, but it is the woman who triumphs³².

It is precisely in order to put an end to the underhand action of women that the same measures must be adopted for them as for men and that their schools must be included in the secularisation process initiated by the parliamentary committee on secondary education.

The arguments of Pauline Kergomard, Maria Pognon and Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello are based on a differentialist foundation: it is because women are mothers and wives that they must be integrated into the Republic. Andrée Téry, on the other hand, adopts a different discourse: women must have the same rights as men not because they are women, but because they are individuals in their own right. Without formulating it in this way, she points to the paradox analysed by Joan W. Scott: while the notion of abstract individualism born of the French Revolution should have been "the foundation of a system of universal inclusion, (against the hierarchies and privileges of the monarchical and aristocratic regimes), it also served to exclude those it defined as non-individuals³³" women. This idea permeates Andrée Téry's discourse:

When we try to prevent the congregation from poisoning the souls of our children, it is always only the *male children*. No one says a word about our daughters.

31 Quoted by Geneviève Fraisse, *Muse de la raison*, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

32 Paule Branzac [Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello], "Laïcisons les femmes", *La Fronde*, 4 November 1902.

33 Joan W. Scott, *The Paradoxical Citizen*, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

[...] A law is being drafted [...] to force all candidates for public office to complete their studies in a lycée. And what about girls? [...] It would be appropriate [...] to indicate in one word that they are equating girls' high schools with boys' high schools and that they want to impose the same obligation on future civil servants of both sexes. But as always, the texts of the law only regulate our fate by preterition³⁴.

According to Andrée Téry, women are forgotten as if they were not part of the nation.

C) Slippery women against teaching congregations: the repeal of the Falloux law, a feminist measure?

Prompted by the agitation of certain religious congregations during the Affair, the President of the Council, Pierre Waldeck-Rousseau, took up the issue of the right of association, a long-standing problem of the Third Republic. The aim was to provide a legal framework for grouping into associations, without arming the congregations by offering them state recognition. The Chamber moved towards a law of exception that imposed particular constraints on religious orders. After prohibiting all preaching by unauthorised congregations - including the Assumptionists of *La Croix*, who had distinguished themselves by their anti-Semitism³⁵ - the Chamber passed the law on the contract of association in July 1901.

This period was marked by intense reflection on the congregations in *La Fronde*. Andrée Téry supports the principle of an exceptional law, recalling that since the Revolution, the Republic has considered it its vital duty to be wary of these states within the state.³⁶ She proposed nothing less than the resumption of the 1792 decree abolishing all congregations. She joined Ferdinand Buisson, who declared in 1902: "The Republic recognises all freedoms, except that of voluntary servitude³⁷." Since the ideal citizen was conceived as a being capable of governing himself, endowed with reason and critical freedom, the principle of the abdication of individual conscience to a religious authority was, in the eyes of the militants of the secular school, incompatible with the republican regime. Moreover, for Andrée Téry, what the Third Republic struggled to understand was the particular hold that congregations had on women: they "hold them and will hold them"³⁸ "if no drastic decisions are taken. For the congregations play a considerable role in the education of girls. According to André Lanfrey, at the turn of the century, 31% of teachers (public education not yet secularised and denominational education combined) were congregationalists.³⁹ the figure was much higher in girls' education. Thus, in 1904, there were still 4,785

34 Andrée Téry, "La femme et le stage scolaire", *La Fronde*, 3 November 1900.

35 Mona Ozouf, *L'École, l'Église, la République, 1871-1914*, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

36 Andrée Téry, "Ce que doit être une loi sur les congrégations", *La Fronde*, 30 November 1900.

37 Quoted by Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, *op. cit.*

38 Andrée Téry, "Ce que doit être une loi sur les congrégations", *La Fronde*, 30 November 1900.

39 André Lanfrey, (preface by Françoise Mayeur), *Les catholiques français et l'école (1902-1914)*, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

nuns teaching in the country's so-called secular public schools and 35,535 sisters in free schools⁴⁰. These 40,000 sisters are only one third of the 128,000 nuns living in metropolitan France compared to the 30,000 religious in the country in 1901⁴¹. The influence of the Congregation in the education of women was reflected in a great sexual dimorphism in religious practice⁴².

Making women allies of the Republic therefore means starting by limiting the influence that the congregations have on their education. In *La Fronde*, Louise Debor supports Andrée Téry's campaign, hoping that she will have convinced "our ill-informed friends, Jesuit-eaters, inclined to show mercy to the little sisters in the hospitals"⁴³. Indeed, despite their anti-clerical declarations, the Republicans still made concessions to women's congregations⁴⁴. But from 1901 onwards, the repeal of the Falloux law was envisaged: in August, the Congress of teachers' associations came out in favour of its abolition, which was welcomed by Maria Vérone⁴⁵. In December, the Senate studied for the first time a proposal calling for its complete repeal. A similar proposal was tabled by Brisson in March 1902 in the Chamber as part of the discussion on secondary education. During the congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement in Lyon in 1902, the issue was also hotly debated. Victor Augagneur, the mayor of Lyon, was a supporter of the monopoly. However, Ferdinand Buisson, who was then the president of the Ligue, succeeded in obtaining from the congress the maintenance of a status for free education taught by lay people. The congress stuck to the "secular monopoly", i.e. the prohibition of teaching by congregationalists, without asking for the suppression of denominational schools⁴⁶. The following year, Buisson was outvoted and the state monopoly thesis won out at the Marseille congress. The national congress of freethought also supported it in Paris in December 1903.

In *La Fronde*, as in the rest of the republican intellectual world, opinions were divided. Maria Vérone, who sat on the Condorcet Society with Andrée Téry and Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, was pleased that this group of left-wing intellectuals had voted unanimously to repeal the Falloux law in the spring of 1902⁴⁷. According to the association's bulletin, it was Maria Vérone herself who defended the state monopoly at the general assembly of 1^{er} April⁴⁸. This

40 André Lanfrey, (preface by Françoise Mayeur), *Les catholiques français et l'école (1902-1914)*, *op. cit.* p. 13. Claude Langlois gives figures on the weight of the congregations and the balance of power between public and public schools in "Les choix des congrégations féminines", *in Ibid.*, p. 152-168 (table p. 155).

41 Patrick Cabanel, "Introduction", *in* Patrick Cabanel, Jean-Dominique Durand (eds.), *Le Grand Exil des congrégations religieuses françaises, 1901-1914*, Paris, Cerf Histoire, 2005, pp. 7-20.

42 Claude Langlois states that in 1870, France had 52% pascalisants, of which 30% were men and 70% were women. Quoted by Jacques and Mona Ozouf (with V. Aubert and C. Steindecker), *La République des instituteurs*, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

43 Louise Debor, "Laïcisons", *La Fronde*, 14 March 1901.

44 In Master 1, we studied the case of the Good Shepherd Congregation in Angers, which took care of "lost girls" and survived without any problems during this period. On nuns in hospitals, see Katrin Schultheiss, *Bodies and souls: politics and the professionalization of nursing in France, 1880-1922*, Cambridge, London, Harvard University Press, 2001.

45 Maria Verona, "L'affranchissement de l'enseignement primaire", *La Fronde*, 22 August 1901.

46 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, *op. cit.*, p. 385.

47 Maria Vérone, "La société Condorcet", *La Fronde*, 2 April 1902.

48 *Bulletin de la Société Condorcet*, April-July 1902.

At first glance, this may seem surprising: dismissed from her position as a teacher by the City of Paris because of her political activities, she was aware of the risk that the state's increasing power in a monopoly situation posed to the teaching staff. However, Maria Verona considered that the reason why teachers were being bullied by their superiors was precisely because of the competition that the Catholic school had with the secular school. She considers that, as it came out of the Falloux law, the freedom of education has resulted in "killing free secular education, so that this regime of so-called freedom has led to the constitution of two rival monopolies, that of the State and that of the Church, between which it is almost impossible for any free secular institution to live⁴⁹". For the Slinger, the priority is to pronounce the teaching ban for religious congregations, a necessary step towards the state monopoly.

In 1902, Odette Laguerre also spoke out in favour of the exclusivity of education by the state, as opposed to Charles Péguy and Charles Guieysse, who supported absolute freedom. Without this, clerical education, "with the interested support of the owners, would continue to impose itself on the proletarians and would triumph, not by the power of ideas, but by that of money⁵⁰". Reusing revolutionary vocabulary, the Slinger proclaimed that the repeal of the Falloux law was a measure of public salvation in the context of a political crisis: "It appears to us, moreover, as a feminist measure, suitable, by promoting the intellectual emancipation of women, to facilitate the conquest of their political rights⁵¹". Odette Laguerre is, however, lucid: the Frenchman "refuses to call his companion to full human dignity, to mental and moral equality⁵²". She fears particular obstacles to the complete secularisation of female education.

When the confrontation became more intense, particularly when Combes closed more than 2,500 girls' schools in the spring of 1902⁵³ For the rebels, it was a question of supporting the government's policy by denouncing the incompetence of the teaching congregations. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello thus considered that "it was not by chance that the epithet '*ignorant*' was added to the name '*brother*'⁵⁴". According to her, the efforts of the women's congregations made since the suppression of the letter of obedience have not been enough to make the nuns capable of teaching, as the book by Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur testifies. And even if the Congregation had sufficient skills to teach, their faith was an obstacle to any liberal teaching worthy of the name: "Doubt is the beginning, the condition of science; yet, among them, doubt is forbidden. But for Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, it is above all in the education of girls that the suppression of congregational teaching is urgent. According to her, for decades, the Republicans have been unwitting accomplices of the congregations. They have been concerned about "men's congregations rather than women's congregations and [have]

49 Maria Verona, "L'éducation populaire", *La Fronde*, 17 August 1901.

50 Odette Laguerre, "L'enseignement de demain", *La Fronde*, 26 October 1902.

51 Odette Laguerre, "Actes nécessaires", *La Fronde*, 9 June 1902.

52 Odette Laguerre, "Le conflit", *La Fronde*, 6 September 1902.

53 André Lanfrey, (preface by Françoise Mayeur), *Les catholiques français et l'école (1902-1914)*, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

54 Paule Branzac [Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello], "La liberté d'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 17 November 1902.

worked towards the secularisation of boys' schools rather than girls' schools⁵⁵ ". Thus, as Jacques and Mona Ozouf noted in their survey of 4,000 teachers, it was "the secularisation of girls' schools [that] was the main fuel for the struggles at the beginning of the century⁵⁶ ". The departure of the female teaching congregations profoundly destabilised the French educational landscape.

D) "There is nothing like experiments outside the official framework to prepare for this reform": praise for free and secular education

The only flaw in the unanimity of the rebels on the secularisation of the school lay in the place to be reserved for free and secular education. While Maria Vérone was determined to see it disappear with the repeal of the Falloux law, and Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello and Odette Laguerre were also in favour of the monopoly, whatever the cost, some of their colleagues were more nuanced. Thus, although very hostile to the Catholic school, Pauline Kergomard defended the existence of free education in the Republic. She was convinced that competition was a ferment of progress, as many free schools had already served as models for public schools: "The Elisa Lemonnier schools serve as a model for professional schools; the Alsatian School served as a field of study for Jules Ferry [...]; finally, great free schools of higher education surround the Sorbonne and maintain its ardour⁵⁷. " The Lemonnier schools, supported in particular by Clarisse Coignet from the end of the Second Empire, appear to be an example rich in lessons for the State. As for the Alsatian school, it is very well known to Pauline Kergomard, who enrolled her two boys there⁵⁸. Created in 1874 by Protestant Alsatian pedagogues who had opted for France, it was secular from the start and quickly became a laboratory for public education. Finally, as far as free and secular higher education institutions are concerned, Pauline Kergomard is probably thinking of the Collège libre des sciences sociales and the École des hautes études sociales, created by Dick May in 1895 and 1900 respectively, in order to set up a teaching system that made the social question an object of scientific study. These two institutions offered courses that had not been available at the University until then and formed a 'little Sorbonne' alongside the big one⁵⁹. To this list of free institutions⁶⁰ The Collège Sévigné, which was a model for girls' high schools, was of course added to this list.

55 Paule Branzac [Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello], "Laïcisons les femmes", *La Fronde*, 4 November 1902.

56 Jacques and Mona Ozouf (with V. Aubert and C. Steindecker), *La République des instituteurs*, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

57 Pauline Kergomard, "Le "monopole" universitaire", *La Fronde*, 20 January 1900.

58 See his article "Through education: elementary primary education. L'école", *La Fronde*, 18 April 1898. On the originality of this school and its boarding school, see Patrick Clastres, "L'internat public au XIX^e siècle: question politique ou pédagogique?", in Pierre Caspard, Jean-Noël Luc, Philippe Savoie (dir.), *Lycées, lycéens, lycéennes, deux siècles d'histoire*, Paris, Institut national de recherche pédagogique, 2005, pp. 397-414.

59 See Mélanie Fabre, *Dick May, une femme à l'avant-garde d'un nouveau siècle: 1859-1925*, *op. cit.*

60 Pauline Kergomard also praised the Monge school at the Second International Congress of Women's Works and Institutions on 21 June 1900: she considered that this school had set an example for the State by entrusting the children's classes of the boys' high school to women.

For the Inspector General, it was necessary to protect the free school and attack the religious congregations at the same time. As early as 1899, she supported the wish of the Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement to expel and dissolve the congregations⁶¹. She also demanded that free school teachers be subject to the same diploma requirements as state employees and that they be obliged to study in a public institution before taking the competitive examination for the teaching profession⁶². However, it is opposed to the solution of a state monopoly.

She was not alone. Several intellectuals on the fringes of public education adopted a stance in favour of freedom of education. Elsie Masson, an intellectual of English origin, who was close to the Union for Moral Action and then to *Pages libres*⁶³In 1905, she published an article in this weekly in which she expressed a libertarian opinion:

We are currently witnessing in France a struggle between the teaching of the Catholic Church and the teaching of the State [...]. Now, not only do we believe that by creating a 'teaching monopoly' the State will not have solved the problem at all, - but we even believe that this starting point is false. [...] The most logical competition for the clerical institutes would be to create others that would be superior to them⁶⁴.

For Elsie Masson, it is not from a state bogged down in its educational traditions that we should expect the pedagogical revolution necessary for the Republic. She criticised the boys' public secondary schools and their compromise with the Church and class society, but recognised that secondary education for women was a greater success, "either because it was younger, more free of 'traditions' [...], or because women put more dedication and less 'functionarianism' into it than men". However, the educational model that Elsie Masson advocated remained, in her opinion, much more within the reach of free and secular education than of the great machine of public instruction. This admirer of Ruskin and Thoreau dreamed of outdoor education, wanted moral, physical, intellectual and manual instruction to be combined, and wanted pupils to be brought up according to the "law of mutual assistance" rather than the competitive model of public schools.

The best example of such an enterprise in free education is L'Avenir social, founded by Madeleine Vernet in 1906 [*biographical note 7, p. 623*]. The latter became known from 1903 onwards through articles published in *Pages libres*⁶⁵. She described the fate of the

61 Pauline Kergomard, 'Physionomie et psychologie générales du XIX^e congrès de la Ligue de l'enseignement', *La Fronde*, 16 November 1899.

62 Pauline Kergomard, 'XIX^e Congrès de la Ligue de l'enseignement', 7 November 1899.

63 See Mélanie Fabre, "Elsie Wright et Émile Masson, deux pédagogues admirateurs de Ruskin entre France et Grande-Bretagne", in Renaud d'Enfert, Frédéric Mole and Marie Vergnon (eds), *Circulations en éducation. Passages, transferts, trajectoires (XIX^e-XXI^e siècle)*, Geneva, Presses universitaires de Genève, 2021, pp. 28-35.

64 Elsie Masson, 'The Ruskin-School Home', *Free Pages*, 4 March 1905.

65 See Madeleine Vernet in *Pages libres*, 'Lettre d'une Cauchoise à un Parisien', 31 October 1903; 'Les bureautins', 2 April 1904; 'Des remèdes', 14 May 1904; 'Une femme dans un village', 29 April 1905; 'Les Bureautins, faits nouveaux', 11 November 1905.

The children of the Assistance, the "bureautins", after her mother, who had recently moved to Normandy, had decided to take in several "bureautines". Sensitive to their situation, Madeleine Vernet pointed out the dysfunctions of their placement in peasant families who sought to make a profit on the pension paid by the Assistance publique. In addition, many children were mistreated, treated as outcasts, beaten and raped. According to her, young boys fare better:

They too were beaten as children, but they became strong nonetheless [...]. Later, they make themselves feared with their fists; and if they become good workers, they can marry an honest working woman and finally create the family they never had. But the "Bureautine" remains the "Bureautine"; - from a bastard she becomes a daughter-mother, and this even seems so natural that the inspectors and officials of the Assistance Service are not at all surprised: the original stain⁶⁶ !

Faced with the outcry over her investigation, Madeleine Vernet was summoned by the departmental inspector of public assistance, who put pressure on her⁶⁷. Madeleine Vernet's mother had her wards withdrawn in reprisal for the articles in *Pages libres*.

Madeleine Vernet then decided to use her own money to set up an orphanage with a free school, first in Neuilly-Plaisance in 1906, before moving to Épône, in the Yvelines, in 1908. She knew that when children from the Assistance system were not sent to families where they were exploited, they were entrusted to Catholic orphanages where they were not well treated. The free initiative should therefore show the way for a care of abandoned children worthy of the Republic. The socialist Marcel Sembat was a great supporter of L'Avenir social. For him, the salvation of France came from this type of initiative, more than from a reform of public education:

The State remains faithful to the prison school type of education for young people, with all its moral and physiological consequences. Madeleine Vernet has a different idea of the school, and I congratulate her. She sees it as a larger family. [...] Everyone talks about reforming primary education. They are quite right. But there is nothing like experiments outside the official frameworks to prepare for this reform⁶⁸.

However, like Cempuis a few years earlier, L'Avenir social was the victim of both administrative harassment and a smear campaign in the press, particularly because Madeleine Vernet and her partner Louis Tribier were living in a common-law relationship. The primary school inspector also sued them because they applied coeducation in their school. Louis Tribier, although he had a bachelor's degree, had his right to teach withdrawn. In Épône, the university administration, in chorus

66 Madeleine Vernet, "Les bureautins", *Pages libres*, 2 April 1904.

67 Madeleine Vernet, "Les Bureautins, faits nouveaux", *Pages libres*, 11 November 1905.

68 Marcel Sembat, preface to Madeleine Vernet, *Cinq années d'expérience éducative, 1906-1911*, Épône, éditions de

l'Avenir social, 1911, 56 p., pp. 6-8.

with the nationalist municipality, was relentless in its opposition to the initiative. Madeleine Vernet therefore asked freethought circles, lodges, human rights activists and trade unions to support her secular and socialist initiative: "Until today, [...] who has thought of creating and organising orphanages, if not clerics of all kinds, supported by the capitalists' purse? These orphanages are therefore in the hands of the rich ruling class, and the education given there can only be favourable to this class⁶⁹". Far from saving the proletariat from the influence of the Church, the 1904 law and Separation set new traps, as Madeleine Vernet explains in the *Annales de la jeunesse laïque* :

At this time when separation is almost an accomplished fact, one thing worries me: what will become of all those poor children whom [...] religious establishments raised under the pretext of charity, but in reality to constitute a powerful weapon for clericalism, and to provide the ruling bourgeois class with the necessary contingent of resigned people of all kinds. [New establishments will arise [...] which will necessarily have a secular appearance, and which will nonetheless continue the work of clericalism. Beguines without horns will be more to be feared than beguines with horns, for how can they be recognised? [...] So that excellent freethinkers, devoted socialists, interested in a disinherited child and contributing among themselves to pay for his pension, will go off in all good faith to throw themselves into the lion's den⁷⁰.

For Madeleine Vernet, the system had to be reformed before limiting the action of the congregations, otherwise the State would remain dependent on clerical initiatives. She presented L'Avenir social as a model to follow, where children were educated without any dogmatic spirit. Madeleine Vernet wanted education not to be the inculcation of obedience but the awakening of a sense of personality. The aim was to train future workers capable of overthrowing the old world. It was supported by a patronage committee which included Ferdinand Buisson, Francis de Pressensé, head of the League of Human Rights, Pierre Renaudel, who represented *L'Humanité*, Léon Vannoz, director of the *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, as well as Marie Bonneval and Nelly Roussel. A socialist, freethinker and feminist, Madeleine Vernet criticised the pitfalls into which public education often fell: it was into the breach opened up by the possibility of free education that she slipped to keep L'Avenir social alive. Like Elsie Masson, Madeleine Vernet was a supporter of secular education in the "war of the two Franks", without supporting any kind of state monopoly, as she deeply believed in a libertarian education, far from the dogmas of the Jules Ferry school.

69 Madeleine Vernet, *Cinq années d'expérience éducative, 1906-1911*, op. cit, pp. 36-46.

70 Madeleine Vernet, "Éducation socialiste et laïque", *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, September 1905.

E) Mobilisation of Catholic women and counter-mobilisation of free-thinking feminists: the school question, a women's issue

Although the Church's discourse was based on the 'right of the father of the family', it was in fact mothers who entered the school battle at the turn of the century, particularly in the ranks of the Ligue patriotique des Françaises, founded in 1902, to which Magali Della Sudda devoted her thesis⁷¹. The law of 1901, by jeopardising the congregations, appeared to be the catalyst for an unprecedented collective mobilisation. At the same time as it hit the congregations, the law offered the laity a legal framework for federating. According to Magali Della Sudda, the Patriotic League "thus represents a case of the reversal of the weapons used by the radicals against the religious"⁷². Doubly marginalised in the Republic as women and as Catholics, the members of the Ligue found in this association a form of collective existence against the feminist groups that were mainly in the camp of the defenders of the secular school. The Ligue patriotique des Françaises was a mass movement: it claimed 300,000 members in 1905 and 545,000 members in 1914⁷³. Christine Bard considers that this represents ten times more members than all the feminist associations that claim to be secular⁷⁴. Its bulletin has a circulation of 50,000 copies⁷⁵ like *La Fronde* at its peak in 1898⁷⁶. The *Bulletin de la Ligue de l'enseignement* reached a maximum circulation of 2,000. Catholics mobilised by emphasising their role as mothers: "The educational mission closely linked to motherhood is politicised during school conflicts."⁷⁷ "The demand for freedom of education appears in the second article of the League's official statutes. The viscountess Marthe de Vélard, president of the association, declared: "it was the soul of the child that was at stake in the struggle... What wonder [that mothers] rose up like lions defending their cubs and were set against those who were making the laws"⁷⁸ ? "

This anti-secular mobilisation is of concern to supporters of the public school. Odette Laguerre, optimistically sees in the actions of Catholic women the triumph of the feminist idea. What she sees as the instrumentalisation of women by the Catholic party is proof that men are beginning to realise the importance of the second sex:

71 This association has a collaborator and competitor, the less powerful Ligue des femmes françaises, which we will not go into. See Magali Della Sudda, *Une activité politique féminine conservatrice, op. cit.*

72 *Ibid.*, p. 62.

73 Magali Della Sudda, *A conservative female political activity, op. cit.* p. 20.

74 Christine Bard, "Les antiféminismes de la première vague", in Christine Bard (ed.), (preface by Michelle Perrot), *Un siècle d'antiféminisme, op. cit.*, p. 41-67.

75 Magali Della Sudda, *Une activité politique féminine conservatrice, op. cit.*, p. 67.

76 According to Mary Louise Roberts, "Subversive copying: Feminist journalism in France at the end of the last century", *Clio. Histoire' femmes et sociétés* [Online], n°6 | 1997, online 01 January 2005, accessed 28 June 2020. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/cli0/390>. Jean Rabaut speaks of 49,000 copies in March 1898 and less than 15,000 at the end of 1899. See Jean Rabaut, (preface by Madeleine Rebérioux), *Marguerite Durand, op. cit.*, p. 79.

77 Magali Della Sudda, *Une activité politique féminine conservatrice, op. cit.*, p. 51.

78 Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 84.

However petty the interests they defend may be, it forces them to think in unusual ways, it takes them out of their rags and their chatter, it starts very badly, but finally it begins their civic education. [...] Whatever the devious intentions and self-interested calculations of the false friends of women [...] they are in fact working, more than they think, for her emancipation. She will one day escape from them and turn against them to join those who sincerely want her emancipation, which is indispensable for the emancipation of humanity⁷⁹.

While the massive mobilisation of women on the right of the political spectrum convinced the radicals of the need to keep them out of politics in order to save the regime, Odette Laguerre interpreted their action in the 1902 elections as an argument in favour of the secularisation of girls' schools and, ultimately, in favour of women's suffrage:

We believe that the victories of the opposition were due, for the most part, to female propaganda. [Our republicanism is saddened by this; but our feminism seizes upon it to demonstrate once again the need to emancipate women and to educate them philosophically, socially and politically. [Until she is freed from the yoke of the Church, do not expect to fight victoriously against the powers of reaction. And as long as it is not a citizen, do not hope to form free citizens. All that you do through the school or the Lycée will be destroyed by the family if the woman is not the auxiliary of your work⁸⁰.

Odette Laguerre does not exaggerate the role that Catholic women played in the 1902 election campaign, where freedom of education was central⁸¹. The Ligue patriotique des Françaises acted as an electoral committee, providing funds to finance the campaign of "good candidates⁸²". Unlike the frondeuses, the women of the Ligue patriotique mobilised significant economic capital: the executives came from high society and set up repertoires of action that were very different from those of the republican women. Louise Debor mocked these women for coming out of their salons: the former lady of charity had become "Electoral officer⁸³". She "puts her white patrician hand to the dough - and what a dough! - her white patrician hand. She "does politics" with the approval of the pontiffs. We see her begging for big money to pay for pamphlets, posters, 'tours' and bribes". Under the pen of the freethinkers, Catholic women crystallise the excesses of politicians: corruption and nepotism.

79 Odette Laguerre, "En marche", *La Fronde*, 22 March 1902.

80 Odette Laguerre, "L'action féminine", *La Fronde*, 3 May 1902.

81 Mona Ozouf, *L'école, l'Église et la République*, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

82 Magali Della Sudda, *Une activité politique féminine conservatrice*, *op. cit.* p. 116.

83 Louise Debor, 'Éducation civique', *La Fronde*, 11 April 1902.

The 1902 elections brought the Bloc des gauches to power, signalled the defeat of the right and paved the way for Separation. As Bruno Dumons explains, this episode convinced the leaders of the Patriotic League "to move away from the path of 'politics first'⁸⁴". The members became involved in social action. It was not until 1924, with the episode of the Cartel, that the Catholic women's leagues again took the path of politicisation.

Among the intellectuals involved on the side of the secular republic, without foreseeing that the beginning of the XX^e century would see such a mobilisation of Catholic women, Pauline Kergomard published on 31 December 1899 in *La Fronde* a call for women's commitment:

What seems to us to characterise the year which is drawing to a close is the very clear impression it will leave us of the peril we are threatened with, if the authoritarianism of the congregations prevails over freedom of thought. [We want to know how the fight against an enemy now unmasked will be waged. Will women be included or not in the army charged with defeating it⁸⁵ ?

Are the ranks of the Republicans condemned to be male? Is the place of women eternally on the side of the reaction? In 1911, Albertine Eidenschenk drew a bitter conclusion:

Only those who obey a watchword from the Church know how to group together to act [...] against progress [...]. Women's groups with a secular spirit exist; but how many women do they influence? The country which does not ignore the Patriotic League of French Women, does not know the National Council of Women⁸⁶.

Albertine Eidenschenk paints a rather dark picture. If the law of 1901, the legislative elections of 1902, the Separation of 1905 and the textbook war of 1908-1909 led to an unprecedented mobilisation of women in the Catholic ranks, the intellectuals of the freethinking tendency, while not leading a mass movement, also became involved and gained visibility. Thus, at the same time, the Dreyfus affair stimulated the dynamism of freethinking groups, which came together in the *Fédération des jeunesses laïques* in November 1902. This was the largest left-wing youth organisation at the time, with 15,000 members on the eve of the war⁸⁷. At the end of 1901, Clémence Royer, who was present at the birth of this organisation, declared:

84 Bruno Dumons, "Résistances des ligues féminines catholiques à l'idée laïque", in Florence Rochefort, (ed.), *Le pouvoir du genre*, op. cit, p. 83-97.

85 Pauline Kergomard, "Un programme de travail pour 1900", *La Fronde*, 31 December 1899.

86 Albertine Eidenschenk, "Notre œuvre doit-elle être autre chose que celle de M. Pécaut", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1911.

87 See Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, op. cit, p. 167.

Why leave women out of their groups? Why not open their ranks to the secular female youth, to the pupils of our girls' high schools and our primary schools? Do they want to repeat the fault of the revolutionary generation which, by leaving women out of its action [...], aborted the revolution⁸⁸ ?

True to the editorial line of *La Fronde*, Clémence Royer points to the original sin of republican culture: the ousting of women. But at the beginning of the XX^e century, the frondeuses force their way into the new association. Andrée Téry, who covered the Congrès de la jeunesse laïque in 1902⁸⁹ joined the editorial team of the *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*. She collaborated with her husband Gustave Téry, but also with Alphonse Aulard, Ferdinand Buisson, René Viviani, Anatole France, Gustave Hervé and many feminists, including Pauline Kergomard and Véra Starkoff.⁹⁰ Among the contributors to the bulletin were Madeleine Vernet, Marie Bonneval and Louise Renard. But it was Odette Laguerre who was the leading feminist in the *Annales*.

In 1904, she published a fictional work entitled "Between Mothers" in which she confronts the life choices of two former boarding school friends, one Catholic, the other free-thinking. The latter refuses to prepare her daughter for her first communion. But what is a girl raised away from the Church worth on the marriage market? She will not find her place in good society...

But fortunately there is another society: that of the intellectuals [...] who represent the future, the emancipated human race. Their number, still small, is growing every day. It is up to us to increase their numbers by courageously joining their small vanguard, instead of cowardly following in the footsteps of our adversaries⁹¹.

Odette Laguerre claimed her place among the republican intellectuals. From 1905 onwards, she wrote the feminist column that opened in the magazine. For her, feminism and freethought go hand in hand: "[T]he alliance of rationalism and feminism seems to me logical, solid and fruitful, just as that of feminism and Catholicism seems to me abnormal, artificial and vain⁹²". When in 1903, the contributor to the *Journal des femmes* Camille Bélilon accused Odette Laguerre of subordinating feminism to party interests, the latter defended herself in *La Fronde*: feminism cannot remain neutral in the face of social issues. It can only be free-thinking, since all religions have encouraged the submission of the wife to the husband. Odette Laguerre paraphrases her friend Nelly Roussel: "between the Church and the Revolt, you have to choose⁹³". Similarly, for

88 Clémence Royer, "La jeunesse laïque", *La Fronde*, 31 December 1901.

89 Andrée Téry, "La jeunesse laïque", *La Fronde*, 15 November 1902.

90 Composition of the honorary committee in September 1906, *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, n°52.

91 Odette Laguerre, "Entre mamans", *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, February 1904.

92 Odette Laguerre, "Libre pensée et féminisme", *La Fronde*, 25 September 1902.

93 Odette Laguerre, "Le féminisme et les grands problèmes actuels", *La Fronde*, 25 May 1903.

A feminist worthy of the name can only demand the economic emancipation of women and therefore adhere to socialism.

In 1882, Hubertine Auclert declared that in the face of the orthodoxy of a masculinist free thought, she preferred free thought⁹⁴. Is the freethought of the early XX^e century just as misogynistic? Odette Laguerre is rather optimistic when she reports for *La Fronde* on the International Congress of Freethought held in Geneva in 1902. She underlines the considerable importance of feminist issues and the "almost unanimous support [...] given to most [of the] demands⁹⁵". The congress was attended by Maria Pognon, Véra Starkoff, Maria Vérone and Andrée Téry. The latter considered that one of the priorities of the movement should be to attract women: if they frequented the Church so much, it was because the mass was the only social act they were allowed to do⁹⁶. It is therefore necessary, outside the Church, to offer women homes for social life. The congress also validated Andrée Téry's report, which called for the same secular and rationalist education for both sexes. For it was around the education of girls that the conflicts crystallised. In 1902, Andrée Téry responded to the attack by the socialist Albert Surier, who considered that there was nothing to expect from female teachers because they were "clerical". The rebel protested:

When men decide to proclaim the emancipation of this slave, [...] when they raise her up materially, morally and intellectually, then, but only then, will they have the right to call her to account for her errors and failings. Until then, they have only one right, that of beating their chests⁹⁷.

The frondeuses are part of an 'advanced' republicanism and court the socialist and freethinking movement. They seek to have their legitimacy recognised in these militant spaces. While they showed unwavering loyalty to the republican left, they also pointed out the failings, and even betrayals, of their political friends with regard to the integration of women into the republican struggle.

F) Exit, voice or loyalty? Women intellectuals between loyalty to the regime and criticism of its masculinism

Secular school activists took up the Republic's anticlerical rhetoric. As Émile Poulat wrote, before 1914, anticlericalism was "the surest criterion of the republican spirit"⁹⁸ "This was the surest way for Republican women to be integrated into a male political family. However, female intellectuals of free-thinking tendencies were reluctant to

94 Quoted in Laurence Klejman, Florence Rochefort (preface by Michelle Perrot), *L'Égalité en marche, op. cit.*, p. 63.

95 Odette Laguerre, "Libre pensée et féminisme", *La Fronde*, 25 September 1902.

96 Odette Laguerre, "Fêtes laïques", *La Fronde*, 6 November 1902.

97 Andrée Téry, "Cléricales, les institutrices?", *La Fronde*, 20 November 1902.

The aim of these women intellectuals is to break down Republican unanimity and to highlight the inconsistencies of their male allies on the issue of women. Freely using the triptych elaborated by the economist Albert Hirschmann in 1970, we can say that these women intellectuals have the choice between three options when they come into conflict with the official representatives of the Republican culture: *exit*, *voice* and *loyalty*⁹⁹. They think of themselves as republicans first and foremost, and therefore cannot seriously consider defecting from the regime. In reality, they constantly navigate between loyalty to the Republic and criticism of the Republicans. The texts they published were symptomatic of this ambivalence, which was to have a long future. When in 1922 the Senate rejected the law giving women the right to vote, did Maria Verona not shout from the gallery, "Long live the Republic!"¹⁰⁰ ?

The discussions in *La Fronde* about the 1904 law crystallise this hesitation between criticism and loyalty. While welcoming this radical measure, many intellectuals denounced the delay in secularising girls' state schools, which had been provided for by the Goblet law since 1886. In 1902, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello called for the secularisation of girls' primary schools without delay, "by application of a law passed sixteen years ago!"¹⁰¹ ". She highlights the double discourse of the republicans, paragons of the emancipation of the individual, but incapable of applying their precepts to their wives and daughters. Writing under a pseudonym, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello adopts a particularly virulent tone against the deputies or her own administration.

Albertine Eidenschenk did the same in her own name. In 1904 and 1905, she criticised the republicans while, according to Mona Ozouf, "the press gave the religious and school problems a place they never had, even at the time of the secular legislation [of the 1880s]."¹⁰² ". Albertine Eidenschenk welcomes the Republic's educational work, but adds:

In spite of the efforts of a few highly intelligent men [...] who saw in women a human being worthy of being developed for her own sake, prejudices [...] have prevented the Republic from doing her justice. [...] In the application of school laws, [there has been] a fear of freeing women's minds too much from traditional tutelage. The law [of] 1886 prescribed that all boys' public schools should be secularised within five years; for girls' schools, the administration was given complete freedom. So we see that after eighteen years and after the great effort of the last two years there were still [...] about fifteen hundred public girls' schools to be secularised. What is the hurry? Do women count in the State? And if a man prides himself on thinking freely, there is a spirit of submission that one likes to find in his wife, as in his children, his servants or his workers. So it is not bad that

99 Albert O. Hirschmann uses this framework in a completely different context. On the initial meaning of his economic thinking, see Olivier Daudé, "Exit, Voice and Loyalty", *Regard croisés sur l'économie*, n°2, 2007, p. 244.

100 Christine Bard, *Les filles de Marianne*, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

101 Paule Branzac, "Laïcisons les Femmes", *La Fronde*, 4 November 1902.

102 Mona Ozouf, *L'école, l'Église et la République*, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

the ancient disciplines which perpetuate this spirit of submission, retain a place in the education of the people and of women in particular¹⁰³.

Albertine Eidenschenk's conclusion shows that, in her view, feminism, socialism and free thought are interdependent: it is in the interest of the bourgeois and male republic to instil a spirit of submission in the working classes and women by maintaining the action of the congregations. Although deeply republican, Albertine Eidenschenk was not fooled by the fact that the authorities defended class and gender interests, which she saw as antithetical to the general interest:

Almost all the men who have had to speak in official circumstances about the need to educate women have proclaimed *urbi et orbi* that the Republic did not want to make *women scholars* but wives and mothers capable of better fulfilling their particular duties. [...] Do they not deserve the reproach that Mme Necker de Saussure addressed to men around 1830: "When they have deigned to concern themselves with the education of women, they have always given themselves over to personal thoughts"?¹⁰⁴ ?

Secular school activists were not content to point to the complacency of the Republicans in the delay in secularising girls' primary schools. Pauline Kergomard reminded us in 1900 that, unlike the so-called "Godless" primary school, male secondary education had chaplains and services for boarders within its walls¹⁰⁵. If the boys' lycées, created under Napoleon I, were secularised in the 1880s - imperfectly, it seems - the girls' lycées do not have the same past: they are the products of the secular Republic¹⁰⁶. But in the eyes of the frondeuses, the girls' lycées were far from fulfilling their promises. Harlor quotes a letter from a former pupil in 1901 who explains that her teachers never encouraged her to deny the God of her childhood, but that while they cleared her mind of certain credulities, they taught her that scepticism "removes from the forehead of the young wife the halo of charm and faith which are the delight of the family home¹⁰⁷". Harlor commented on this letter in an article she entitled 'Secular Education and its Religious Work'. She considers secondary education for girls to be a betrayal, since it succeeds in making "the republican idea, the fear of the

103 Albertine Eidenschenk, "La femme française et la République", *La Femme nouvelle*, January 1905; on the same theme, see also "La femme nouvelle - culture morale", *La Femme nouvelle*, April 1904.

104 Albertine Eidenschenk, "La femme française et la République", *La Femme nouvelle*, January 1905.

105 Pauline Kergomard, "Le "monopole universitaire"", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} February 1900.

106 The differences between girls' and boys' secondary schools were not as glaring as Pauline Kergomard claimed, as a decree by Paul Bert (24 December 1881) brought the male secondary schools into line with the female ones in terms of secularism. The big difference lies in the existence of chapels within the male boarding schools. See Jean-Luc Marais, "L'aumônier des lycées (1802-1959), cheval de Troie de l'Église dans l'Université?", in Pierre Caspard, Jean-Noël Luc, Philippe Savoie (dir.), *Lycées, lycéens, lycéennes*, op. cit., p. 99-116.

107 Quoted in Harlor [Jeanne Perrot], "L'enseignement laïque et son œuvre religieuse", *La Fronde*, 28 August 1901. Daughter of the feminist Amélie Hammer, Harlor began her career as a journalist and art critic in *La Fronde* when she was in her early thirties. She was the companion of the feminist Léopold Lacour.

Lord and scientific notions'. How could it be otherwise, since the teachers in these schools have themselves received - at Sèvres in particular - this education of compromise that Harlor describes as "mental cowardice"? The slinger's conclusion is bitter:

"If, indeed [...] the emancipation of intelligence is what this correspondent expresses, the Republic should not congratulate itself on its alleged courage in favour of women.

It is true that many teachers were afraid of offending the religious convictions of their students. The former Sevrier Marguerite Aron adopted an attitude of compromise that was shared by many of her colleagues¹⁰⁸. In an article published in the *Camille Sée* review in 1908, she was wary of anything that might turn high schools into free-thinking seminaries:

"Without falling back on the routine yoke from which we have been freed, let us be afraid of going to the opposite excess¹⁰⁹". She constantly calls for "keeping to the middle of the extremes". It was this timidity that Miss E. Rousson, a teacher, attacked in 1907. Rousson, a secondary school teacher, attacked this timidity at the Gard Secular Youth Congress. Representing the advocates of a more offensive secularism, she wrote a text with feminist and free-thinking overtones. According to her, if the aim of high school was "the emancipation of women", it should above all "destroy the *faculty of belief* in them, leaving them only the possibility of *being convinced*¹¹⁰". According to her, female teachers are restricting themselves in their approach to religious issues. She therefore calls for the creation of a course in the history of religions, which would be

"The only way to destroy all clericalism for ever". She also considered that as long as the public school did not truly undertake the "liberation" of women, "we will achieve nothing, and men themselves will be constantly stopped in their march forward". On the eve of the Great War, her proposal to introduce a course in the history of religion was not acted upon. In January 1914, Miss J. Vaudouer even recalled in the *Camille Sée* review that "the fifth paragraph of the Practical Morality programme is entitled *Religious duties*; it includes the *Role of religious feeling in morality; future life and God*¹¹¹". These are all compromises with the secular spirit. The teacher states: "After that, could one, without bias, accuse this programme of having banished religious and spiritualist ideas, and will some not reproach it, on the contrary, for having given these ideas too much space?"

G) "Secularising the secular: the question of the state monopoly in the training and recruitment of women teachers

As the laws of 1901 and 1904 were being prepared, attention turned to the teachers, who, more than the students, were accused of being "pious" secularists. Secular, because they

108 Jacques and Mona Ozouf also conclude that this neutrality is present in primary schools (*La République des instituteurs, op. cit.*).

109 M. A. [Marguerite Aron], "Compte rendu de *L'Éducation intellectuelle et morale*, par G. Compayré", *Secondary education for girls*, July 1908.

110 Miss E. Rousson, "L'éducation de la femme, rapport présenté au Congrès des jeunesses laïques", *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, September 1907.

111 Miss J. Vaudouer, "L'enseignement de la morale dans les lycées de jeunes filles", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, January 1914.

do not belong to any congregation, but are pious, because they have been educated by nuns in convents or in denominational schools¹¹². Albertine Eidenschenk addressed this problem in three articles published in *L'École nouvelle* in 1900. According to her, if some of the female staff were not up to the task, it was because the republicans had abandoned the normal schools, which only trained a minority of future female teachers. Based on official ministry documents, Albertine Eidenschenk highlights the declining numbers in the teacher training colleges since the 'esprit nouveau' policy in the 1890s:

It is not for administrative or pedagogical reasons that the number of students has been reduced everywhere. The truth is that we have been forced to comply with the wish, repeatedly expressed by Parliament, that savings be made in the chapter on teacher training colleges. [...] These savings are the kind of savings that the Republic should be afraid of¹¹³.

The budgetary policy of reducing the number of places in the teacher training colleges resulted in the entry into the teaching profession of more and more young girls who had been educated in denominational schools where they had prepared for the elementary or higher certificate. According to Albertine Eidenschenk, these teachers were less well trained than the normal girls and, above all, had little secular spirit. Albertine Eidenschenk's criticism conforms to the republican discourse that had already been mobilised in the 1880s. Jean-François Condette recalls its content: "Republican historiography, in order to justify the policy of secularisation and the imposition of the Normalien framework in 1879, placed great emphasis on the poor training received by women teachers in these courses [in the hands of the congregations], which were primarily concerned with religious training¹¹⁴". Rebecca Rogers shares this observation: "with the stiffening of the school war, [...] women became more and more an issue. [...] For the Republicans, ... it is a matter of secularising education *and* the teaching staff, the latter measure having a much greater impact on girls than on boys¹¹⁵".

Twenty years after the Bert Law, Albertine Eidenschenk accuses legislators of betraying the legacy of the school laws by allowing nuns to compete with normal schools. Thus, according to her, budgetary restrictions in the normal schools led to the slowing down of the secularisation of schools that had begun after the Goblet law. The author uses the Ministry's figures: for

112 According to Françoise Mayeur, boarding schools were called "convents" when they were run by nuns: the use of this term by freethinkers therefore often covered any instruction in a denominational setting ("Towards a Catholic secondary education for young girls at the beginning of the XX^e century", art. cit.).

113 A teacher training college director [Albertine Eidenschenk], "La question des écoles normales", *L'École nouvelle*, 16 June 1900.

114 Jean-François Condette, "De la foi catholique à la "foi laïque". La religion dans la formation des instituteurs et des institutrices du département du Nord (1834-1914)", in Jean-François Condette (ed.), *Éducation, religion, laïcité, op. cit.*

115 Rebecca Rogers, "La place de la religion dans la formation des enseignantes religieuses et laïques en France avant les années 1880", in Jean-François Condette (ed.), *Éducation, religion, laïcité, op. cit.*

In the second half of 1887 alone, 42 girls' schools were secularised, whereas there were only 27 secularisations in 1896, 20 in 1897, 26 in 1898 and 15 in 1899, and there were still more than 5,000 nuns in state schools at that time¹¹⁶. Albertine Eidenschenk denounced the effects of the policy of the new spirit launched by Eugène Spuller in 1894 in response to the rallying of Catholics¹¹⁷. This period began with the Casimir-Périer ministry at the end of 1893 and ended with the resignation of Jules Méline as President of the Council in June 1898. During these four years, the government, dominated by moderates, abandoned the policy of hostility to the Church that had marked the 1880s.

The climate of the Dreyfus Affair completely calls into question the decisions taken during this period. Albertine Eidenschenk, for example, welcomed the increase in the budget for teacher training colleges in 1901, voted in 1900¹¹⁸. She went further: she wanted the normal schools to be able to recruit all the primary school staff from now on¹¹⁹. Public education should stop offering posts to people leaving convents and free schools, often with only an elementary certificate. Not only is this diploma intellectually insufficient, but these teachers are the antithesis of the republican teacher defined by Pécaut:

[They are not used to reflection, to personal judgement! [...] We ask ourselves if these are the teachers that are needed for the children of France, at a time of crisis from which we will emerge only by dint of intelligence, energy and moral value. [...] What must be formed above all in the child is character and conscience. [Now,] one cannot awaken consciences if one is not a living conscience; one will be unable to teach others to behave if one does not have unshakeable principles of conduct, founded in reason. [...] Men are needed for this work, and especially women. We beg you to pay the price¹²⁰.

When Albertine Eidenschenk demanded a monopoly on the training of female teachers by the normal schools, she did so not only against the denominational schools, but also against the lycées, a large proportion of whose pupils graduated with a higher diploma and thus competed with the normal women. Although the lycée girls had a solid general culture, they had not acquired the teaching methods taught at the Ecole Normale and were not imbued with the 'primary spirit' that the teachers at the Ecole Normale had retained from Fontenay. For Albertine Eidenschenk, only the normal schools would train primary staff with dignity.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello followed Albertine Eidenschenk's lead and launched a debate in *La Fronde* from 1902 onwards with a series entitled 'La nomination des institutrices'. For her, if

116 A headmistress of a teacher training college, "La question des écoles normales", *L'École nouvelle*, 23 June 1900.

117 The term "new spirit" was established in his speech to the Chamber on 3 March 1894.

118 A headmistress of a teacher training college, "La question des écoles normales", *L'École nouvelle*, 16 June 1900.

119 A headmistress of a teacher training college, "La question des écoles normales", *L'École nouvelle*, 7 July 1900.

120 A headmistress of a teacher training college, "La question des écoles normales", *L'École nouvelle*, 23 June 1900.

the government's objective is to secularise the school, it must first review the method of appointing female teachers. In particular, she attacked the academy inspectors, who had sovereignty over the appointment of female teachers, and who often preferred female teachers with a degree who were "secular only in costume"¹²¹. With the same rigour as Albertine Eidenschenk in the use of administrative sources, the director of the Lycée de Lyon recalls that it took no less than three ministerial circulars between 1888 and 1897 to decide that the inspectors should give priority to appointing female teachers¹²². This did not prevent many inspectors from allocating the best posts to well-recommended candidates from Congregational establishments.

Moreover, like Albertine Eidenschenk, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello protested against the reduction in the budget of the écoles normales in the 1890s. When schools created exclusively to train women teachers only provided a quarter or a third of the teaching staff, how can it be surprising that neutrality was not respected in girls' schools? According to Marcel Grandière, in 1911, the normal schools only trained one out of two lay teachers - the situation was worse for women teachers - which led to an overall decline in the quality of the staff¹²³. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello blamed the political staff in no uncertain terms:

I do not see, moreover, how men - who make the laws and who are so much more reasonable than women - reconcile the following antinomies: On the one hand, they multiply the precautions to have excellent women teachers, they choose them from the competition [...]. Once they are admitted to a teacher training college, they are accustomed, for three years, to working reflectively, their critical sense is awakened, their minds are opened to all sorts of subjects, they are trained to observe the child's soul, to teach [...] and, on the other hand, it is left to the Inspector of the Academy to take the other teachers anywhere, without any professional preparation¹²⁴ !

To limit this arbitrariness, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello demanded that the inspector be obliged to choose new teachers from a list drawn up by the departmental council. She also proposed raising the age limit for appointment to 19 years, considering that holders of the elementary certificate appointed at 17 years of age benefited from unfair recruitment conditions compared to the student teachers who did not leave the normal school until two or three years later. In addition to the undeserved advantage enjoyed by the mere 'brevetées', they are not,

121 Paule Branzac, "La nomination des institutrices", *La Fronde*, 5 November 1902.

122 See, for example, the *Manuel général de l'Instruction publique* of 11 August 1888, which reproduces the circular letter to prefects signed by Édouard Lockroy (Minister). He mentions 'a serious defect in the method of recruiting teaching staff: [...] it happens [...] that the inspector of the academy delegates as trainees and that the prefect then appoints as full teachers teachers who not only do not have the higher diploma, but who have not even been to a teacher training college'. The Minister imposed that the normaliens be appointed as a priority.

See also, dated 1^{er} June 1897, Alfred Rambaud's circular prescribing the appointment of trainee teachers in preference to other applicants, male and female student teachers graduating from primary teacher training colleges.

123 Marcel Grandière, *La formation des maîtres en France: 1792-1914*, Lyon, INRP, 2006.

124 Paule Branzac, "La nomination des institutrices", *La Fronde*, 9 November 1902.

according to Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, mature enough to manage a class. Like Albertine Eidenschenk, the headmistress of the Lyons high school called for the higher diploma to be the examination required to enter the profession. Similarly, she felt that "no one should be put in charge of a class without having learned the profession of teacher in the Écoles Normales created for this sole purpose. To this end, she proposed the creation of one-year scholarships in the Écoles Normales for female applicants for a job as a teacher: this was a reworking of the school internship project proposed by Minister Leygues as part of the reform of male secondary education.

Although the proposals of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello and Albertine Eidenschenk are part of the same dynamic, they are not unanimously supported by feminists. Maria Vérone considers that "If we really want to 'secularise the secular', we have to start with the head¹²⁵". She deplored the mediocrity of the republican convictions of the administration of public education and considered that the problem did not come from the field staff, but from its hierarchy. Louise Debor took the same line, considering that if many teachers fought the Congregationalist competition with clerical overbidding, it was because the inspector took into account, in the extreme, the "The state of mind of the people¹²⁶" and hesitates to support teachers who are too "secular".

Maria Vérone also attacked Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's proposal to make it compulsory for all trainee teachers in the department to attend a teacher training college. She asserted that "the teacher training colleges do not have a monopoly on the secular spirit, they are far from it¹²⁷" and that in many of them, routine reigned supreme: many were still "prison boarding schools". The controversy was launched and much ink was spilled. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello replied to Maria Vérone that the normal schools she described were an exception. Most of these institutions were run by "teachers who had graduated from the secular school of Fontenay, [who] developed in these future teachers the habit of reflection rather than the habit of submission¹²⁸". The headmistress of the Lycée de Lyon could not tolerate the presentation of the Congregational schools and the normal schools as two sides of the same coin. But prejudice against the normal schools continued after the publication of an investigation against these institutions by the free-thinking newspaper *La Raison*. As a result, Odette Laguerre deplored the fact that the girls' normal schools were not sufficiently free¹²⁹. This time it was a former Fontenay resident, Rachel Albert, who had already defended Fontenay and Pécaut against Vogüé a few years earlier, who sought to restore the image of the normal schools in the feminist daily.

According to her, the bad reputation of teacher training colleges stems from their compulsory boarding, which makes them closed schools, "as if they were secular convents¹³⁰". But

125 Maria Verona, "La nomination des institutrices", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} December 1902.

126 Louise Debor, "Les institutrices et le devoir laïque", *La Fronde*, 12 December 1902.

127 Maria Verona, "La nomination des institutrices", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} December 1902.

128 Paule Branzac, "La nomination des institutrices", *La Fronde*, 9 December 1902.

129 Odette Laguerre, "Institutrices laïques", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} October 1903 "Par l'école", 19 November 1903.

130 Rachel Albert, "L'enseignement dans les écoles normales d'institutrices", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} December 1903.

Contrary to what Maria Vérone and Odette Laguerre believe, there are no more *ex cathedra* courses, no more rote learning. The teacher training colleges are at the cutting edge of pedagogy. As far as religious issues are concerned, Rachel Albert points out that the vast majority of the staff are non-practising, and that in her 15-year career she has never seen the slightest discrimination against free-thinking pupils: the cases mentioned in *La Raison* are isolated examples. Faced with this plea for normal schools, Odette Laguerre carried out her own investigation: she studied the official programmes, obtained notebooks from teacher-pupils, questioned normal women and primary inspectors, and visited the normal school in Chambéry. She recognised that her attacks were partly unfounded, but did not regret her words, believing that she had "caused a salutary agitation"¹³¹. Are the letters she received from the staff of the teacher training colleges not proof that "they sometimes read the *Fronde* and that they were interested in the movement of ideas"? Odette Laguerre finally paints a laudatory picture of the écoles normales¹³². However, she advised the headmistresses to be more daring and to encourage future teachers to read the press:

I claim that what prolongs the intellectual and social inferiority of women [...] is not knowing how to read the newspaper. [...] It is no exaggeration to say that any woman who can read the newspaper is an emancipated woman. [...] I see in it a school of criticism and judgement; [...] a course in contemporary history¹³³. [...] Who will enlighten the brain of the common woman, the worker, the peasant? [...] Who, if not the lay teacher? [...] By her alone, [...] the last cable [...] that still holds quivering humanity to the ancient shore will be cut¹³⁴.

The social role that feminists recognised in the teacher explains the importance of the question of their training in *La Fronde*. Convinced by her investigation, Odette Laguerre finally rallied to the proposals of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello and Albertine Eidenschenk: she went so far as to support the idea of a monopoly of normal schools in the training of women teachers¹³⁵. However, this measure was never implemented: many primary school teachers continued to be trained outside the normal schools, despite the insistence of Albertine Eidenschenk, who declared in 1906 that these institutions were the only "true citadels of the secular and democratic spirit"¹³⁶. She also recalled that "the destiny of the Écoles normales in our country has been intimately linked to that of liberal and democratic ideas; when the latter are eclipsed, their vitality is affected. The attitude of the political world towards these institutions would be a barometer of the democratic health of the country.

131 Odette Laguerre, "Les écoles normales d'institutrices", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} February 1904.

132 Odette Laguerre, "Les écoles normales d'institutrices", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} May 1904.

133 Odette Laguerre, "Les écoles normales d'institutrices", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} April 1904.

134 Odette Laguerre, "Institutrices laïques", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} October 1903.

135 Odette Laguerre, "Portrait de femme : Mme Eidenschenk", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} July 1904.

136 Albertine Eidenschenk, "Les écoles normales et le projet de M. Massé", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1906.

II- Reconfiguration of free secondary education: the emergence of a new generation of Catholic intellectuals?

At the beginning of the XX^e century, intellectual women of free-thinking tendencies participated in the construction of a republican historiography that made secular education the only possible path to progress for women. They condemned Catholicism for its archaism with one voice. But in their synthesis on the secondary education of girls in the Western world, James C. Albisetti, Joyce Goodman, and the author of the book "The History of Women in the West". Albisetti, Joyce Goodman and Rebecca Rogers disagree with this reading:

"The complexity of national studies should warn us against the temptation to associate [...] conservatism with Catholicism¹³⁷". André Lanfrey, a specialist in Catholic schools, follows the same line: "We will combat the received idea that the free school was the natural support of social, political and religious conservatism and we will undertake to show that it was one of the great undertakings of renovation of Catholicism¹³⁸". Does this observation apply to the free secondary school for women, which emerged bloodless from the 1904 law that removed the right of nuns to teach?

The period from 1904 to 1914 marked a profound change in the structures of denominational education for girls. By removing the teaching congregations from the educational landscape, the 1904 law opened the way for lay Catholic women to speak out¹³⁹ on educational issues. Madeleine Daniélou was presented by the Viscountess of Adhemar as the continuation of Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur's project¹⁴⁰. Paradoxically, therefore, the Combine laws provided the conditions for the emergence of legitimate intellectuals in the Catholic ranks. These women defended a new image of the Catholic woman, cultivated and educated. However, as Sylvie Fayet-Scribe writes, these women are often forgotten by history: "feminism, [...] instinctively hostile to anything that smacks of reaction¹⁴¹" has long denigrated their action. And yet, Catholicism at the beginning of the XX^e century appears in many respects as "a fantastic reservoir of feminine energies¹⁴²".

The main source mobilised here to analyse this pivotal decade for women's free secondary education is the *Bulletin de la SGEE*, whose ideological line changes radically between the end of the XIX^e century and the eve of the Great War. This journal appears to be an observatory of the debates on female education and of the gradual emergence of a female voice, which was very difficult to discern in Catholic intellectual circles before 1904. This source

137 James C. Albisetti, Joyce Goodman, Rebecca Rogers, "Girls' Secondary Education in the Western World: A Historical Introduction", in James C. Albisetti, Joyce Goodman, and Rebecca Rogers (eds.), *Girls' secondary education in the Western World: from the 18th to the 20th century*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, pp. 1-8. ("The complexity of these national studies should caution us to associate [...] conservatism with Catholicism.)

138 André Lanfrey, (preface by Françoise Mayeur), *Les catholiques français et l'école (1902-1914)*, op. cit., p. 9.

139 "Lay" is understood here as not belonging to a religious congregation.

140 The Viscountess of Adhemar devotes a chapter to Madeleine Daniélou, entitled "Dix ans après". See *Une religieuse réformatrice : la Mère Marie du Sacré-Cœur*, Paris, Bloud, 1909, 440 p.

141 Sylvie Fayet-Scribe, (preface by Émile Poulat), *Associations féminines et catholicisme - De la charité à l'action sociale, XIX^e-XX^e siècle*, op. cit., p. 8.

also makes it possible to get around one of the difficulties pointed out by Antoine Prost: "While the collections kept in the National Archives make it possible to follow public education in a globally coherent way, the history of private establishments involves a sort of treasure hunt: the search for congregational archives scattered throughout France¹⁴³". The *Bulletin de la SGEE* and additional Catholic sources will allow us to continue Henri Peretz's work on free secondary education for women during the Belle Époque, which had been left untouched until then¹⁴⁴.

A) Comparative analysis of women's contributions to the *Revue pédagogique* and the *Bulletin de la Société générale d'éducation et d'enseignement*

In reaction to the Combit laws, several Catholic women's groups were created at the beginning of the XX^e century, including the Ligue des femmes françaises, the Ligue patriotique des Françaises and Action sociale de la femme. In 1913, Jeanne Chenu, secretary general of the last association, drew up a balance sheet: women had assisted the committees of fathers in their daily supervision of public schools, in the organisation of after-school works and in the foundation of Catholic normal schools after the expulsion of the congregations. According to her, "thanks to the events [...], women have really become the companions of men in the school struggle¹⁴⁵". But are women treated as equals by their male colleagues? Can they make their own voice heard when they enter Catholic intellectual circles?

In order to try and answer these questions, we have undertaken a statistical analysis of women's contributions to two competing journals dedicated to school issues, the *Revue pédagogique* and the *Bulletin de la SGEE*. This approach gives some clues as to the place reserved for women's voices among the defenders of the secular school and in Catholic circles. The *Bulletin de la SGEE* and the *Revue pédagogique* both publish an average of 60 to 80 articles per year (excluding book reviews and bibliography), which makes them comparable quantitatively. The contributors to the *Educational Review* and the *SGEE Newsletter* are not unaware of each other. They sometimes engage in controversy through the journal¹⁴⁶.

The *Bulletin de la SGEE* is the rallying point for Catholic thinkers hostile to secular schools¹⁴⁷. According to its statutes of 1885, the objective of the SGEE is "to work for the propagation and improvement of instruction, based on religious education. It studies all questions

143 Antoine Prost, "Conclusion", in Yves Verneuil (ed.), *L'enseignement secondaire féminin et l'identité féminine enseignante, hommage rendu à Françoise Mayeur*, Reims, CRDP de Champagne-Ardenne, 2009, p. 167-169.

144 Henri Peretz, "La création de l'enseignement secondaire libre de jeunes filles à Paris (1905-1920)", *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, n°32, 1985, p. 237-275.

145 Mme Chenu, "Progrès de l'éducation catholique en France, Rapport de la Secrétaire générale de l'Action sociale de la Femme au Congrès du Conseil international des œuvres catholiques féminines tenu à Londres, le mercredi 25 juin 1913", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, December 1913.

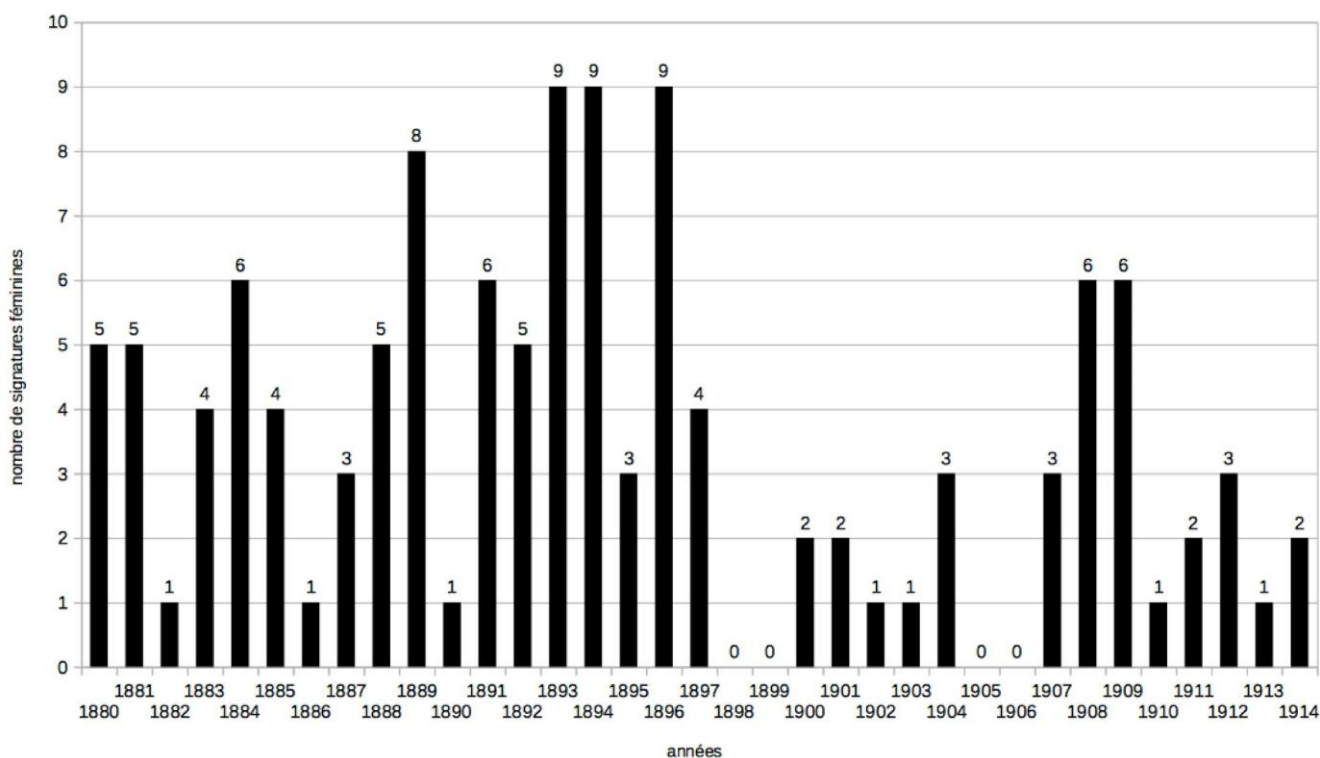
146 M. Dudon wrote an article in the *Bulletin de la SGEE* on 15 March 1900. M. P. reported on it in the *Revue pédagogique* of 15 May 1900. Mr Dudon replied in the *SGEE Bulletin* of June 1900. Mr P. concluded the debate in the *Revue pédagogique* of 15 July 1900. The whole thing was about the link between secular education and delinquency.

147 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, op. cit., p. 139.

The Association's newsletter contains articles on the organisation of free education, on pedagogy and moral education, reports on congresses, and legal advice from the Litigation Committee. Its bulletin compiles articles on the organisation of free education, on pedagogy and moral education, minutes of congresses as well as legal advice issued by the litigation committee.

The *Revue pédagogique* is the monthly reference magazine for public education staff. It featured well-known pedagogues as well as leading republican intellectuals. According to its editorial, this journal "is in a way a permanent and universal pedagogical congress¹⁴⁸". The editorial board is keen to "allow all pedagogical opinions to be expressed and defended", hoping that teachers will not be "an army of silent and passive officials". Experts in the field are being asked to participate.

Number of female contributions per year in the *Revue pédagogique* between 1880 and 1914



Of the 35 years of publication of the *Revue pédagogique* studied here, there are only four years in which no article¹⁴⁹ by a woman (1898, 1899, 1905, 1906). For the remaining 31 years, the highest statistics are 9 female articles for the years 1893, 1894 and 1896, i.e. between 10% and 15% of the total annual production. Between 1880 and 1914, 121 texts signed by a woman are listed, for 64 different identifiable contributors, many texts being anonymous ("une directrice d'école normale", "Mme C. R."). The largest contributor was, unsurprisingly, Pauline Kergomard, who contributed 12 texts to the *Revue*

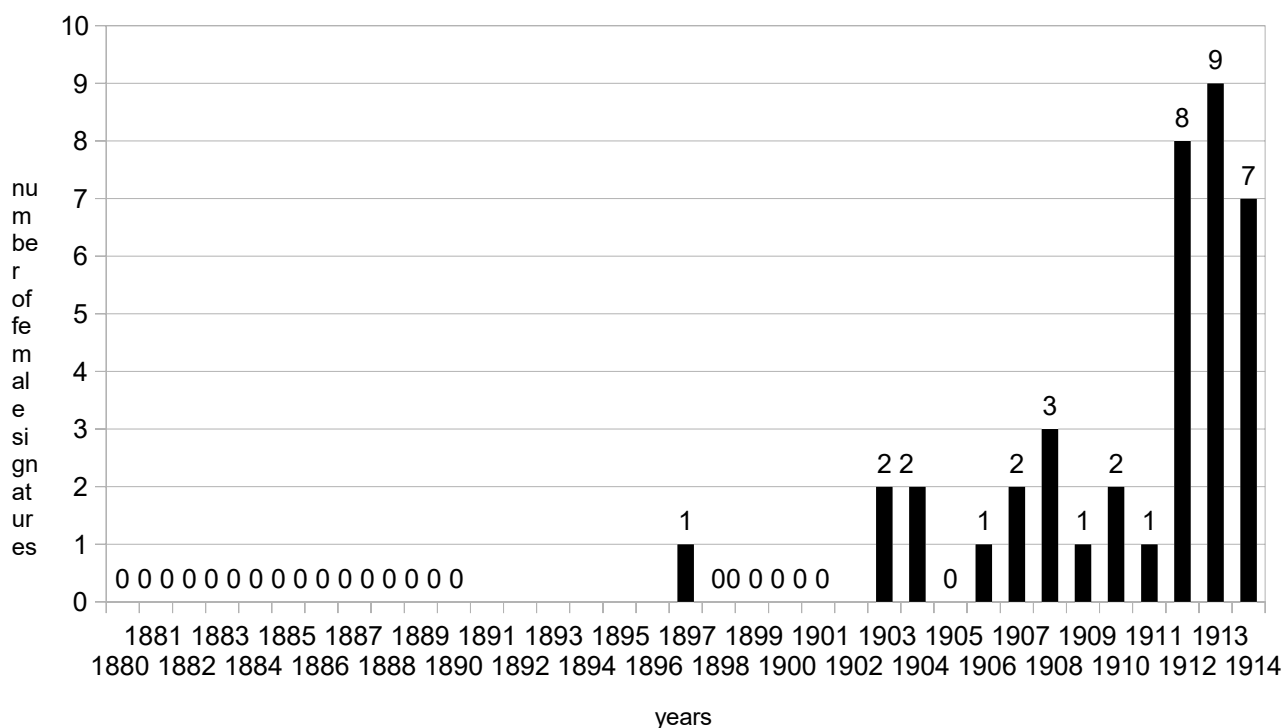
148 Programme article in the issue of 15 July 1882.

149 We exclude from all these counts the book reviews that appear in the Bibliography section.

between 1880 and 1914. The proportion of female contributions in the total number of articles is fairly constant over the period, and even slightly decreasing from the turn of the century. Many female contributors had prestigious positions in the ranks of public education (inspectors, directors of teacher training colleges, agrégées). The subjects addressed by the women were often related to female education (girls' schooling abroad, domestic education, women's normal schools), to nursery schools (notably in the writings of Anna Lampérière, former director of the normal course of asylum rooms, Marie Matrat, Mme Thévenelle, Pauline Kergomard and Suzanne Brès, all four inspectors general of nursery schools), as well as to the status of female civil servants (the situation of the female teacher, the question of female inspection). The overwhelming majority of these articles therefore concern subjects considered to be

"The data used to construct the two graphs are available at the end of this volume, starting on p. 629, with details of the contributions. [The data used to construct the two graphs are available at the end of this volume, starting on p. 629, with details of the contributions.]

Number of female contributions per year in the SGEE Bulletin between 1880 and 1914



Between 1880 and 1914, the *Bulletin de la SGEE* only included a female text on 39 occasions. Only 23 different female contributors could be identified, three times less than in the *Revue pédagogique*. The largest contributor was Miss Decaux, author of 6 articles, 5 of which were on domestic education. The texts written by women are significantly different from those in the *Revue pédagogique*. A large part of them deals exclusively with domestic education. The

Other texts are devoted to the monograph of a free school by its founder or director. A large number of texts remain anonymous. In November 1891, for example, the Catholic Association of Ladies and Young Women in Education published a collective text without signing it¹⁵⁰. In May 1892, the same association wrote a report for the Catholic assembly in Paris but had it read by Abbé Lapalme, who felt he should not speak at the congress. The women members of the association excluded themselves from this male assembly out of humility¹⁵¹.

Most of the women who wrote in the *SGEE Bulletin* did so at the end of the period to introduce the school they were running, describing the timetable, staff and even the curriculum. With the exception of domestic education, few articles by women address a national educational issue, with a few exceptions at the very end of the period (1912-1914). Before 1912, only men wrote general articles on girls' education¹⁵². After this date, Hélène Liégeois and Louise Desrez stand out. The former was a former Sevrier, who *tied* with Marie Baertschi for first place in the agrégation d'histoire in 1899, which made her an exceptional personality in this field. Louise Desrez spent her entire career in public education before becoming the founder of the first "new generation" Catholic girls' school¹⁵³ "in 1906.

From this, it seems that the *Review of Education* tends to have a wider range of female contributors than the *SGEE Bulletin*, which has fewer female contributors and a narrower focus. There is another major difference between the two journals. Women's contributions to the Catholic bulletin, which were almost non-existent until 1903, took off from that date and grew strongly until 1914. The turning point of 1903-1904 corresponds to the peak of the combist laws. Until then, many institutions were in the hands of nuns, who did not express themselves publicly (no article in the *Bulletin* was signed by a sister). It was therefore only after their disappearance that lay people took up¹⁵⁴ It was only after their disappearance that laywomen took up the issue of women's education in this review.

There was no such development in the *Revue pédagogique*. Indeed, from the 1880s onwards, the first women with state diplomas appeared in the journal, expressing themselves in the name of the status conferred on them by the fact that they were civil servants in the public education system. The institution's recognition of their skills as teachers went hand in hand with a certain openness of the

150 Anonymous, "Catholic Association of Ladies and Damsels in Education", *Bulletin of the SGEE*, November 1891. The name of the president is not even mentioned.

151 Abbé Lapalme, "Association catholique des dames et des demoiselles de l'enseignement", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, February 1893.

152 We have already mentioned the articles by L. Lescœur, A. Mascarel and G. Alix in the 1880s and 1890s. See also P. R. du Magny, "L'enseignement secondaire et supérieur des filles", March 1910; A. Briot, "L'état actuel de l'enseignement secondaire libre des jeunes filles", July 1912.

153 We use this term to refer to the secondary schools designed to replace the religious congregations expelled in 1904.

154 To be understood here as non-religious women, but of Catholic faith.

to their contributions. It should also be noted that the editorial board included Ferdinand Buisson and Félix Pécaut, both of whom stood out for the feminist tone of their discourse and their desire to promote women in public education. However, it should be borne in mind that even in the years when they are most represented, women authors of the *Revue pédagogique* account for hardly more than 10% of the contributions.

In contrast to the *Bulletin de la SGEE*, the number of female contributions to the *Revue pédagogique* tended to decline from 1900 onwards. This can be explained by the increase in the number of feminist-oriented journals that were opening up to female intellectuals. *La Fronde*, *La Femme nouvelle*, *La Revue de morale sociale*¹⁵⁵ for example, offered them new platforms. This was also true of corporatist journals, such as *L'École nouvelle*, founded in 1897, or specialised educational journals such as the *Bulletin de la Société libre pour l'étude psychologique de l'enfant*, created at the turn of the century. The small erosion of women's contributions to the *Revue pédagogique* can probably be explained less by a withdrawal of women from the debates than by the multiplication of forums - often more militant or more specialised - in which they could express themselves.

B) The common refusal of school neutrality among Catholic intellectuals

As far as the SGEE was concerned, although the law of 1904 was an upheaval, it was not until 1911 that the women sought to unite their efforts. It was at this time that the Committee for Secondary and Higher Education for Girls was created within the association. The aim was to bring together female teachers and directors from Paris and the provinces in order to unify the curricula of free secondary schools, following the example of what already existed in male education¹⁵⁶. The historian Henri Peretz has shown that the birth of free secondary education for women was not the result of a concerted institutional initiative, but of a series of individual actions¹⁵⁷. The group was chaired by the vice-rector of the Catholic Institute, but the rapporteur states that the success of the Committee "was due to the zeal and initiative of the ladies who made it up¹⁵⁸". Among them were Hélène Liégeois, director of studies at the École normale libre of Madeleine Daniélou, Louise Desrez, director of the École normale catholique, Mlle Trillard, director of the Institut Notre-Dame-des-Champs, Mme Mouillet, head of an establishment in Besançon, Mlle Taillandier, director in Clermont-Ferrand, and Mlle Chauvière, secretary of the Committee¹⁵⁹. In all, there are about fifteen female directors and teachers of free education¹⁶⁰. In 1912, the Congress of Diocesan Directors of Free Education devoted one of its sessions to female education. The meeting was held

155 See Anne R. Epstein, 'Gender and the Creation of the French Intellectual, the Case of the *Revue de Morale sociale*, 1899-1903', art. cit.

156 See the description of the Committee's role by J. Guibert, "Le but du comité pour l'enseignement secondaire et supérieur des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, June 1911.

157 Henri Peretz, "La création de l'enseignement secondaire libre de jeunes filles à Paris (1905-1920)", art. cit.

158 J. Guibert, "Le but du comité pour l'enseignement secondaire et supérieur des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, June 1911.

159 See Miss Chauvière, "La séance consacrée à l'enseignement des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, June 1912.

160 Mlle Desrez, "La situation de l'enseignement secondaire libre féminin à Paris", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1914.

under the presidency of Mgr Baudrillart, son of an academic, normalien, history professor, director of the Catholic Institute and defender of female Catholic secondary education.

What the members of the Comité d'enseignement secondaire et supérieur des jeunes filles had in common was their refusal of the neutrality of education in girls' secondary schools. Neutral education was already denounced in 1900 by the Viscountess of Adhemar in *La femme catholique et la démocratie française*. She condemned "the implicit if not always explicit atheism of university teaching¹⁶¹". In primary school, out of a residue of modesty, one did not dare to pass over God in silence, but this God is reduced "to the mere mention of his name¹⁶²". As for secondary education, it is no more explicit: "What is a God that philosophy exhumes for an hour, as an intellectual exercise, that history banishes, that literature ignores or blasphemes¹⁶³ ?" The viscountess sees the confessionalization of Catholicism as a catastrophe:

When our daughters make history, let us tell them that Christianity is socially indispensable, [...] because it proclaims the law of earthly sacrifice with future compensation. [...] The odious massacres which for nearly two years bloodied Armenia could not have occurred in Europe, despite the lowering ... of the Christian faith. [...] Neutrality towards Christian principles can only favour homicidal morals such as those of fanatical Muslims¹⁶⁴.

Mme d'Adhémar associates Christianity with the 'process of civilisation' which she believes characterises the Christian West. The relegation of religion to the intimate sphere seems to her to be an obstacle to this pacification of morals. She was disappointed by the neutral teaching of history, which showed only the trace of man and erased that of God: "a generation trained by such great masters in such great scepticism will [...] fatally become [...] a compound of enjoyers and anarchists¹⁶⁵". A year before her death in 1935, when the viscountess published the memories of her Protestant youth, she looked into her own past to find the hand of God in it. For her, the historical process is a means of knowing God: she "protests against tendentious shortcuts that would willingly reduce [history] to a game of chess played by skilful players. It goes back to its origins, finds and reinstates the supernatural in its rights¹⁶⁶".

A few years after the publication of Mme d'Adhémar's first texts, Madeleine Daniélou expressed the same distrust of secular history teaching. Like her elder sister, she could not accept religious neutrality. It must be said that she herself was traumatised by her own experience as a former student of a secular institution. Coming from a family of

161 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *La femme catholique et la démocratie française*, op. cit. , p. 58.

162 *Ibid*, p. 59.

163 *Ibid*, p. 61.

164 *Ibid*, pp. 77-78.

165 *Ibid*, p. 70.

166 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *En quête d'une Église, ma jeunesse protestante*, Paris, Beauchesne, 1934, 199 p., p. 10.

Bonapartist tendency which accepted the Ralliement¹⁶⁷In 1897, at the age of 17, Madeleine Daniélou was placed in a Catholic school where she prepared for the brevet supérieur. She passed with flying colours in 1897, at the age of 17, thanks to an age exemption from the school inspector¹⁶⁸. She was then enrolled at the Collège Sévigné in 1898. Madeleine Daniélou - whose surname was Clamorgan at the time - remembers her first meeting with Mathilde Salomon, who warned her that "here, the custom is to lose your faith in three months¹⁶⁹". This was confirmed very quickly: Louise, one of her friends, confided in her a few months after the start of the school year: "I was made to read France and Renan; I no longer believe, I took down the statue of the Blessed Virgin that was in my room¹⁷⁰". As for Madeleine Daniélou, she kept her faith. A friend of Mercédès le Fer de la Motte, she frequented the salon of Baroness Piérard, who was close to Albert de Mun, and moved in the circles of social Catholicism.

It was therefore after passing through a secular institution that Madeleine Daniélou became a Catholic intellectual. A brilliant student at Sévigné, she passed the agrégation de lettres in 1903. The following year, she was hired as a teacher at Sévigné, proof, despite certain differences, of her esteem for Mathilde Salomon. At the same time she became Marie Baertschi's colleague. Her cohabitation with free-thinking intellectuals soon became a problem. When Madeleine Daniélou gave her lecture on Joan of Arc, she had no doubt about the origin of the voices heard by the shepherdess. Her biographer relates the episode:

In the name of neutrality, Miss Salomon ordered her not to refer to these 'voices'. Secularism was a must. Miss Clamorgan [future Mme Daniélou] did not want to yield to the principal's point of view. The question opposed them very strongly. Just as there were two France's, two clans formed in the school. [...] She became aware that in such a context, in spite of the liberalism which reigned at Cours Sévigné, she would suffocate¹⁷¹.

Madeleine Daniélou taught for only one year at Sévigné. She married in 1904, joined the Cours Villiers for the school year, gave birth to her first son in 1905 and then founded the Catholic Normal School with Louise Desrez in 1906. Following a conflict with the latter, she decided to found her own institution, the École normale libre, in 1907¹⁷². She would have benefited from the help of the Catholic and royalist aristocracy¹⁷³. She probably also benefited from the network of her husband, who was mayor of Locronan and then deputy of Finistère from 1910 onwards on the Republican right.

It was from 1907 onwards that Madeleine Daniélou acquired a very high profile in Catholic intellectual circles. Between 1907 and 1909, she made more than 16 public interventions

167 Jeanne Caron, "Les débuts de Sainte-Marie", in Françoise Mayeur and Jacques Gadille (eds.), *Éducation et images de la femme chrétienne*, op. cit., pp. 124-129.

168 Blandine-D. Berger, *Madeleine Daniélou, 1880-1956*, Paris, Cerf histoire, 2002, p.19.

169 *Ibid.*, p. 36.

170 *Ibid.*, p. 39.

171 Blandine-D. Berger, *Madeleine Daniélou, 1880-1956, op. cit.* , p. 43.

172 Louise Desrez would not have had the same vision of the school as Madeleine Daniélou: after a career in public primary education, she would have hesitated to adopt the secondary orientation that the agrégée defended. See *Ibid*, p. 59.

173 Henri Peretz, "La création de l'enseignement secondaire libre de jeunes filles à Paris (1905-1920)", art. cit.

on the need to reform Catholic secondary education, including seven lectures in the spring of 1908 alone¹⁷⁴. She spoke in March and December 1908 in the salon of Countess Jean de Castellane¹⁷⁵ who was one of her greatest supporters. Denys Cochin, Albert de Mun, Lucie Félix-Faure-Goyau¹⁷⁶ as well as several personalities who had supported Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur ten years earlier. For example, when in 1908 *Le Gaulois* launched a subscription to support Madeleine Daniélou's initiative, the Viscountess of Adhemar donated 300 francs¹⁷⁷. Unlike the supporters of the secular school, Madeleine Daniélou spoke a lot in salons, where she addressed an economic elite ready to finance free educational institutions. She also spoke in prestigious scientific venues, such as at a conference at the Société de géographie which attracted 500 people¹⁷⁸. Madeleine Daniélou also spoke at diocesan conferences for clergymen, notably in Blois, Lille, Orléans, Paris and Versailles.¹⁷⁹ She brandished the successes of the École normale libre everywhere: from 55 students enrolled in 1907, the school grew to over 150 three years later.¹⁸⁰

This success did not, however, negate the threat posed to young women by state schools. In 1908, Madeleine Daniélou spoke to members of Action sociale de la femme and dissuaded them from sending their daughters to secondary schools. First of all, she protested against the near-exclusivity of the state in the secondary education of girls:

Such a monopoly, de jure or de facto, is neither rational nor desirable. The child does not belong to the State, and this is a truth to be upheld against [those who] see in the child only a citizen whom the State alone has the task of forming according to its own ideal. The child belongs to his parents, who, representing for him the divine authority, have the right and the duty to transmit to him not only their religious beliefs, but their traditions¹⁸¹.

To the argument that the state would respect everyone's beliefs in its schools, she replies:

Even if the State's teaching were neutral, we do not want neutrality [...]. In order to be neutral, one must teach only facts, without ever making their meaning clear to the child [...]. History must be taught without bringing in Providence, morality, without showing that it has its roots in heaven [...]. We must completely separate the natural from the supernatural, science from faith [...]: God is on one side, man on the other. In this way, there is a risk of making either materialists or mystics.

174 Blandine-D. Berger, *Madeleine Daniélou, 1880-1956, op. cit.* pp. 62-63.

175 See in particular the *Gil Blas* of 15 March 1908.

176 See Julien de Narfon, 'L'école normale libre, une conférence chez la comtesse Jean de Castellane', *Le Figaro*, 17 December 1908.

177 Jeanne Caron, "Les débuts de Sainte-Marie", art. cit.

178 *Ibid.*

179 *Ibid.*

180 Blandine-D. Berger, *Madeleine Daniélou, 1880-1956, op. cit.* pp. 56-59.

181 M. Daniélou, "Conférence: l'enseignement secondaire des filles", *L'Action sociale de la femme*, December 1908.

For Madeleine Daniélou, it is criminal to educate young girls in neutrality for the most important ten years of their lives. Indeed, just because religion is not attacked does not mean that the school is not pursuing a dechristianisation process. Pupils are imbued with a morality considered incompatible with Christianity, when they are not simply pushed to "moral invention"¹⁸². The founder of the *École normale libre* declared that the girls left the lycée with "a mind radically unfit for Catholicism"¹⁸³.

For her, it was therefore necessary to build Catholic secondary education in a spirit opposite to that of the lycées. This involved a reworking of the curriculum: Miss Pluzanski, one of Madeleine Daniélou's collaborators, declared on the eve of the war that the women's lycées reserved too much space for the authors of the Enlightenment, including Diderot, Rousseau and Voltaire¹⁸⁴. In 1913, Madeleine Daniélou disapproved of the authors on the Sèvres curriculum: Emerson, Renan and Maupassant¹⁸⁵. The *École normale libre*, which in 1913 became the *Université normale libre* after the creation of the Collège Sainte-Marie¹⁸⁶ It therefore refused to copy the curriculum of the state education system. For example, neither Renan nor Flaubert were studied there. The latter were removed from the curriculum, but others "dishonestly ignored in the University" were reintroduced, such as Thomas Aquinas, Bossuet and Fénelon, especially his *Traité de l'existence de Dieu*. At the *Université normale libre*, students were obliged to attend mass on Thursdays and Sundays. In addition, there were two hours of religious history per week. Inspired by the Collège Sévigné, Madeleine Daniélou concentrated all classes in the morning, leaving the afternoons free for individual study.

In 1907, she rented the premises of a clinic run by the Augustinian Sisters, and when the school expanded and moved in 1913, it was established in the former Convent of the same congregation¹⁸⁷. The symbolism is important, as the Victor-Duruy and Jules-Ferry girls' high schools opened in 1912 and 1913 respectively in the former convent of the Sacred Heart and the Ladies Zelators of the Holy Eucharist. In the eyes of Catholics, the establishment of secular secondary schools in former convent premises symbolically consecrated the victory of public education over the congregations. Madeleine Daniélou fought to create a truly Catholic secondary education for girls. Her boldness was praised by some and criticised by others within the Catholic ranks.

182 Madeleine Daniélou, "Collèges catholiques et jeunes filles", *Revue du clergé français*, March 1913.

183 M. Daniélou, "Conférence: l'enseignement secondaire des filles", *L'Action sociale de la femme*, December 1908.

184 Miss Pluzanski, "Le collège Sainte-Marie, à Neuilly, monographie", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1914.

185 Mme Daniélou, "Collèges catholiques et jeunes filles", *Revue du clergé français*, March 1913.

186 The institution was initially a teacher training college (1907), which prepared students for the various certificates and competitions required to train a qualified female teaching force (brevet supérieur, certificat d'aptitude à l'enseignement secondaire). Students who had already completed their secondary education elsewhere, in particular in state schools, came to the *École normale libre*

The school was "dechristianised". Madeleine Daniélou therefore wanted to take up the work "from below" and in 1913 founded the Collège Sainte-Marie, which offered secondary studies with Latin and philosophy and prepared

for the baccalaureate. The whole thing formed the Université normale libre. See Blandine-D. Berger, *Madeleine Daniélou, 1880-1956, op. cit.*

187 Henri Peretz, "La création de l'enseignement secondaire libre de jeunes filles à Paris (1905-1920)", art. cit.

C) The reception of the struggle of Madeleine Daniélou, a leading figure in the renewal of Catholic secondary education for women

Although Madeleine Daniélou was not very vocal in the *Bulletin of the SGEE* and sent her director of studies, Hélène Liégeois, to sit on the Committee for Secondary Education for Women, she nevertheless became the leading figure of the renewed Catholic education. She was active in the Œuvre des campagnes, whose aim was to provide the rural clergy with relief for parish schools and patronages. The association contributed to the foundation of 850 secularised schools. Madeleine Daniélou, known for her oratory skills, gave a speech at the General Assembly in June 1908. She summarised the main orientations of the association and drew up the financial statement for the year. As usual, she made a strong impression: "Mme Daniélou succeeded in poetising a document bristling with figures, by showing the calm life of the countryside where, when evening came, all that could be heard was the singing of insects and the prayers of the farmers and their children¹⁸⁸".

In the same year, Madeleine Daniélou also became the head of the new corporation of female Catholic secondary school teachers. At the Congress of Free Education Unions, she explained their situation¹⁸⁹. She launched a project for a mutual insurance scheme for private schoolteachers, which would enable them to secure a pension, a question which had not arisen until then for nuns. Madeleine Daniélou was encouraged by the diocesan authorities: it was necessary to provide the teachers of free education with sufficient security to ensure their loyalty¹⁹⁰. Madeleine Daniélou became their representative in the Chambre syndicale and remained so for several years¹⁹¹.

La Lanterne soon saw her as the symbol of Catholic education rising from the ashes. The anti-clerical daily noted that, in view of the success of the public schools, Catholics, who had previously been hostile to female education, had radically changed their views:

We have already mentioned the conferences and collections of Mme Daniélou, who wants to create a higher teacher training college, where the future teachers of this free education would be trained. We must see the passion that the clerics bring to the realisation of this project. [...] The reactionaries feel that women, who until now have been the natural allies of the Church, are going to escape them. It was to avoid this eventuality that the clerics resigned themselves to propagating secondary education for women¹⁹².

If the article in *La Lanterne* is aimed particularly at Madeleine Daniélou, it is because she was a pioneer in paving the way for a new generation of intellectuals who, despite their

188 Quoted in "L'Œuvre des campagnes", *L'Univers*, 7 June 1908.

189 Abbé C. Chantrel, "Le Congrès de la Fédération des Syndicats de l'Enseignement libre", *Annales catholiques*, 6 June 1908.

190 See "Congrès diocésain de Paris", *La Croix*, 3 June 1908.

191 See "Congrès des membres de l'enseignement secondaire libre", *La semaine religieuse de l'archidiocèse d'Albi*, 14 May 1910.

192 "Lycées de filles", *La Lanterne*, 26 June 1908.

The majority of the other headmistresses of this period were educated in two stages. Most of the other headmistresses of this period followed a two-stage curriculum: first they were free teachers in primary education, then they enrolled for higher degrees. Most of them went back to school in adulthood to open schools to compensate for the expulsion of the congregations. But Madeleine Daniélou was already an associate professor of literature at the age of 23. The teaching experience she had when she opened her institution at the age of 27 was exclusively in secondary education (Collège Sévigné, Cours Villiers and then the École normale catholique). Moreover, unlike many of her colleagues, Madeleine Daniélou was married and had six children: she had nothing to do with the model of the secularised religious. Finally, Madeleine Daniélou was deeply religious. On the eve of the war, she even founded the Communauté féminine apostolique Saint-François-Xavier within her institution. Father de Grandmaison, her director of conscience, was aware of the strength of her faith, but was suspicious of her exceptional intelligence:

Your direction of conversation... is too high [...]. Too intellectual [...]. It certainly sets the tone, maintains a level, far above mediocre [...]. And this is perhaps your role... But underneath you, [...] for the days when you are not there, there should be someone who is simply maternal and humble¹⁹³.

Although it claimed the heritage of the congregations, the institution founded by Madeleine Daniélou appeared no less daring to some Catholics in the context of the modernist crisis. As André Lanfrey reminds us, the school was an issue of discord: "Indeed, the three great sensibilities of Catholicism in the XIX^e century: Liberalism [...], Social Catholicism, and Integralism, clashed over the school problem and sought to invest the Catholic school in order to perpetuate their influence¹⁹⁴. " For example, when it came to renewing teaching in convents, the intransigents cried treason, but when the congregations kept their practices intact, the democrats and liberals declared them archaic¹⁹⁵. If the 1904 law forced Catholics to find palliatives to congregational education, the new initiatives were not always well accepted. The Count of Haussonville¹⁹⁶ wrote in 1914:

For having taken this bold and intelligent initiative, Mme Daniélou will certainly be attacked. [...] The *fundamentalists* [...] who console themselves with their mediocrity by denouncing it, will accuse her of literary *modernism* or other things in *ism*, which pass

193 Quoted by Blandine-D. Berger, *Madeleine Daniélou, 1880-1956, op. cit.*, p. 164.

194 André Lanfrey, (preface by Françoise Mayeur), *Les catholiques français et l'école (1902-1914), op. cit.*, p. 3.

195 *Ibid*, p. 38.

196 Nephew of the Duke of Broglie, academician, the Count d'Haussonville was initially active in the Orleanist party, but as a moderate royalist, he gradually rallied to the Republic. A social Catholic, he was liberal in matters of religion.

to be frowned upon in Rome. Mme Daniélou can rest easy; she is covered, in fact, by the patronage of the Cardinal-Archbishop of Paris¹⁹⁷.

Despite her support in high places, Madeleine Daniélou struggled to achieve her aims. For example, when she wanted to add a secondary school to the *École normale libre* in 1913, dedicated to the preparation of the baccalaureate, the Archbishop of Paris expressed serious reservations. It was more inclined to train primary school teachers than baccalaureate graduates or other graduates¹⁹⁸.

What played in Madeleine Daniélou's favour was the threat of the lycées, which had become obvious. She was haunted by the fear that the former clientele of the congregations would move to public education. However, according to Henri Peretz, even after the 1904 law, free education and public education did not enter into direct competition in female secondary education: "They did not achieve their respective gains by gaining part of the competitor's clientele, but by each drawing on their own potential clientele¹⁹⁹". Françoise Mayeur defends a slightly different point of view: at the start of the 1904 school year, girls' secondary schools saw an increase of 16.4% in their numbers, which can only be explained by the closure of Congregational schools²⁰⁰. When the congregations were expelled, there were five lycées in Paris: Fénelon, Lamartine, Racine, Victor Hugo and Molière. In addition, there was a secondary school in Versailles and two secondary schools in Paris annexed to the Buffon and Voltaire secondary schools for boys. These institutions were completed in 1912 and 1913 by the girls' lycées Victor-Duruy and Jules-Ferry. The range of secular secondary education (which also included secular free schools such as Sévigné) was quite different from the Catholic provision.

The threat to public schools was symbolically multiplied by the increased visibility of intellectuals who advocated secular education for girls. Louis Lescœur, who had already criticised the Sée law in the 1880s, was concerned about this in 1907:

These ladies teach and write in the spirit of the masters of the day, under the paternal eye of the University. They have their own journals, and there are already many of them. [...] We must admit it: without even mentioning the eccentric and openly materialistic theories of the free-thinking women of whom Mme Clémence Royer [...] was the type, the impression produced by reading educational reviews animated by this spirit is frankly unpleasant! One feels uncomfortable: this is not French²⁰¹ !

This is followed by a full-scale attack on the new women, who imagine themselves to be the embodiment of science and progress, which they present as **t h e** prerogative **o f** secular education. The author aims at

197 Comte d'Haussonville, "L'Université libre de jeunes filles", *Le Gaulois*, 24 February 1914.

198 Blandine-D. Berger, *Madeleine Daniélou, op. cit.* See also Jeanne Caron, who explains that in 1906, Mgr Péchenard, who had just opened the Catholic Institute to girls, wanted Madeleine Daniélou to confine herself to

- primary education so as not to compete with her, in "Les débuts de Sainte-Marie", art. cit.
- 199 Henri Peretz, "La création de l'enseignement secondaire libre de jeunes filles à Paris (1905-1920)", art. cit.
- 200 Françoise Mayeur, *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles sous la Troisième République*, op. cit. , p. 377.
- 201 L. Lescœur, "Les revues féminines d'éducation laïque", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, October 1907.

This was particularly true of certain reviews, including *La Femme nouvelle*, founded by Léa Bérard, a teacher at the Lycée de Montpellier, whose collaborator was Mme Roy, a teacher at the Lycée de Nancy. Both were agrégées. This was all it took to persuade Louis Lescœur that these new journals (he also cited the *Femme universitaire* and the *Nouvel éducateur*) were a relay for the harmful influence of the lycées and sought to propagate socialism and feminism, both condemned in the same movement.

D) The Congregational heritage as seen by Catholic women intellectuals

If the lycées are a deterrent, one should not believe that the blessed time of the congregations is the ideal pursued by all Catholics. As early as 1900, the Viscountess of Adhemar, following in the footsteps of Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart, complained about the weaknesses of the education offered to young middle-class women in convents and declared that the superiority of the lycées was undisputed²⁰². According to her, the only solution offered to Catholics was to build a free education on a par with that of the University. While some attempts were made to modernise the provision of Catholic education in the late nineteenth century²⁰³ and some Congregational institutes were secularised at the time of the Combo laws²⁰⁴ The new generation of Catholic intellectuals who emerged at this time demanded a break with past experiences. This was manifested in 1906 and 1907 by the foundation of Louise Desrez's *École normale catholique* and then Madeleine Daniélou's *École normale libre*: these were establishments that were not based on any previous structure, which had great intellectual ambition and adopted new pedagogical methods.

The Combist laws provided the necessary cataclysm for a recomposition of Catholic education for young girls. Initially, it was with indignation that prestigious congregations closed their doors in Paris, such as the Convent of the Sacred Heart and that of the Chanoinesses de Saint-Augustin, which until then had welcomed the girls of the bourgeoisie.²⁰⁵ Three years after the law, Madeleine Daniélou declared at the Joan of Arc Congress that the sisters, although wonderfully disinterested, were "not always aware of the most modern teaching methods, but their vocation made them apostles²⁰⁶". Criticism broke through the chorus of praise. The following year, Madeleine Daniélou once again returned to the inadequacies of Congregational teaching in front of the members of *Action sociale de la femme*: "[Were the nuns] always up to the task in terms of instruction and

202 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *La Femme catholique et la démocratie française*, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

203 In 1897, Mgr d'Hulst inaugurated a course for girls at the Catholic Institute and sent the typed lessons to some convents. The *Désir* course, which had been operating in Paris since the middle of the XIX^e century, only provided primary education, according to Henri Peretz. In 1892, a Catholic Association of Ladies and Damsels of Education was formed, whose aim was to improve the training of free schoolteachers through normal courses.

204 In Besançon, the headmistress left the religious habit to transform the school into a secondary institute. (Mrs Mouillet, "L'école supérieure de jeunes filles de Besançon", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1912). The Ladies of Saint-Maur, who had instituted classes at the Hôtel de Jumilhac in 1898, gave birth to the *Cours Dupanloup* in 1904.

205 Henri Peretz, "La création de l'enseignement secondaire libre de jeunes filles à Paris (1905-1920)", *art. cit.*

206 Mme Charles Daniélou, "L'école normale catholique d'institutrices", *Bulletin de la semaine*, 12 June 1907.

methods? No, no doubt, it has been said, it has been said too much.²⁰⁷. " Madeleine Daniélou is referring here to the scandal raised by the book of Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur and the texts of Mme d'Adhémar.

The more years passed after the 1904 law, the more tongues were wagging about the need to break with the Congregational heritage. In 1912, Hélène Liégeois, a collaborator of Madeleine Daniélou, conceded that free education was suffering from the memory of obedience letters²⁰⁸. Mlle Taillandier considered in 1913 in the *Bulletin de la SGEE* that the creation of Sèvres and Fontenay had enabled the State to rise above free education, and that the nuns had been slow to adapt²⁰⁹. In 1914, even the very conservative *Gaulois* recognised that Catholics had fallen behind in female education because of the inertia of the congregations:

The education given in these convents was excellent, in the sense that they knew how to train [...] excellent wives and admirable mothers. But it must be admitted that from the intellectual point of view it remained somewhat weak. [...] It was hardly more than a higher primary education, intermingled with the arts of pleasure. [...] Poor Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur, to whose memory I wish to pay tribute in passing, [...] for whom some bishops have been so harsh, had not, however, completely lost her pain when these convents were brutally closed²¹⁰.

The ideas of Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur are back in favour. For *Le Figaro*, there is no doubt that Madeleine Daniélou has fulfilled, some ten years after the publication of *Les Religieuses enseignantes*, the desire of the religious²¹¹. The Viscountess of Adhemar was convinced of this, since she included in her 1909 book extracts from Madeleine Daniélou's conferences, in order to show how the wind of history had changed, giving reason to the decried pioneer²¹². The *Bulletin de la SGEE*, which had been severe against the nun from Issoire, in turn published an eulogy of her ideas under the pen of Miss Taillandier, headmistress of the Fénelon school in Clermont:

It was the long-standing anguish of the far-sighted friends of Christian education to note that, while Sèvres provided secular education with numerous licentiates and agrégées, Catholics were content to launch witty invectives against the exaggerated instruction of women [until] the all too resounding clarion call of Mme Marie du Sacré-Coeur²¹³.

207 M. Daniélou, "L'enseignement secondaire des filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, December 1908.

208 Mlle Liégeois, "La détermination des examens susceptibles d'être le plus utiles pour l'enseignement des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1912.

209 Mlle Taillandier, "De l'éducation intellectuelle des jeunes filles - convient-il de l'orienter vers l'éducation secondaire?", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1913.

210 Comte d'Haussonville, "L'université libre de jeunes filles", *Le Gaulois*, 24 February 1914.

211 Julien de Narfon, "L'école normale libre, une conférence chez la comtesse Jean de Castellane", *Le Figaro*, 17 December 1908.

212 Vicomtesse d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice: la Mère Marie du Sacré-Cœur*, *op. cit.*

To affirm that Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart was right in 1898 was also to recognise the need to "secondarise" Catholic education. In 1908, Madeleine Daniélou considered that few Catholic establishments were capable of providing secondary education²¹⁴. She noted that, outside the lycées, girls were mainly taught in classes where they were accompanied by their mothers. Madeleine Daniélou considered that this lecture-based education was not secondary: it was dogmatic, it was aimed at the memory, and it did not encourage the young girl to reflect. However, "it is not by learning ideas that one learns to think". While the lecture is suitable for an adult audience, it is unsuitable for adolescent girls. Furthermore, the lectures are usually given by men. This leads to mutual embarrassment between the teacher and her students and results in a desire to please or excessive shyness on the part of the girls. In this indictment of the courses, Madeleine Daniélou implicitly targets certain initiatives that have developed to compensate for the disappearance of the congregations, such as the courses at the Catholic Institute or the Cours Dupanloup. For her, it was by imitating the structure of the high schools that Catholics would find the solution. This is how her own school works, where the teachers, who know the pupils very well, pursue a real educational action.

Louise Desrez shares this observation. Like Madeleine Daniélou, she considered that by dedicating themselves to the preparation of elementary and higher certificates, convents and free establishments had frozen Catholic education for girls in primary methods²¹⁵. A. Briot, a professor at the Catholic Institute, wrote a report in which he concluded that, unlike boys, there was little difference between primary and secondary education for girls. The only real distinction is based on the social background of the pupils, not on the curricula and methods adopted. His conclusion is that free education for girls is simply higher primary education because the teaching staff is not sufficiently educated to provide an education of the same level as that of the lycées²¹⁶.

E) The threat of the Briand-Massé project and the need to graduate Catholic teachers

The issue of training female teachers came up for discussion in 1907, when a bill was introduced by MPs Aristide Briand and Alfred Massé. The latter wanted to give the state the means to exercise greater control over free secondary education. Some Catholic thinkers, such as Pierre de Magny, a professor at the Catholic Faculty of Lyon, considered the Briand-Massé project as a "Masonic plan"²¹⁷. Some Catholic thinkers, such as Pierre Magny, a professor at the Catholic faculty of Lyon, considered the Briand-Massé project to be a "Masonic plan" aimed at attacking Catholic institutes in order to win back their clientele for the benefit of state schools.

213 Mlle Taillandier, "De l'éducation intellectuelle des jeunes filles - convient-il de l'orienter vers l'éducation secondaire?", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1913.

214 Madeleine Daniélou, "L'enseignement secondaire des filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, December 1908.

215 Mlle Desrez, "La situation de l'enseignement secondaire libre à Paris", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1914.

216 A. Briot, "L'état actuel de l'enseignement secondaire libre des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1912.

217 Anonymous, "L'enseignement secondaire et supérieur des jeunes filles", *Bulletin des facultés catholiques de Lyon*, January-March 1911.

Madeleine Daniélou took a more nuanced view. She saw the law as a boon to free education, since it would require teachers to have the same grades as civil servants and give the state the right to inspect these schools. Faced with these constraints, Madeleine Daniélou feared that the directors of free schools would circumvent the law by declaring their schools to be upper primary rather than secondary schools. They would certainly escape any state control, but

they will have to cut from their curriculum everything that goes beyond the level of primary education, [...] everything that, alas, would be likely to develop faculties other than memory. The result would therefore be to lower the level of our free education still further [...]. This attitude [...] would make it possible to 'save' establishments for the time being, but would irremediably compromise their future²¹⁸.

According to Madeleine Daniélou, the only way for free education to compete with the lycées is to accept the constraints of the law. The free schools will emerge strengthened; they will give families guarantees on the value of the education they provide:

These requirements in themselves are far from being an evil. Teaching is not a matter of goodwill, but above all of competence, and it would seem highly illogical that in free secondary education one should improvise oneself as a teacher with a simple higher diploma, while the State requires several years of study of young girls who want to teach in its lycées. [...] Why didn't we create normal schools earlier [...]! We could then say that our teachers are as good as those of the State [...] and do not need official diplomas. No one would dare to argue this at the present time.

Madeleine Daniélou therefore encouraged free schools to prepare young girls for the certificate of aptitude for teaching (also known as the "licence de Sèvres") or the baccalaureate, recognised by law as a sufficient diploma to teach and run a free secondary school. In another text published in the *Bulletin de la semaine*, Madeleine Daniélou is confident: thanks to the Briand-Massey law, private school teachers will be of an intellectual level equal to those in the public sector, but they will be superior to them educationally because they will be motivated by faith²¹⁹.

The Briand-Massé project hovered over free education throughout the Belle Époque without ever being voted on. However, the trauma of the combative laws, which were applied without mercy, meant that Catholics took the threat seriously. In 1912, Hélène Liégeois wrote a report on "the determination of examinations likely to be most useful for the teaching of

218 Madeleine Daniélou, "Le projet de loi Briand et l'enseignement libre des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la Ligue de la liberté d'enseignement*, 15 December 1907.

219 Madeleine Daniélou, "L'école normale catholique d'institutrices", *Bulletin de la semaine*, 12 June 1907.

In this book, she welcomes the need for future female free teachers to prepare real diplomas.²²⁰ Mme Hamel, secretary and treasurer of the *École normale libre*, reminded us that Catholic secondary schools for girls could not rely indefinitely on male graduates to teach: future female teachers had to be trained.²²¹

In public education, the ENS of Sèvres and Fontenay provided the female staff needed for the teacher training colleges and the girls' lycées. In Catholic education, Louise Desrez's *École normale catholique* and Madeleine Daniélou's *École normale libre* played this role. However, although these two schools were run by women (which was compulsory for all establishments for young girls since the law of 1886), men were still in the majority in their staff. The *École normale libre* opened with 15 men out of 17 teachers. According to Henri Peretz's study, on the eve of the war, there were still 86 men out of the 256 teachers at the free secondary school for women in Paris, i.e. one third of the staff²²². In July 1914, when she made an assessment of free secondary education for women in Paris, Louise Desrez estimated that almost everywhere the "most important" courses²²³ "were taught by men. However, she was pleased that since their foundation, the *École normale catholique* and the *École normale libre* had enabled 45 women to obtain the necessary qualifications to teach in secondary schools.

Many of them had passed the baccalaureate: in 1912, after five years of existence, the *École normale libre* had enabled 86 girls to pass this exam²²⁴. If Madeleine Daniélou and Louise Desrez directed their pupils towards the baccalaureate, it was primarily because the lycées were the only ones able to award the secondary school leaving certificate, which, unlike the baccalaureate, was not available to pupils in free education. Moreover, the school-leaving certificate is already devalued in the lycées, since it does not open the doors to higher education. But young women who want to teach in free schools do not have the same prestige as the agrégées. However, there was no question of them taking the agrégation, since every candidate undertook to serve the state for five years²²⁵. In 1913, there was therefore talk of creating an internal agrégation for free education, but the project never saw the light of day²²⁶.

F) The Catholic secondary school for women, a disruption in the order of representations

The 1904 law and the Briand-Massé project of 1907 forced Catholics to re-evaluate the previously dominant representations of the female graduate. Thus, whereas the high school and bachelor's degree student appeared as monsters emerging from the bowels of a hated modernity, it was a matter of

220 Mlle Liégeois, "La détermination des examens susceptibles d'être le plus utiles pour l'enseignement des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1912.

221 Mme Hamel, "L'enseignement libre catholique des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, February 1913.

222 Henri Peretz, "La création de l'enseignement secondaire libre de jeunes filles à Paris (1905-1920)", art. cit.

223 Mlle Desrez, "La situation de l'enseignement secondaire libre féminin à Paris", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1914.

224 Anonymous, "L'école normale catholique", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, October 1912.

225 Since a circular of 1904. Madeleine Daniélou was therefore not concerned when she took the competition.

226 Mlle Chauvière, "La journée d'études consacrée à l'enseignement des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, June 1913.

This is the reason for the intensive preparation for various exams, including the baccalaureate and the certificate of aptitude for secondary education. Pierre de Magny, professor of law at the Catholic faculty of Lyon, justifies this race for diplomas among young Catholics as follows:

Do we want to leave the prestige of the title, very vain no doubt, but still brilliant and capable of fascinating the eyes of the crowd, to the high school girls? Do we want to allow our opponents to say, even with a simple appearance of truth, that the Christian woman is the one who has not cultivated her intelligence enough to free it, and that the free-thinking woman is the one whose reason has matured through the normal cycle of study? And do we want it to be said that the teachers who prepare their pupils for the two certificates do not themselves have higher degrees?²²⁷ ?

The author calls for public opinion to be taken into account, and thus to respond to the demand for diplomas that it makes its own. Until the beginning of the XX^e century, however, these same diplomas were the object of scorn in the *Bulletin de la SGEE*. In the pages of this journal, Pierre de Magny himself continued, in 1910, to ridicule the "princesses of science"²²⁸ In 1910, Pierre de Magny himself continued to ridicule the "princesses of science", while urging Catholic girls to graduate. Louis Lescœur, who had been very violent against high-level female education, changed his mind in 1907: if free education was to win the battle against the state school, it had to win through the excellence of its methods and the superiority of its science²²⁹. It was no longer a question of proportioning knowledge to young girls, but of competing with the state school to offer them the highest possible education.

In 1908, Julien de Narfon reported for *Le Figaro* on a lecture given by Madeleine Daniélou about her school with the Countess de Castellane. Although she was an agrégée herself, the latter gave an ambiguous speech between the promotion of new diplomas and distrust of the model of the new independent woman thanks to her intellectual achievements: 'How many of these professions are really suitable for women? Medicine? The bar? Mme Daniélou does not seem to believe much in the woman doctor or the woman lawyer. There is still teaching. There, the woman is absolutely in her place.²³⁰.' Madeleine Daniélou also makes it clear that if teaching provides a livelihood for young women, it must above all be sought after because it is a powerful means of apostolate. The quest for a diploma must be done in a disinterested way, without ever arousing a desire for individual promotion.

The line consistently followed by Catholic intellectuals is that strong studies are healthy for girls provided they are delivered by

227 Quoted in "L'enseignement secondaire et supérieur des jeunes filles", *Bulletin des facultés catholiques de Lyon*, January-March 1911.

228 P. R. du Magny, "L'enseignement secondaire et supérieur des filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, March 1910.

229 L. Lescœur, "Les revues féminines d'éducation laïque", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, October 1907.

230 Julien de Narfon, 'L'école normale libre, une conférence chez la comtesse Jean de Castellane', *Le Figaro*, 17

December 1908.

believing teachers. This is what Madeleine Daniélou said in her report of 29 May 1907 to the Joan of Arc Congress²³¹. It is necessary to ensure that young girls are educated in a religious way, which allows them to be given strong intellectual nourishment without risk. However, it is necessary to constantly remind them of the harmlessness of knowledge for girls. Miss Teillard-Chambon stated again in 1912:

"We refuse to admit that knowledge leads to vanity more than ignorance and foolishness have always done²³²". On the same date, Mlle Chauvière recalls that Fénelon, Dupanloup and d'Hulst exorcised the ghost of the woman who became a pedant because she was educated²³³. This does not prevent the Count of Haussonville from advising Madeleine Daniélou's students to take Joseph de Maistre's advice to his daughter Constance: "It is infinitely better for a young girl to pass for a coquette than for a scholar²³⁴". Also in *Le Gaulois*, a text published in 1914 highlights a lasting distrust of higher education for women. Even the Catholic figure of Madeleine Daniélou arouses suspicion:

Madeleine Daniélou is an agrégée in philosophy. Academic titles, when attached to a woman's name, always make one smile a little, and if the good man Chrysale were still in this world, he would fall from his height. [...] Fortunately, she is not a proselytizer of feminism [...] but an elite woman who knows how to combine the highest culture with a superior reason and an intact conscience²³⁵...

Madeleine Daniélou was not an agrégée in philosophy, but in literature. It is true that she shared the teaching of philosophy at the École normale libre with Abbé Clodius Piat, who was an agrégé in philosophy.²³⁶ For the journalist from *Le Gaulois*, the main thing is to specify that this agrégée is not a feminist. The threat of the new, independent and vindictive woman was not far away... And support for Madeleine Daniélou's initiative was tinged with mistrust. That same year, in *Le Figaro*, Julien de Narfon justified his praise of Madeleine Daniélou by her humility: "[She] says these things with the authority given to her by her title of agrégée de l'Université, but also with a charming simplicity²³⁷". The discourse was similar when Marie Baertschi was praised as a lecturer in the UP²³⁸. Freethinking intellectuals and Catholic intellectuals seem equally obsessed with the spectre of female pedantry.

231 Reported by Mme d'Adhémar, *Une religieuse réformatrice : la Mère Marie-du-Sacré-Cœur*, op. cit. p. 417.

232 Miss Teillard-Chambon, "Projet de programme pour l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1912.

233 Miss Chauvière, "La séance consacrée à l'enseignement des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, June 1912.

234 Comte d'Haussonville, "L'université libre de jeunes filles", *Le Gaulois*, 24 February 1914.

235 Quoted by Blandine-D. Berger, *Madeleine Daniélou, 1880-1956*, op. cit. , p. 63.

236 *Ibid*, p. 60.

237 Julien de Narfon, "L'École normale libre, une conférence chez la comtesse Jean de Castellane", *Le Figaro*, 17 December 1908.

238 Francis Framée, "Dans une UP", *Le Radical*, 12 December 1899: "There is no trace in the lecturer [...] of this pretense of superiority, of this cutting and dominating arrogance [...]. Miss Baertschi knows how to remain a woman".

G) The promotion of classical culture by Catholic intellectuals

From the founding of the École normale libre in 1907 and throughout the Belle Époque, Madeleine Daniélou defended the transmission of classical culture to young girls:

There is nothing for Catholics to fear in this expansion of culture, but only if it is classical culture. Obviously, we should not copy the curriculum of the girls' high schools. The education given there is a kind of modern, hybrid education, without Latin, [...] without what makes a good mind. [...] Two worlds are closed to the schoolgirl: classical antiquity [...] and the infinitely rich domain of Catholic thought²³⁹.

Furthermore, Madeleine Daniélou does not understand that there can be two different types of teaching depending on the sex of the pupils: "Will it be argued that there are two ways of having judgement and taste? Or that the same exercises [...] which form a good man's mind are not suitable for forming a good woman's mind? We remember that 14 years earlier, in connection with the project of Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart, A. d'Herbelot wrote in the *Bulletin of the SGEE* that wanting to give young girls the same instruction as boys was a violation of the divine plan²⁴⁰... Things have changed since 1898, and Madeleine Daniélou's choice to promote classical culture for young girls also responds to an obvious gap in secular provision. Indeed, the girls' lycées were resolutely modern in orientation, and although the Collège Sévigné began preparing for the baccalaureate in 1905, it merely sprinkled Latin over a modern education. In contrast, Madeleine Daniélou wanted to make classical culture the basis of Catholic secondary education for young girls. She was aware of the main defect of the girls' lycées: they did not prepare their pupils for any useful sanction and trained them by default for the brevet supérieur. Preparation for the baccalaureate, for which a command of an ancient language was necessary, therefore appeared to be a promising niche for free education.

Madeleine Daniélou presents classical culture as a safeguard against modernity:

"Only classical culture will defend us against the invasion of foreign imaginations, the madness of Nietzsche or Ibsen. Nietzsche is the one who proclaims that "God is dead" while Ibsen shocks society with his Nora from *A Doll's House*, in which feminists see the beginnings of the new woman, refusing to be sacrificed on the altar of social conventions. Madeleine Daniélou also uses historical examples to defend Latin: did not 17th-century women such as Mme de Sévigné and Mme de La Fayette, while being very pious, know Latin? Historical references are of course malleable: a few years earlier, Mathilde Salomon published a biographical article on Mme de Sévigné

239 Madeleine Daniélou, "Collèges catholiques et jeunes filles", *Revue du clergé français*, March 1913.

240 A. d'Herbelot, "La question des religieuses enseignantes", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1898.

in which she emphasised her interest in modern languages, which enabled her to defend modern education against classical culture²⁴¹.

In 1912, Miss Teillard-Chambon spoke out in favour of classical education for girls because Latin was the language of the Church: "What benefits would Christian women not find for their faith, what nourishment for their piety, [...] in associating themselves in spirit, as well as in heart, with the services of the Church!²⁴² " She recalls that Dupanloup himself advised teaching Latin to women so that they could read religious texts.

Madeleine Daniélou took this logic to its logical conclusion. In 1913, she added the Collège Sainte-Marie to her École normale libre, which was the first women's school to include Latin in the curriculum from the first year of secondary school, i.e. from the age of 13. She also invited all the pupils of Collège Sainte-Marie to take the baccalaureate at the end of their studies²⁴³. All sections of the baccalaureate were prepared: philosophy, Latin and Greek were integrated into the curriculum, unlike the girls' high schools.

This classical orientation of women's secondary education was generally accepted in Catholic circles. J. Laurentie, speaking as a jurist, even declared in 1914 that Catholic women should not hesitate to open secondary schools in which Latin and Greek were taught, even if they did not master them themselves. On the one hand, it was legal for men to teach there; on the other hand, the administration could not prevent these openings:

Did she not, as early as 1880, and before the [Camille Sée] law was passed, allow the Collège Sévigné to open in Paris, whose headmistress, Mlle Mathilde Salomon, was not, we believe, a baccalaureate holder, and where secondary education was nevertheless given, including Latin, and much more: where this education was given by men²⁴⁴.

While it is true that Mathilde Salomon did not have a bachelor's degree and that she employed men, it should be remembered that Latin was not introduced at Collège Sévigné until 1905²⁴⁵. In spite of the overall consensus on the integration of Latin into the female curriculum and the choice to make the baccalaureate the crowning achievement of the new free secondary schools, there were also a few dissonant voices. Abbé Bonnet, an inspector of religious education, wondered whether the books placed in the hands of young girls to prepare them for the baccalauréat would not be dangerous for them²⁴⁶. The answer to this type of objection is always the same: if the teaching is given by religious teachers and the programme gives a large place to instruction

241 Mathilde Salomon, "L'éducation de Mme de Sévigné", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, January 1883.

242 Miss Teillard-Chambon, "Projet de programme pour l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1912.

243 Blandine-D. Berger, *Madeleine Daniélou, 1880-1956, op. cit.*, p. 99.

244 J. Laurentie, "De la légalité de l'enseignement secondaire féminin", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1913.

245 For more details, see the following development: III- Women's high schools, nurseries of bachelors?

Controversies on the fate of public secondary education in a competitive context.

246 Quoted in Mlle Chauvière, "La séance consacrée à l'enseignement des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, June 1912.

In the case of religious education, advanced intellectual training will not be dangerous. Louis Prunel, vice-rector of the Catholic Institute of Paris, proposes to impose at least one hour of religious instruction per week, preferably given by a priest²⁴⁷. It is not a question of reproducing a vulgar catechism: the priest will have to teach in a classroom, chalk in hand, and provide the plan of his lessons: "Obviously, one must be careful not to fall into an excessive intellectualism, [...] but isn't the danger for women rather in the sentimentalism which develops superstition in certain natures [...] to the detriment of true religious feeling? Louis Prunel advocates cooperation between the history teacher and the parish priest. The latter should jointly teach Protestantism, Jansenism and Gallicanism, which "need to be seriously explained, from the dogmatic and historical points of view". Louis Prunel is convinced that a woman educated in religion will be more proselytising than a man. It will be necessary to explain to her

loyally, without bias, the questions [that our adversaries] exploit against us: the Inquisition, St. Bartholomew's Day, the condemnation of Galileo, the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the *Syllabus*, etc. It will suffice to deal with these questions in a clear and precise manner, for the answer to the objection to emerge of its own accord.

H) Attempt by Catholic intellectuals to standardize the female secondary school

The biggest problem after 1904 in women's free secondary education was the lack of centralisation. Revived by personal initiatives, Catholic education struggled to find its unity in the face of the uniform model of the lycées. At a time when it was no longer desirable to maintain the confusion between primary, upper primary and secondary education, the aim of the Committee for Secondary and Higher Education for Girls, created in 1911, was to establish a clear hierarchy of Catholic establishments for girls: the diocesan schools would prepare for the elementary certificate, the normal schools for the higher certificate, and the so-called "university" establishments would accompany pupils towards the baccalaureate and licentiates in order to train the future secondary teaching body.²⁴⁸ This rationalisation of the structure of women's education could not do without a survey of the situation of Catholic schools nationwide. In 1912, the Committee launched a study in all the dioceses of France to draw up a report on the situation of girls' secondary education. The initiative was a failure: only 27 of the 87 dioceses replied²⁴⁹. The conclusion, formulated by Miss Trillard, vice-president of the Committee, was simple: free education suffered from an exaggerated individualism²⁵⁰.

247 Louis Prunel, "Des principes généraux qui doivent régir le cours d'instruction religieuse dans les établissements d'enseignement secondaire libres de jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1913.

248 See J. Guibert, "Le but du Comité pour l'enseignement secondaire et supérieur des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, June 1911.

249 A. Briot, "L'état actuel de l'enseignement secondaire libre des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1912.

250 See Miss Chauvière, "La séance consacrée à l'enseignement des jeunes filles", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, June 1912.

Despite the difficulties, Louise Desrez succeeded two years later in providing an assessment of free secondary education for women in Paris²⁵¹. The director of the Catholic Normal School estimated that about twenty free houses had organised a complete secondary cycle in six years preparing for the baccalauréat. These schools enrolled about 2,500 girls over the age of twelve. This Parisian survey reveals the presence of 11 agrégées, 36 licenciées, 42 bachelières and 67 teachers holding the brevet supérieur in Parisian free secondary schools. For Louise Desrez, it was essential to concentrate efforts in the provinces, where only the town of Clermont-Ferrand had had an establishment providing training for future female secondary school teachers since 1912. She recalls that the girls' secondary schools have more than 25,000 pupils²⁵² while the free secondary schools have only 3,000 students and have not yet been able to federate.

In 1914, Hélène Liégeois raised a new problem: how to keep teachers in free education whose diplomas offered a much better situation in public education²⁵³ ? In Clermont-Ferrand, Mlle Taillandier set up a system of ten-year contracts: students from the École Fénelon who were candidates for the professorial exams undertook to serve for a period of five to ten years in free education²⁵⁴. The diocesan teacher training college in Lille adopted the same strategy and only admitted pupils who had completed their primary education in Catholic schools.²⁵⁵ Hélène Liégeois thought less about a system of constraints on graduates than about ways to improve their financial situation²⁵⁶. She was aware that the preparation of new diplomas had the consequence of introducing a new personality into the denominational schools: the "woman-teacher", quite different from the nun. These women teachers needed a decent salary, necessary to pay for long and expensive studies, which only allowed them to enter the job market at the age of 22 at the earliest. Aware that it is impossible to match the salaries of civil servants, Hélène Liégeois nevertheless pleads for salaries in line with the lifestyle of female secondary school teachers, which has nothing to do with that of congregational teachers. She would like to unify the status of female teachers in free secondary schools, both in terms of salaries and the number of teaching hours, which Hélène Liégeois believes should not exceed 16 hours per week. Lucidly, she concludes: "The licensed teacher [*sic*] will only become truly and completely attached to the work of Enseignement secondaire libre if it gives her the impression of stability and dignity that one is entitled to expect from a Catholic organisation, in the deepest sense of the word.

251 Mlle Desrez, "La situation de l'enseignement secondaire libre féminin à Paris", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1914.

252 Françoise Mayeur puts forward the figure of 35,000 pupils.

253 Mlle Liégeois, "La condition des professeures licenciées dans l'enseignement secondaire libre", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1914.

254 Mlle Taillandier, "L'École Fénelon, Institut normal de jeunes filles, à Clermont-Ferrand", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1912.

255 Miss H. Descamps, "L'école normale diocésaine de Lille", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, December 1914.

256 Mlle Liégeois, "La condition des professeures licenciées dans l'enseignement secondaire libre", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, July 1914.

While female voices were hardly identifiable in Catholic intellectual circles before the beginning of the XX^e century, the 1904 law brought secular Catholics into the debates about girls' education. The Combit laws were the occasion of a reversal: while the *Bulletin de la SGEE* condemned the ambitions of women's lycées, its collaborators ended up rallying to the idea of quality education for girls. A female intellectual elite, guided in particular by the agrégées Madeleine Daniélou and Hélène Liégeois as well as the founder of the École normale catholique Louise Desrez, followed in the footsteps of Mme d'Adhémar and Mère Marie du Sacré-Cœur, whose words were unheard at the end of the XIX^e century. This new generation of intellectuals was united by a common refusal of school neutrality and by the desire to improve women's education, which should not remain the prerogative of the secular school. After the 1904 law, it was the Briand-Massé project of 1907 that appeared to be a new threat to Catholic schools and gave credence to Madeleine Daniélou's desire to train a qualified female teaching force. However, it was not until 1911 that a Committee for Female Secondary Education was set up within the SGEE in order to federate individual initiatives and standardise denominational secondary education. This committee brought together Catholic women specialists in educational matters, most of whom were directors of the new institutions that were taking over from the teaching congregations.

III- Make female high schools into bachelor's degree factories? Female intellectuals initiate the debate in public secondary schools

When, at the beginning of the 20th century, Catholic establishments initiated a preparation for the baccalaureate for girls, the questioning of the secular secondary model, which had already been initiated for some years, took on a new face. Should we be proud of the original features of modern education and reject any assimilation of female secondary education to male secondary education? On the contrary, is it time to introduce the classical humanities to girls in order to treat them as equals to their brothers²⁵⁷ ? Karen Offen, in her pioneering work on women and the baccalaureate, states that "the existence of the baccalaureate as a male privilege (regardless of its intrinsic merit) embodies the bourgeois ideal of segregated gender roles²⁵⁸ ". This explains the conservatism of the institution in the face of the desire for reform by intellectuals convinced of the obsolescence of the principle of disinterested culture for girls. If the institution is stalling, Jo B. Margadant considers that on the eve of the war, "public opinion has completely

257 For boys, Latin is the dividing line between primary and secondary school. This is not the case for girls: neither the normal girls, nor the high school girls, nor the Sevrier girls, nor the Fontenays girls study dead languages.

258 Karen Offen, 'The Second Sex and the Baccalaureat in Republican France, 1880-1924', *French historical studies*, Autumn 1983, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 252-286: 'The existence of the *baccalauréat* as a man's privilege (irrespective of its intrinsic merit) epitomized the bourgeois ideal of sex-role segregation'.

change of mind regarding secondary education for girls²⁵⁹ ". Female students and their families now expect secondary education to provide them with economic security. The debate on how to adapt girls' secondary schools to modern society took place in several discursive spaces: it arose among feminists, where the struggle for women's access to education was a consensus; it also crept into the specialised press, such as the *Revue universitaire* or *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, as well as the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique. Women played a major role in this controversy. Leading figures such as Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello and Pauline Kergomard combined field experience and feminist activism. Mathilde Salomon justified her demands by the successful experimentation at the Collège Sévigné. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben produced an analysis of the situation in the lycées, in particular by producing statistics. In her column in the *Revue universitaire* entitled "The 'Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles' (Bulletin of secondary education for girls) tirelessly called, until the Great War, for girls to be allowed to prepare for the baccalauréat. But other supporters of secular secondary education, who were in the minority but had a certain audience, defended the institution. They sometimes adopted a more conservative stance on gender relations than their Catholic rivals. But behind all these nuances, one fact remains indisputable: there was not a single intellectual involved in educational issues who was not interested in girls' access to the baccalauréat in the Belle Époque.

A) Will the new century be the century of bachelors? The debates provoked in the feminist ranks by the reform of secondary education (1899-1902).

It was not until Catholic initiatives were taken that the debate on girls' access to the baccalaureate came to the attention of supporters of secular education. In November 1899, shortly after the establishment of the parliamentary commission on secondary education, Louise Debor wrote in *La Fronde* in favour of maintaining a distinction between the female and male curricula, for fear that preparing girls for the baccalauréat would divert them from the role to which they were called, namely motherhood.²⁶⁰ Maria Pognon, who had chaired the International Congress on the Status and Rights of Women three years earlier, reacted sharply. In her view, the model of the housewife is obsolete and it is desirable for women to work, when their job is sufficiently paid to be a factor of emancipation²⁶¹. Maria Pognon accused Louise Debor of promoting a conservative feminism, which was at odds with the evolution of society. Five days later, Louise Debor defended herself from being a "bourgeois half-feminist²⁶² "and

259 Jo Burr Margadant, *Madame Professor, Women Educators in the Third Republic*, op. cit. p. 222: "Public opinion had reversed itself completely regarding girls' secondary education.

260 Louise Debor, 'Open letter to Madame Maria Pognon, President of the French League for Women's Rights', *La Fronde*, 22 November 1899.

261 Maria Pognon, "L'éducation féminine", *La Fronde*, 24 November 1899.

262 Louise Debor, 'Seconde lettre ouverte à Maria Pognon', *La Fronde*, 29 November 1899.

said that she had criticised the extension of the baccalaureate to girls in order to avoid introducing into their high schools the force-feeding practices denounced for boys.

At the turn of the XX^e century, feminists were torn between a desire to offer young girls the same career opportunities as men and a repulsion for the baccalauréat, an exam whose preparation was much maligned. Thus, in October 1899, Pauline Kergomard was delighted to see the baccalauréat condemned to death by the parliamentary enquiry²⁶³. Without claiming the right for girls to take an old dying exam, the inspector general nevertheless considered it indecent to deny them classical culture: "Do we have the right to deprive the elite of young girls of the intellectual nourishment that is so generously distributed in the boys' lycées to thousands of dunces? When the question was raised in 1900 at the Congress of Women's Works and Institutions, Pauline Kergomard demanded that girls should have access to higher education without being condemned to take the baccalauréat²⁶⁴. The secondary school leaving certificate specific to girls' high schools seemed preferable. While waiting for the two diplomas to be assimilated, Blanche Edwards-Pilliet, a baccalaureate holder since 1878, called for girls' lycées to organise optional preparation for the baccalauréat²⁶⁵. Her wish was adopted, with Pauline Kergomard not opposing it.

But when Blanche Edwards-Pilliet renewed her request three months later at the Congress on the Status and Rights of Women, she was opposed by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, also a baccalaureate holder, who argued in favour of the school certificate:

As a headmistress who has acquired some experience of the question through eighteen years of management, I will advocate the school-leaving certificate. This diploma, which is the natural sanction of the studies of secondary school girls, and which is passed before a jury made up largely of teachers from the class, is so much the ideal of examinations that those who call for the abolition of the baccalauréat for young people ask that it be replaced by a diploma of completion of studies [...]. Since secondary education for girls has this excellent thing [...] let us beware of replacing it by a worse one²⁶⁶.

Predicting, like Pauline Kergomard, the imminent ruin of the baccalauréat, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello demanded that the school-leaving certificate should open the doors of higher education to girls. Louise Debor opposed this solution, considering that in the presence of two candidates, one with a baccalaureate and the other without, any jury would systematically prefer the baccalaureate. In order to settle the debate, the commission decided in favour of the following wish: "That the education of young girls and young men be [...] such [...] that it allows both sexes access to all liberal professions²⁶⁷. "

263 Pauline Kergomard, "Un progrès en voie de réalisation", *La Fronde*, 20 October 1899.

264 Session of 19 June, in *Deuxième congrès international des œuvres et institutions féminines*, op. cit. , p. 77.

265 Séance du 23 juin, in *Ibid.* , p. 290.

266 See the proceedings of the *International Congress on the Status and Rights of Women*, *op. cit.* , p. 142.

267 *Ibid*, p. 145.

However, the debate was far from over. In 1901, the Minister of Public Education gave women's high schools the possibility of organising optional courses. In *La Fronde*, Marcelle Tinayre jumped at the opportunity to demand the creation of preparatory courses for the baccalauréat:

"since the path of reform is open, [this is] the only way²⁶⁸ "as this examination was the only way "to choose a profession". Until then, young women only left the lycées for the Fontenay or Sèvres lycées: the education they received only opened up teaching careers. However, according to J. Hellé, "not all women are made to be teachers or professors, just as not all men are made to be teachers or professors". Only the baccalaureate appears to be the real "touchstone of working life". Although it was often presented as an insurmountable test, it was in fact far from formidable for most female students, who until then had been obliged to prepare for two exams: the school-leaving certificate and the brevet supérieur. In these circumstances,

it would be inconceivable, while girls' secondary schools were created with a view to egalitarian education, that these establishments should put girls [...] in a state of systematic inferiority to boys for any longer. This is all the more true because the examination for the secondary school leaving certificate is [...] much more difficult than that for the baccalaureate. Thus, much more is demanded of girls than of boys, and at the same time they are disarmed! [It is by preparing for the baccalaureate that the lycées] will be that work of strong secular education, egalitarian education [...] that the Republic was waiting for.

The debate that agitated the feminists was not without effect on the discussions underway in Parliament. In 1901, Maurice Faure, rapporteur for the budget for public education in the Chamber, called for the end-of-school diploma to be assimilated to the higher diploma and recommended the creation of optional Latin and Greek courses in girls' schools. For Renée Rambaud, who came to question him under the banner of *La Fronde*²⁶⁹ it was now time for the girls' high schools to fulfil their promises and to keep up with the evolution of society. The equivalence of the brevet supérieur and the diploma of completion of studies was therefore unsatisfactory: it was the baccalauréat that should be equivalent to open up liberal careers to women, at a time when parliament had just allowed them to become medical interns and to plead in court. Designed to attract the daughters of the bourgeoisie, lycées are in fact favoured by the middle classes. The cult of disinterested studies is therefore unsuitable for this clientele. The historian Jean-Michel Chapoulie estimates that in 1899, 20% of female students were the daughters of teachers, 20% were the daughters of "heads of important houses" or senior employees, 20% were the daughters of small businessmen, and about 10% came from the families of workers or menial employees²⁷⁰.

268 J. Hellé [pseudonym of Marcelle Tinayre], "Pour nos filles", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} October 1901.

269 Renée Rambaud, "Les lycées de jeunes filles et le rapport de M. Maurice Faure", *La Fronde*, 23 December 1901.

We have no biographical information on this slinger.

Given its clientele, female secondary education must offer its students career prospects. Is the price to be paid, paradoxically, the introduction of a classical culture for girls that runs counter to the timid modernisation of male secondary education²⁷¹ ? Fifteen years after the publication of *La question du latin*, in which Raoul Frary opposed the supremacy of classical culture in secondary education, the reform of the boys' lycées finally maintained Latin among the flagship subjects (it was indispensable for three of the four series leading to the baccalauréat). Harlor sees this as a hypocrisy on the part of policy makers, who consider the subject to be of primary importance for boys, but do not think to include it in the curriculum for girls. Outraged by the inequity, the rebel nevertheless reluctantly pleads for the introduction of Latin in female high schools: what is the use of a language "from which ours emerged, it is true, but which for a long time now has served only for the celebration of Catholic worship [and] now has no existence other than liturgical²⁷² " ? She goes even further: "The superiority of the curricula of girls' high schools [...] is perhaps precisely because they exclude this lie and this waste of time. This is the uncomfortable position in which many feminists find themselves: they praise modern education but are aware that the absence of Latin is a means of hindering girls in their quest for intellectual equality. Harlor's conclusion reflects this hesitancy: she argues for the permanent disappearance of Latin for both sexes, except for the female and male intellectual elite of the lycées. After presenting Latin as a legacy of religious teaching and a vector of archaism, she finally advocated the creation of optional courses in dead languages in girls' lycées.

Clémence Royer is much more radical. She considers Latin to be useless in the formation of a scientific mind²⁷³. But, according to her, public education is so governed by timid academics that the reform of secondary education has not dared to attack this useless idol²⁷⁴. Similarly, for the teacher Marguerite Bodin, Latin is the language of an elite and its defenders "the reactionaries of thought²⁷⁵ ". For her, the language of modernity and peace, the idiom that deserves to be taught everywhere, is Esperanto.

B) The new baccalaureate, a door ajar for girls? The interpretation of the intellectuals.

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, a graduate of the University of Seville and an agrégée, confided to *La Grande Revue* in 1911

an article entitled "Bachelières d'autrefois et bachelières d'aujourd'hui"²⁷⁶ ". The author looks back at

271 Jean-Michel Chapoulie has shown that at the turn of the century, Latin was in retreat in the curricula. In the 1880s, Latin speech and verse disappeared from secondary school and then from the general competitive examination. In 1886, they were removed from the licence and no longer featured in the agrégation de lettres from 1907, see *in Ibid.*, p. 130.

272 Harlor, 'Le latin et la femme', *La Fronde*, 1^{er} February 1901.

273 Clémence Royer, "La réforme de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 11 January 1901.

274 Clémence Royer, "L'enseignement public et son but", *La Fronde*, 14 January 1901.

275 Marguerite Bodin, "Questions/answers: Latin as a universal language", *La Fronde*, 17 March 1901.

276 Jeanne Crouzet-Ben-Aben, "Bachelières d'autrefois et bachelières d'aujourd'hui", *La Grande Revue*, 10 December 1911.

the history of women and the baccalauréat: since Julie Daubié, the first woman to take the baccalauréat in 1861, a number of women have taken up the examination. The decisive moment in this evolution, according to the author, was the reform of 1902. From this date onwards, the baccalauréat was divided into four sections, including a modern and scientific section, without Latin (D), and a Latin-language section (B), with Latin but without Greek. With no Greek test and few science requirements, this section gained a reputation for being easier than the others²⁷⁷. With intensive Latin courses, the Latin-language section is compatible with the curriculum of women's high schools.

Were the legislators of 1902 aware that by reforming the baccalauréat, they were creating an air gap for girls? The report that Maurice Faure presented to the Chamber that year suggested that they were, since it advocated the introduction of optional Latin and Greek courses from the fourth year in girls' lycées. But when the CSIP took up the issue, it opposed these proposals and provoked the ire of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello. The headmistress of the Lycée de Lyon, who was initially convinced that the reform of the male secondary school was going to destroy the baccalauréat, finally decided to support the right of young girls to prepare for this exam, since it was maintained. In 1903, she published a vitriolic article in *La Fronde* against the CSIP's decision, entitled "Égoïsme masculin"²⁷⁸. She explained the wish of Mme Dejean de la Bâtie, headmistress of Fontenay, to create optional Latin and Greek courses in some lycées²⁷⁹ and protests at the opposition of the assembly, despite the modesty of the proposal:

As long as nature endows the weaker sex with a stomach, [woman] has the right to earn her living [...]. It is an *injustice* to close to her the most lucrative and honourable careers [...]. But male egoism defends itself energetically, bitterly, and seeks to preserve its privileges. [...] "How," thought these gentlemen, [...] "it would not be enough to have to fight against competitors, in the future we would have to compete for places with female competitors? [...] We would be very naive to give ourselves "rivals" in addition to "rivals". [...] Since the barrier of Latin and Greek hinders the most enterprising, let us maintain this obstacle firmly²⁸⁰."

As usual, the headmistress of the Lycée de Lyon describes without complacency the mechanisms that govern male decisions. Certainly, in the *Bulletin administratif de l'Instruction publique*, the male members of the CSIP justified their refusal of Mme Dejean de la Bâtie's proposal by mobilising other arguments, giving a "long and convoluted answer, like everything that lacks frankness". Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello played her role as a feminist intellectual by demystifying their discourse: 'I will only say to these learned professors that women will not be fooled by such arguments; that ten insufficient reasons,

²⁷⁷ Françoise Mayeur, *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles sous la Troisième République*, op. cit, p. 388.

²⁷⁸ Paule Branzac [alias Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello], 'Égoïsme masculin', *La Fronde*, 8 January 1903.

²⁷⁹ Meeting of 8 December 1902, see CSIP minutes, F/17/12976.

280 Paule Branzac, 'Égoïsme masculin', *La Fronde*, 8 January 1903.

do not make a good one". To the argument that the introduction of Latin and Greek for girls would betray the spirit of the Sée law, she replies: "What does it matter to us what the legislator's intention was in 1880? We are in 1903 [...]. Why not go back further, and see what Roman law decided? To avoid the costs that the creation of these courses would entail, the headmistress of the Lycée de Lyon proposed allowing baccalaureate candidates to go and study with the students:

Allow parents [...] to have girls attend boys' high schools. You will cry scandal. Co-education, what a scarecrow! And yet you don't need to go to America to see coeducation; there are thousands of mixed schools in the gentle country of France. It is true that these are primary schools, schools for the people, and that what is good for the people is not good for the bourgeoisie. This is of course true, and it was not thought otherwise several centuries ago.

While Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello gave free rein to her polemical verve in *La Fronde*, the National Council of French Women took its turn to speak out on this issue. Marie Baertschi, secretary general of the Education section, wrote a report²⁸¹. She was convinced that women's programmes were ahead of the men's curriculum. Therefore, she called not for the assimilation of the curricula, but for the equivalence of the school-leaving certificate and the baccalaureate, so that girls could enter the same careers as men without having to take the male exam. This does not prevent the CNFF's education section from calling for the introduction of ancient languages in girls' high schools. Like Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello three years earlier, Marie Baertschi considered that the school-leaving diploma was the only intelligently designed examination: she would like to make it a precedent for the entire French school system. She concludes her report with a question that sums up the tension at work among feminists: "in order to conquer the place in society to which she is entitled, must women necessarily mould themselves to men and slavishly adopt their ways of being [or] must they, on the contrary, walk freely in their own ways? The question is whether it is appropriate to make the male model the generic norm to be applied to young girls²⁸².

C) Introduction of equivalences or preparation for the baccalauréat à la sauce Sévigné? The controversy was divisive (1905-1908).

The debate resurfaced at the end of 1904 when the Dean of the Faculty of Science, Paul Appell, again proposed to the CSIP that the school-leaving diploma should be recognised as equivalent to the baccalauréat. In January 1905, the Association des sévriennes asked

281 See Marie Baertschi-Fuster, "Rapport sur l'unification des programmes scolaires, première assemblée générale publique, le 17 mai 1903", *Première assemblée générale publique du CNFF*, Dole, 1903, p. 33.

282 See Karen Offen, "Defining Feminism: A Comparative Historical Approach", art. cit. It is a good thing to "Adopt a male model as the human norm?"

the equivalence between the diploma and the higher certificate. In the following months, the *Revue universitaire* published two texts by women on this subject²⁸³. But above all, in the same year, Mathilde Salomon opened a complete preparation for the baccalauréat at the Collège Sévigné. This initiative from the free education sector led the defenders of public schools to reconsider their position.

In March 1905, it was Camille Sée who took up the pen in his review²⁸⁴. In response to the wish of the Association des sévriennes to assimilate the school-leaving certificate to the brevet supérieur, he declared that girls' colleges and lycées were not intended to prepare for the brevet supérieur, which was the culmination of a primary, not a secondary, curriculum. Camille Sée saw in the assimilation of the school-leaving diploma to the brevet supérieur a potential lowering of the standard of secondary schools. Aware, however, that the formulation of this wish by the Sevrier association was a symptom of the obsolescence of disinterested studies among girls, Camille Sée called for the assimilation of the school-leaving diploma with the baccalauréat. The former deputy was in favour of a "female baccalaureate": he wanted girls' high schools to retain their specificity and for the diploma they awarded to offer as many rights to their graduates as the male baccalaureate.

Camille Sée's article is directly followed by an article written by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, who in turn protests against the wish formulated by the Sevrier association²⁸⁵. How could a committee of high school teachers and principals have gone so far wrong? Are not all secondary school staff confronted on a daily basis with the desire of families to see their daughters prepare for the baccalaureate, a necessary prerequisite for entry into liberal careers? The headmistress of the Lyons high school also points out the paradoxes of public education. How can it be explained that Russian, Romanian and Swiss students obtain equivalence for their foreign diplomas in French faculties, while French women are turned away from higher education, even when they hold a diploma? Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello reiterated the proposal she submitted to the 1900 Feminist Congress concerning the assimilation of the diploma to the baccalauréat. For her, the introduction of Latin and Greek courses in secondary schools was not a panacea: young girls, exhausted by heavy days, were victims of overwork. As a feminist, she called for reform:

Since the law was passed [in 1880], economic and legal changes have led many families [to] ensure [their daughters'] economic independence. It is the liberal careers to which they seek above all to direct them, and it is access to these careers that a democratic state [...] has the duty to make accessible to

283 Ms A. Gonnet, "Le diplôme de fin d'études dans les lycées et collèges de jeunes filles", *Revue universitaire*, June 1905 and Mrs B. Savery, "À propos du diplôme de fin d'études", *Revue universitaire*, October 1905.

284 Camille Sée, "Le diplôme de fin d'études secondaires et le brevet de l'enseignement primaire supérieur", *Secondary education for girls*, March 1905.

285 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "L'assimilation du diplôme de fin d'études secondaires au baccalauréat",

Secondary education for girls, March 1905.

The feminists do not ask for favours for women, but only for equality, justice, and common law. Feminists do not demand favours for women, but only equality, justice, common law.

Faced with the outcry provoked by the wish of the Association des sévriennes, Louise Belugou, its president, took up the pen in the *Camille Sée* bulletin to clear up any misunderstanding²⁸⁶. If the association called for the diploma to be assimilated to the higher diploma, it was to avoid the problem of having to prepare twice for the exams, since many women take both. The aim was to ensure that girls' lycées did not sink into primary education: it was a question of ridding pupils of the preparation for the *brevet supérieur* so that they could concentrate on the diploma. While recognising the relevance of Camille Sée's and Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's criticisms, Louise Belugou did not agree with the solution they proposed. According to her, equating the diploma with the *baccalauréat* would imply that girls were benefiting from a favour by being exempted from the male secondary school exam. To get the same advantages as boys, girls need to take the same tests.

This was also the opinion of Mathilde Salomon, who defended this point of view at the CSIP. In 1904, she abstained from voting on Paul Appell's wish for equivalence between the *baccalauréat* and the school-leaving certificate²⁸⁷. Four years later, when some of her colleagues proposed exempting holders of the *baccalauréat* from the requirement to have a school-leaving diploma for enrolment in medical faculties and pharmacy schools, Mathilde Salomon, who was not very vocal on the CSIP, voiced her opposition. According to her, "young girls should be able to take the *baccalauréat* like young men. This is not an inaccessible degree and girls would be the first to reject the gift that we want to give them. The Council would be going against their interests by adopting the vow²⁸⁸". This position was supported by Miss Sériès, vice-president of the National Federation of Teachers of Male and Female High Schools. She sent a letter to the CSIP in which she expressed the majority position of the federation: girls should be given the means to pass the *baccalauréat*, not to bypass it. However, the advocates of the wish point out that all candidates - whether or not they have a *baccalauréat* - for medical and pharmaceutical studies are first obliged to take an entrance examination (PCN) to demonstrate their ability to follow these studies. Until now, girls with a high school diploma are allowed to take the NCP, but not those with a high school diploma, which is a higher level of education! The argument did not sway the meeting. The director of secondary education, Jules Gautier, brandished the threat of the massive arrival of female students who would sow disorder in the French faculties:

286 L. Belugou, "À propos du diplôme de fin d'études secondaires", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, April 1905.

287 See Yves Verneuil, "Mathilde Salomon au Conseil supérieur de l'instruction publique (1892-1909). Son action et ses idées", in Jean-Pierre de Giorgio (ed.), *L'école des jeunes filles, Mathilde Salomon, op. cit.*, pp. 99-128.

288 Minutes of the CSIP meeting of 18 July 1908, F/17/13644.

There is a lot of talk today about feminism and social equality between women and men, but is it up to the Board of Governors to push women into male careers? Whether the Council and the Minister adopt this wish, it will undoubtedly happen that a large number of young girls, imagining that they have a medical vocation, will rush to the Faculty of Medicine. Is this in the interest of these girls, of the Faculty of Medicine and of the Society? No.

On reading such an intervention, one can only agree with Christine Bard's observation that anti-feminism "permeates the dominant ideology [and] motivates the legislator²⁸⁹". Anti-feminism is stated as a doxa to which the majority spontaneously adheres. Hostile to the economic emancipation of women, doubtful of their intellectual skills, afraid of seeing them establish themselves as rivals to men and threaten their privileges, Jules Gautier is an example of this hostility towards any change in gender relations in the Belle Époque.

During the same session of the CSIP, Mathilde Salomon, consistent with herself, refused to sign the motion calling for the end-of-studies diploma to be assimilated to the baccalauréat. Her colleague Albertine Eidenschenk made the opposite choice. However, she declared that "when she signed the motion, she had few illusions about the fate that awaited her²⁹⁰". The discussions held at the CSIP on 18 July 1908 thus demonstrate the difficulty, for the representatives of women's education, of presenting a united front. Mathilde Salomon, Mlle Sériès and Albertine Eidenschenk defended opposing positions. The first two, by refusing to exempt holders of the baccalaureate from the school-leaving certificate, unwittingly formed a front with the antifeminists. Albertine Eidenschenk was the only woman to defend, as a feminist, a simplification of access to prestigious careers for young girls.

Mathilde Salomon was opposed to any exemption from the baccalaureate for girls because she had initiated a preparation for this exam in her school in 1905. She explained the reasons behind this initiative three years later in the *Revue de Paris*:

As long as [women] compete with men for these careers, they must enter them as equals, through the same door as them, without any privilege. Some people, driven by a feminism that is more zealous than thoughtful, would like to see the school-leaving certificates of girls' high schools or the brevet supérieur considered as the equivalent of the baccalauréat. Why is this? Feminism is acting against its own interests if it demands that female weakness be taken into account in order to serve its cause. Young women who intend to leave the beaten track and one day fight professionally with men must have confidence in their own strength. The baccalaureate, moreover, is not

289 Christine Bard, "Pour une histoire des antiféminismes", in Christine Bard (ed.), (preface by Michelle Perrot), *Un siècle d'antiféminisme, op. cit.*, p. 21-37.

290 Minutes of the CSIP meeting of 18 July 1908, F/17/13644.

not one of those inaccessible heights reserved for exceptional beings. It has been established for the average honest person from whom there is no reason to exclude girls²⁹¹.

Mathilde Salomon then rejoiced in the success of her pupils at the baccalaureate: in July 1907, 18 of the 19 candidates in the Latin and modern languages section passed, 17 of them with honours. Once again, the Collège Sévigné played its role as a pioneer: it proved that preparation for the baccalauréat in no way implied a questioning of the resolutely modern culture that was the hallmark of women's secondary education. Unlike Madeleine Daniélou, who, at the same time, intended to renovate Catholic secondary schooling for women by basing it on the study of classical culture, Mathilde Salomon asserted that the secret of the success of her baccalaureate students lay in their mastery of modern languages. Unlike their brothers, who began studying Latin themes and versions at the age of ten, the girls at Sévigné began studying Latin at the end of their schooling. Concentrated over two years, the number of texts analysed by the girls was necessarily smaller than those studied by their male counterparts. However, the daily organisation of the Collège Sévigné offers students time to compensate for these shortcomings through personal study. Indeed, only the mornings are devoted to classes, while the afternoons are free. Unlike high school students, the girls are not overworked or crammed. Mathilde Salomon argues not only that female high schools could learn from Collège Sévigné, but also that "the education of boys could perhaps benefit from the experience of girls". Doesn't the success of Sévigné demonstrate "that the time devoted to the study of Latin can be reduced considerably without the knowledge of the language having to suffer"? Is it not enough to delay the learning of dead languages and to proportion their study to the intellectual maturity of the pupils? Mathilde Salomon concludes with an apology for the female secondary school, which has not fallen into the pitfall of adoring Latin:

Twenty-three years ago, Raoul Frary was putting ancient languages on trial [...]. Since then, his ideas have gained ground [...]. Those who are interested in the fate of Latin studies should meditate on the experience of the young female baccalaureates: it is in this way that we must seek the means to save [...] the study of Latin.

Yves Verneuil summarised Mathilde Salomon's position: "If by any chance a process of rapprochement, or even identification, between female secondary education and its male counterpart were to begin, it would be on the basis of female education reformed on the model of the Collège Sévigné²⁹². " The headmistress of Sévigné is not lacking in audacity...

291 Mathilde Salomon, "Baccalauréat de jeunes filles", *Revue de Paris*, 1^{er} July 1908.

292 Yves Verneuil. "Mathilde Salomon at the Conseil supérieur de l'instruction publique (1892-1909). Son action et ses idées", art. cit.

D) Breaking through the cracks in public education: the threat of free education as seen by secular school activists

If Mathilde Salomon added in 1905 a preparation for the baccalaureate to the preparation for the agrégation and the certificate of aptitude for secondary education already in place since 1885, it was because the pupils at Sévigné, even more than the high school girls, needed a diploma to show for it on the job market. When, in 1913, Louise Weiss studied there to prepare for the agrégation de lettres, she discovered how different the clientele was from that of the Parisian lycées:

The contrast between the atmosphere of the Lycée and that of the Collège Sévigné was so violent that I drew a lesson. [In the lycées attended by] unconcerned young bourgeois women, a culture disdainful of practical sanctions could develop. But in the dusty building of the rue de Condé [where the girls] tried to be self-sufficient in spite of the prejudices of a society hostile to women alone, one could see that the teaching of M. Camille Sée had reached a dead end. The education of girls could not remain at the level of aimless instruction²⁹³.

Louise Weiss notes that the students at Collège Sévigné come from much less privileged backgrounds than those in public high schools, where the cost of schooling is higher:

Most of them led a difficult existence, [...] gave rehearsals or corrected copies for starvation wages and [...] arrived at the College harassed, foreseeing their probable failure at the agrégation, a failure which, by ending their attempt at emancipation, would throw them back forever into the proletariat of the teachers²⁹⁴.

Louise Weiss describes here the young women who were preparing for the agrégation thanks to evening classes, and not the candidates for the baccalauréat, who were younger and no doubt less affected by the necessities of life. The fact remains that most of Sévigné's students are, according to this testimony, women who have been

They are "defectors from their environment and [the] declassed²⁹⁵ "for whom the possession of a diploma was a question of survival. The Collège Sévigné played a pioneering role in preparing girls for the baccalaureate because, as a free school, it could not issue the school-leaving diploma, which was internal to the lycées. Preparing for the baccalaureate was a way of getting around this exclusion and of placing itself on the market for educational opportunities, which expanded with the creation in 1906 and 1907 of the École normale catholique and the École normale libre. As Françoise Mayeur recalls, in the 1880s, "the internal nature of the diploma was [...] a war machine against the

²⁹³ Louise Weiss, *Souvenirs d'une enfance républicaine*, Paris, Denoël, 1938, 10th edition, 243 p., p. 199.

294 *Ibid*, p. 196.

295 The formula is by Louise Weiss, *in Ibid*, p. 197.

convents: the enemies of the congregations could congratulate themselves on having created the diploma of completion of studies, which remained inaccessible to the pupils of convents²⁹⁶ ". But the time came when, forced to circumvent this obstacle, free education - both lay and Catholic - reoriented itself towards the preparation of the baccalaureate and came to compete with the girls' lycées, for whom the privilege of awarding the school-leaving diploma became a millstone around their neck.

1905: a preparation for the baccalaureate opens at Sévigné. A year later, the same thing happened at the École normale catholique. In 1907, it was the turn of the École normale libre. It was in this context that Camille Sée's magazine published an article in the form of a warning in 1909. The author - anonymous - complained that the year's budget did not provide sufficient funds for girls' schools. Is the State in the process of marking time, "and this precisely at the moment when the singular movement of an organisation which is not yet a rival organisation, but which is thinking of becoming one, is taking shape beside us, around us²⁹⁷ " ? The author is frightened by Madeleine Daniélou's attempt to form a Christian Sèvres. For the moment, the threat "is not very formidable", but if these schools multiply, especially in neighbourhoods without high schools, it will be too late to react.

At the same time, Pauline Kergomard spoke on this subject in the context of the *Union pour la vérité's* free talks²⁹⁸. She was surprised that the governing bodies were only just beginning to realise the competition weighing on the women's high schools: "Some free courses founded in Paris successfully prepare young girls for the baccalauréat. The state establishments realised the danger that threatened them [...] and also opened courses [...] for those of their pupils who aspired to be baccalaureates. On that very day, the CNFF had just voted in favour of the creation of baccalaureate preparatory courses in at least one lycée for each faculty town. Forced to accept the survival of this exam, Pauline Kergomard approved this decision. Like Mathilde Salomon, she considered that the future of women's high schools lay in preparing for the baccalauréat, not in the equivalence of grades:

Equivalences underline the deficiency of women's intellectual education. So feminists do not want it. They believe that as long as the degrees presented by women do not represent an equal amount of knowledge with the degrees presented by men, as long as there are female degrees and male degrees, male colleagues will continue to treat their female colleagues with courtesy, but also with a certain condescension.

Moreover, how can women aspire to the most prestigious intellectual positions as long as they do not have a humanities degree? The doctorate of letters, for example, is not for them.

296 Françoise Mayeur, *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles sous la Troisième République*, op. cit. , p. 125.

297 R. J., "Opportunity", *Girls' Secondary Education*, February 1909.

298 "Questions relating to the economic and legal status of women - in what public jobs would it be advantageous to introduce women?", *Free Conversations of the Union for Truth*, 14 February 1909.

closed. As for the agrégées, they are often unable to teach the optional Latin and Greek courses timidly introduced in their high schools, due to a lack of sufficient training²⁹⁹.

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, herself a baccalaureate holder and agrégée de lettres, became the face of the fight for access to the baccalaureate for girls. Since her marriage to Paul Crouzet in 1898 and her two pregnancies, she had been on inactive leave, waiting for a position in the same town as her husband. After teaching for ten years, she continued her intellectual activity by publishing books and articles³⁰⁰. From March 1909 until 1939, she wrote a monthly column entitled "Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles" in the *Revue universitaire*. In it, she dealt with issues relating to female secondary education. In the very first edition of this column, *the* subject of the baccalauréat was discussed: "Do we not notice that the free establishments, which are better advised, [prepare] their pupils for the baccalauréat with easy success which they will exploit against us? [...] State education will soon appear backward [and will remain] in no state to defend itself against a competition favoured by involuntary inertia³⁰¹."

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben considers that girls' access to the baccalaureate is not only a conquest of feminism, but also responds to the "simple wish [of the] practical family father³⁰² "who wants his daughter to receive the sanction to which she is entitled. According to her, the consensus that was reached was not to demand exemptions to allow girls to study at university, nor to create equivalences between diplomas, but to introduce classical culture into the female curriculum³⁰³. To show the feasibility of such a project, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben encourages her readers to discover the text written by Mathilde Salomon about the Collège Sévigné. After the death of the headmistress of Sévigné in September 1909, she devoted an obituary to her. It is the tribute of a representative of the Public Education to a great lady of free education. It is also an opportunity to recall the pioneering role of Sévigné, which, after having opened the way in other fields, is now ahead of the lycées in introducing Latin to girls³⁰⁴.

E) Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben: the outline of a sociological reading of women's enthusiasm for the baccalauréat

Aware that preparation for the baccalaureate was becoming more democratic among young women, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben called in 1909 for women to be considered as a special category in the statistics for passing the exam³⁰⁵. Four years later, after obtaining the number of female students in higher education in Paris, she asked the deans of the

299 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben mentions this problem in the "BESJF", *Revue universitaire*, December 1910.

300 See his career files: F/17/24295 and AJ/16/1025. On Paul Crouzet, AJ/16/5943. Among Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben's publications, 'Lamartine, poète social', *Revue du Palais*, 25 April 1907 and, with her husband, a new edition with images of Corneille, *Le Cid*, Paris, Didier, 1910, 125 p.

301 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJF", *Revue universitaire*, March 1909.

302 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJF", *Revue universitaire*, April 1909.

303 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJF", *Revue universitaire*, July 1909.

304 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJF", *Revue universitaire*, October 1909.

305 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJF", *Revue universitaire*, October 1909.

She also contacted the provincial faculties of arts and sciences to establish statistics for the whole country. They all responded: she was therefore able to provide more accurate statistics on girls' attendance than the administration could.³⁰⁶

It is unusual to make women a particular statistical category, even though Mme Pégard had set a precedent by producing a set of graphs at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893 to highlight the place of women in the French workplace³⁰⁷. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben repeated this approach 15 years later on the subject of female baccalaureates and students. She mobilised skills acquired outside her original training: she seized upon the statistical language, reputed to be 'scientific', which until then had been used mainly by men, to make visible a social development that she wanted to put at the heart of the debate: the tendency for more and more female high school students to embark on liberal careers, which requires them to pass the baccalaureate. By drawing attention to female baccalaureate holders and students, who were previously subsumed under gender-neutral statistics³⁰⁸ Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben delivers a feminist message: she exposes a social phenomenon that the administration ignores or tries to conceal and demonstrates that women have every capacity to take the same diplomas and follow the same courses as men. The figures accompany and complement her argumentative strategy by bringing women's successes into the open. The data that Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben presents in the *Revue universitaire* are aimed at two audiences: they are addressed to men, to members of the administration, in order to provide proof of a social evolution in progress; they are also addressed to women - in particular female teachers - with the aim of raising collective awareness about the obsolescence of disinterested studies for girls. These surveys reveal a social reality against which it would be futile to fight. The constantly increasing number of female candidates for the baccalaureate proves that girls are bypassing the obstacles placed in the way of their intellectual emancipation. Is it not in the interest of the Republic to follow the movement instead of slowing it down?

In 1911, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben also launched her own investigations to
Until this question of facts and statistics is resolved, all the talk will lack the only real basis³⁰⁹. " She carried out a survey of nine colleges and lycées in Paris and the provinces, to which she sent two questions: from what social class was the school's clientele recruited? What is the proportion of pupils preparing for a primary certificate, the end of secondary school diploma?

306 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, June 1913.

307 See Hélène Périvier, Rebecca Rogers, 'Women and the Language of Statistics in Late-Nineteenth-Century France - Reading the Graphs of Madame Pégard', *French Politics, Culture and Society*, vol. 37, no. 3, Winter 2019, pp. 1-26. To summarise: 'Pégard's embrace of statistical methods to describe women's status in society represented an important moment when Frenchwomen seized the opportunity to use a male statistical grammar to place the "woman question" before the public eye.

308 In fact, there are already some statistics on female students at the end of the XIX^e, especially on foreigners. See Pierre Molinier, *La naissance de l'étudiant moderne: XIX^e siècle, op. cit.*

309 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "La clientèle secondaire féminine et ses besoins", *Revue universitaire*, November 1911.

What is the best way to study, the baccalaureate? By summarising the answers, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben shows that the girls who go the furthest in their studies (by completing five or six years of secondary education) are those who come from the least privileged backgrounds. Moreover, three quarters of the "girls without dowries" take an exam in addition to the school-leaving certificate to secure financial resources. For Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, the conclusion is clear: female secondary education is not secondary enough because it ignores the classical humanities; it is too feminine "in that it leads to nothing, that it is not scientific enough, not prolonged enough".

Should the girls' high schools nevertheless be faithful to the ideals that inspired them in the 1880s? For Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, it is pointless to keep referring to the founders' project: they had to fight against such prejudices that they had to multiply precautions, and the law gave birth to an institution with ambitions that were less than the initial objective³¹⁰. Moreover, had not the women's high schools already been reformed? Household education courses, introduced in the 1900s, had not been foreseen by the founders, but did not raise any controversy. If the preparation of the baccalaureate by girls is such a sensitive subject, it is because it directly affects male pride.

In addition, there is the argument that the arrival of women in the faculties would constitute a risk of lowering the level of education. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben does not believe this³¹¹. She recalls her own experience as a candidate for the baccalauréat in 1887-1888. She had not had the same solid preparation as the boys and had had to take private lessons:

In spite of these fanciful preparations, it was not generally null or indifferent candidates who presented themselves before the jury; either they had a maturity of mind that made up for their shortcomings, or they felt obliged to justify their abnormal application by being above the average level of the candidates³¹².

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben captures here the process by which minorities over-invest in the preparation of diplomas to compensate for their lack of legitimacy. Patrick Cabanel's analysis of this phenomenon in relation to religious minorities can just as easily be used as a guide to the success of women: following the example of Jews and Protestants, young girls place a 'slightly crazy' hope in academic success, as a direct compensation for their marginality.³¹³

In addition, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben had a desire to take revenge through academic success in the face of the contempt in which women were held. Thus, it was not without a certain amount of bitterness that she noted in 1913 that most candidates for the baccalauréat were concentrated in the

310 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, October 1911.

311 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, January 1914.

312 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "Bachelières d'autrefois et bachelières d'aujourd'hui", *La Grande Revue*, 10 December 1911.

313 Patrick Cabanel, "Un lieu de mixité religieuse, Protestants et juifs au lycée sous la Troisième République", in Pierre Caspard, Jean-Noël Luc, Philippe Savoie (dir.), *Lycées, lycéens, lycéennes*, *op. cit.*, p. 117-129.

Latin-languages, considered the easiest. In the summer of 1912, there were 171 candidates in this section, compared to 44 in the other three streams combined. The agrégée exclaimed: "Come on, ladies, a little more courage, or tomorrow your baccalauréat will be contested as some of your other exams were contested³¹⁴". For Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, the duty of women is to prove, in competitions where they are on an equal footing with men, that they are intellectually equal to them. The movement is underway. While the agrégée remembers her shame at entering an exclusively male lecture hall when she took the baccalaureate exams, she notes that the young girls of the Belle Époque asserted their right to be there: "They have a decisive look, they talk with the young men as comrades, in a word, they feel *at home*.³¹⁵."

F) Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben's plea for a uniform curriculum with male secondary schools

Unlike Mathilde Salomon, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben did not see the preparation for the baccalauréat as a simple adaptation of secondary school women to a new diploma requirement: in her eyes, it was an opportunity to integrate classical culture into the curriculum for girls. She wonders why female students should not be able to read Latin and Greek works in the text, like their brothers: "What is it about women that they are denied the clarity and integrity of knowledge? However, some academics were alarmed by the threat that young girls would pose to Latin studies. Thus, M. Maquet, a teacher at the Lycée Condorcet, was afraid that the example of the Collège Sévigné would serve as a precedent for the male lycées: if young girls manage to learn Latin in two years, what is the point of employing young men for six years in the same study?³¹⁶ ? Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben reassured him: the innovation of the Collège Sévigné aimed to offer students the means to overcome an obstacle, not to draw all the intellectual and moral profit possible from classical culture. Far from undermining the classical humanities, the interest that the girls showed in them would, on the contrary, enhance the value of Latin teaching. On the eve of the war, the deputy Théodore Reinach put forward this argument:

As today's youth, in its haste to reach productive and lucrative situations, is increasingly deserting the preoccupations of pure science or pure art, [...] it is not a bad thing for young French women to be drawn into high studies [for] we need women both to swell the public that enjoys masterpieces and the elite that creates them³¹⁷.

314 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, February 1913.

315 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "Bachelières d'autrefois et bachelières d'aujourd'hui", *La Grande Revue*, 10 December 1911.

316 Quoted by Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, February 1910.

317 Quoted by Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, April 1914.

Did the female clientele, for whom modern secondary education was conceived in 1880, paradoxically become the salvation of classical culture in the Belle Époque? According to the supporters of the reform of girls' secondary schools, Latin was in no way a threat to French women's femininity: M. Druenes, a Latin teacher, demonstrated the compatibility between dead languages and domestic tasks: "ancient culture and the gentleness of the next home are things that are maintained and of which the former contributes to ensuring the latter³¹⁸". Moreover, thanks to Latin, women would finally have the same culture as their husbands and would become the ideal teacher of their children. Ancient languages, which were harmless to the social order, were described as a means for women to place themselves at the service of the family and society³¹⁹.

But the addition of optional Latin courses in women's high schools was primarily explained by the need to counter the initiatives of Catholic schools. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben declared that "in the presence of competition from free education, preparation for the baccalaureate [...] is, for official women's education, a question of vital competition³²⁰". She reproduces the arguments that the conservative Alfred de Tarde uses to urge the University to safeguard classical culture³²¹. The latter recalls that the Catholic Normal School, the Free Normal School and the Catholic Institute pride themselves on perpetuating the tradition of classical culture: "There is no hesitation in following the programmes of the boys, in encouraging the study of ancient languages, and in directing young girls towards the baccalaureate. From then on, the superiority of this education is obvious³²²". In this context, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben lamented the inertia of the Ministry of Public Instruction: "What we have been asking for years of the Ministry of Public Instruction, namely a women's programme adapted to modern life, without neglecting the classical, has been achieved... by the important Catholic association: *the General Society for Education and Teaching*.³²³".

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben also reminds us that the women's lycées have the means to diversify their educational offer, since they made a significant net profit in 1913-1914. Every year, the public authorities rejoice at the increase in attendance at the women's lycées, but 'who has ever counted the pupils they lose to better-informed competitors, for not yet satisfying all the needs of their time'?

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben was particularly concerned about the ambitions of Madeleine Daniélou, whom she quoted in one of her articles to show the danger that her institution posed to public schools: "The movement of young girls towards intellectual culture is an absolutely obvious fact, and it seemed to us to be a clear duty to try to take the lead, or at least to take the lead in the development of the intellectual culture.

318 Quoted by Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, September-October 1913.

319 See Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, March 1913.

320 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, March 1912.

321 Alfred de Tarde, close to Action Française, is the author of *L'Esprit de la nouvelle Sorbonne* (1911). In it, he deplored the decline of classical culture from a reactionary, antidreyfusard and anti-secular perspective. Paradoxically, his conclusions converge with those of Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, a feminist and militant of the secular school.

322 Quoted by Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, March 1912.

323 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, May 1914.

Unless he does not allow the intellectual elite of the girls of France to be drawn to the state schools³²⁴ ". The Free University was indeed in a position to take the lead.

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben shows that public education is not only being outpaced by free education, but also by other countries. She comments on a German initiative: "[the] Director of Karlsruhe [...] would like to introduce Greek into the girls' gymnasiums [and] proposes a programme for the teaching of Latin which will seem quite bold next to our timid innovations³²⁵ ". France, which prided itself on being a pioneer, no longer held its own. Thus, the 1913 Congress of Secondary Education postponed the discussion of the reform of girls' high schools, without taking into account the urgency of the issue. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben reproduced the report that Mlle Allard should have read to the congress, in which she explained that the secondary staff were opposed to the equivalence of the diploma with the baccalauréat, and could no longer tolerate the solution whereby young girls overcame themselves by preparing for both examinations simultaneously³²⁶. The debate was about whether girls' secondary schools should be modelled on those for boys.

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben was not afraid of this prospect. In 1913, she and the CNFF's education section called for the same education to be given to girls and boys and for them to be subject to the same sanctions³²⁷. But the editor of the *Revue Universitaire* eventually lost heart: "The patience with which on the one hand the same thing is always repeated without obtaining anything, and on the other hand the same thing is always heard without being granted, seems equally untiring. Will it always be so?³²⁸ ? "

G) Conservative intellectuals: a view of gender inherited from the 1880s

The inertia that characterises female secondary education is explained by the conservatism of its leaders, who remain attached to the differentiation of studies between girls and boys. For example, in 1909, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben summarised a lecture by Gabriel Compayré, who was opposed to any change and declared that "a purely intellectual woman is a monster³²⁹ ". He mobilised a strategy that had proved its worth: the indifferenciation of studies would necessarily lead to the masculinisation of women. It is therefore necessary to 'feminise women's studies without effeminating them', which is a way of legitimising the *status quo*. Louis Liard's speech at the inauguration of the Lycée Victor-Duruy in Paris in 1913 is in the same vein and bears witness to the difficulty senior officials had in acknowledging the inadequacies of the institution created by Camille Sée:

324 Madeleine Daniélou quoted by Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, February 1914.

325 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, December 1909.

326 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, June 1914.

327 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, July 1913.

328 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, February 1913.

329 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, May 1909.

It would have been enough to model the girls' schools on the boys' schools to change their sex at birth. This mistake, which would have been irreparable, was not made. The girls' schools had no models. They were not copies. [...] We have even been reproached at times for not being utilitarian enough, for not thinking enough about the need, for many of our pupils, to have a profession. The reproach is undeserved³³⁰.

The vice-rector of the Paris Academy disdains the criticism that has been levelled at the school-leaving certificate for years. He even rejoiced in the absence of any useful sanction in girls' secondary schools: "The tyranny of examinations and competitions does not weigh on them, does not deform them. Louis Liard was unaware of the reality of female secondary education: even more than in boys' schools, the tyranny of examinations was eating away at the daily lives of young girls, who were forced to prepare for the school-leaving certificate at the same time as the *brevet supérieur* or the *baccalauréat*. As early as 1897, Gabriel Compayré's speech in Lyon demonstrated the administration's blindness: "If you are looking for primary certificates, it is because you want to; you are not forced to do so³³¹. "

Sixteen years later, as more and more female high school students are taking the *baccalauréat*, the discourse has not changed. Faced with the impossibility of denying the figures, Liard tried to minimise the situation: "I hope that they remain a small battalion, these Latinist high school girls [...]. Otherwise, many things, excellent things, would be compromised³³² ". It is a question of avoiding at all costs that women enter into competition with men: the *lycée* must cultivate in girls "grace, a spirit of moderation, a horror of pedantry, the modesty of an intimate and discreet knowledge³³³ ".

In 1913, when the *Lycée Molière* celebrated its 25th anniversary, the tone was the same. Marie Dugard praised the female secondary school. She wrote a *prosopopoeia* that brought to life Molière's *Henriette*, the ideal of girls' secondary schools: "Brought up with women who drew on new science without discretion and were intoxicated by it, I was able to resist intoxication. Between the pedantic excesses of knowledge and ignorance, I observed a happy medium³³⁴. " While Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben mobilised the German example to show that France was on the way to being overtaken, Marie Dugard declared that "Other nations have Secondary Schools where strong studies in dead languages [...] or mathematics are made; but none of them offers its pupils such a general culture as ours.

Although there had never been so many female *baccalauréat* candidates fleeing the school-leaving certificate, the jubilees and inaugurations of autumn 1913 confirmed the immobility of an institution attached to 30-year-old ideals. Louise Weiss, a former student of the *Lycée Molière*, was not mistaken: "I wondered if the commemoration I was attending did not consecrate

330 Quoted by M.A. [Marguerite Aron], "Inauguration and Commemoration", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, December 1913.

331 Gabriel Compayré, "Speech by the Rector of the Academy at the *Lycée de jeunes filles de Lyon*", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, November 1897.

332 Quoted by Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, December 1913.

333 Quoted by M.A. [Marguerite Aron], "Inauguration and Commemoration", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, December 1913.

334 Miss Dugard, 'The Henrietta of the XX^e century', *University Review*, November 1913.

the institution of a nonsense³³⁵ ". While Marie Dugard was content to ignore the issue of preparing girls for the baccalauréat, some of her colleagues were critical of these innovations. In 1909, Anna Lampérière considered that the movement towards the baccalauréat was diverting women from their primary role:

How often we have seen women, whose work has for a moment filled the newspapers, confess [...] that they have wasted their lives, that the effort to be both a kind and good woman, a happy mother and at the same time an absorbing profession, is, in truth, beyond their strength³³⁶ !

An admirer of the doctrine of Léon Bourgeois, Anna Lampérière justifies the sexual division of tasks by the ideal of human solidarity³³⁷. Unlike Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben or Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Anna Lampérière is part of a "relational" rather than "individualistic" feminism, to use the classification proposed by Karen Offen. She sees "individualist" feminism, which defends women's rights as human beings and in the name of their individual dignity, as a risk of atomising society and destroying the balances that have existed up to now³³⁸. She thus disapproves of the entry of women into men's studies and careers, which poses a threat to the family unit and creates competition for men on the labour market. Anna Lampérière thus asked the 1900 Congress of Women's Works and Institutions - in vain - to issue a vow to ban women's work, which she considered contrary to reason and nature, and harmful to the proper functioning of the economy³³⁹. Although a single mother struggling to feed her two daughters³⁴⁰ Anna Lampérière considered the movement to encourage girls to take the baccalaureate and enter the liberal professions in search of financial independence to be selfish.

The paradoxes are no less numerous for the former Sevrier Marguerite Aron. When most high schools began to offer optional Latin courses, she wrote:

The Greek course is still lacking... but it is no longer a matter of "snobbery". [...] It is not always the best pupils [...] who play [...] the 'bachelière'. How many mediocre ones do we see, who, almost certain to fail the Diploma

335 Louise Weiss, *Souvenirs d'une enfance républicaine*, *op. cit.*

336 Anna Lampérière, *La Femme et son pouvoir*, Paris, Giard et Brière, 1909, 308 p., p. 26.

337 Florence Rochefort makes her an example of female resistance to feminism: 'L'antiféminisme à la Belle Époque, une rhétorique réactionnaire', in Christine Bard (ed.), *Un siècle d'antiféminisme*, *op. cit.*

See also Anne R. Epstein, " Pas "tout à fait des nôtres": Anna Lampérière and the feminists at the turn of the twentieth century', in Christine Bard (ed.), *Les féministes de la première vague*, Rennes, PUR, 2015, pp. 75-87.

338 Karen Offen, "Defining Feminism: A Comparative Historical Approach", art. cit. The relational feminists viewed individualistic feminism 'as atomistic and, hence, socially destructive'.

339 Speech by Anna Lampérière, session of 20 June, in *Deuxième congrès international des œuvres et institutions féminines*, *op. cit.*, p. 114-115.

340 On his personal situation, see his career files, F/17/3014/2 and F/17/22819.

The ambition of a "*public*" examination and the glory of later taking some vague Faculty registrations, sustain themselves.³⁴¹ ?

Marguerite Aron seems to be unaware of the economic necessities that push young girls to aspire to the baccalauréat. If Anna Lampérière, by celebrating women in their maternity, is part of a 'relational' feminism, Marguerite Aron shows a hatred of feminism that brings her closer to the antifeminists. As Christine Bard writes, this feminine anti-feminism "is sometimes a simple reflex of 'survival', especially when [those who profess it] venture into male domains where their assimilation requires the integration of the sexist norms of the milieu³⁴²". As a member of the jury for the women's agrégation de lettres and a regular contributor to the Camille Sée review, Marguerite Aron has in fact integrated herself into a milieu haunted by the fear of the disruption of gender norms. An Agrégée de lettres, author of books and contributor to reviews, Marguerite Aron nevertheless showed ambition and in many ways seemed to be a counter-example to her own discourse, which accused high school girls of snobbery. She is one of those women for whom "the contradiction between [life] and [speech] is striking³⁴³".

In December 1912, Marguerite Aron devoted an article to "the fashion of examinations in women's education³⁴⁴". In this article, she considers that a woman should never become a slave to fashion, which is as "right in matters of examinations as it is in matters of hats". She writes:

Bachelière" is a better word than "Brevetée". [It reconciles the coquettish cult of a somewhat pedantic tradition with the emancipatory and egalitarian ambition of the rivalry of the sexes. Isn't there a certain exhilaration, at 17, in taking on this assault? While Jeanne Crozet-Benaben expresses herself through documented and quantified surveys, Marguerite Aron reduces to psychological causes the tendency of secondary school girls to enrol for the baccalauréat. She shows the harmful consequences for female secondary education. Built with a view to transmitting a disinterested culture, it gradually became a way of 'warming up' students for the 'bachot'. Marguerite Aron, on the contrary, praises the

"She gave her students the example of Louis Pasteur's wife, who did not seek the glory of being an intellectual in place of her husband. She gives her students the example of Louis Pasteur's wife, who did not seek the glory of being an intellectual in her husband's place:

Far from striving [...] to be jealous of this dominating science which absorbed all her husband's activity, [...] far from fabricating rebellious feelings, like our feminists, [...] against the inequality which placed Pasteur in the laboratory and herself in the home, she welcomed the fact that the home could be [a] tender and comforting environment³⁴⁵.

341 Marguerite Aron, "Pour l'amélioration de l'enseignement féminin", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, May 1912.

342 Christine Bard, "Pour une histoire des antiféminismes", in Christine Bard (ed.), *Un siècle d'antiféminisme*, op. cit., pp. 21-37.

343 Christine Bard, *Les filles de Marianne: histoire des féminismes, 1914-1940*, op. cit., p. 414.

344 Marguerite Aron, "La mode des examens dans l'éducation féminine", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, December 1912.

345 Marguerite Aron, "La vraie Femme du savant : Mme Pasteur", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*,
December 1913.

Marguerite Aron praises the woman who "did *not* live her life, did not claim her right to happiness", as French women now do. She concludes her portrait of Mme Louis Pasteur with the following words: "Do we know how many great men would have been greater without their wives?"

If Anna Lampérière, Marguerite Aron and Marie Dugard were opposed to the transformation of girls' lycées with a view to preparing for the baccalauréat, it was because of the cult of disinterested study, which made them suspicious of young girls who wanted to monetise the knowledge they had acquired. Well integrated into male intellectual networks³⁴⁶ These three intellectuals denied their pupils the right to compete with their brothers. They deplore a development in which they see women's high schools, citadels of liberal culture, being subjected to the law of the market. They were an exception at a time when the majority of women involved in the debate agreed on the need for reform of girls' schools.

It was thanks to women that the debate on the preparation of the baccalaureate by girls arose in the Belle Époque. While the reform of male secondary education, which led to the new baccalauréat in 1902, ignored girls' lycées, the intellectuals of *La Fronde* refused to accept this invisibilisation and introduced the 'women's question' into the discussion. In their wake, several female teachers and headmistresses relayed the reality on the ground and the desires of the families with which they were confronted on a daily basis. Although there was a consensus on the need to go beyond the ideal of disinterested culture, the debate was also a source of division, particularly on the subject of the place to be reserved for classical culture or on the introduction of equivalence between specifically female diplomas and male examinations.

Competition from free schools played a decisive role in this debate: in particular, it was a question of dealing with the threat that the Church now posed to women's secondary education. Finally, the debate about the baccalaureate for girls inevitably fed into the debate about women's work, while some feminists demanded the right for women to embrace liberal careers and to obtain individual consecration through their academic success, on a par with boys.

Conclusion of Chapter 6

If it had not been provoked by women, both in the Catholic world and in the world of public education, would such a debate on the education of girls have existed in this form in the Belle Époque? On the side of the Church, the heirs of Madame d'Adhémar and Mother Marie du Sacré-Cœur defended a new kind of secondary and Catholic education in a school battle that was also a war of representations. It was a question of reorienting the discourse that had hitherto dominated among Catholics: a high level of education was not in itself a danger

³⁴⁶ Anna Lampérière is close to Léon Bourgeois, Marguerite Aron to Camille Sée, Marie Dugard is a member of the editorial board of the *Revue universitaire*.

for young girls on the condition that it is provided in a religious context. Secularism was designated as the enemy. In this fight, Madeleine Daniélou appeared as an intellectual in the strongest sense: a holder of prestigious diplomas, a woman of great culture, a talented speaker, a publicist in her spare time, with a large network, she was the most exposed female figure. A theoretician as well as a woman of the field, she is the guide of the renewed Catholic secondary school for women. Her colleagues do not have such an aura and speak almost exclusively in the name of the institution they lead, on limited issues. However, they have a great deal of room for manoeuvre due to the lack of centralisation of free education, which enables them to make concrete proposals in a context of crisis.

Their freedom of movement was much greater than that of female civil servants, who had to take the debate to the public arena to bring about a nationwide reform. For both secular activists and Catholics, the Combo laws were a major break. For the former, these laws marked a threshold in the secularisation of the school, which had to be rid of the compromises of the past. For the Catholics, the anti-congregational policy allowed for a profound renewal of the education of young girls. This marked the beginning of a period in which the boundaries between Catholic and secular education, which had been presented as intangible, were blurred. A new competition was established: it encouraged pedagogical innovations, fuelled debates by pushing each side into its corners, justified audacity, radicalised positions and opened up space for women claiming expertise in the field. On the side of the supporters of the secular school, the personalization of the debates is greater than among the Catholics. Several intellectuals saw their names associated with this struggle, such as Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello and Mathilde Salomon.

Conceiving the secular republic as a promise of equality, these intellectuals, although loyal to the regime, pointed out the hypocrisy of decision-makers - politicians as well as senior administrators - in their desire to preserve their gender privileges. It was they who made women's secondary education - until then relegated to the background - a major focus of the school war. Their struggle was as much secular as it was feminist, as the issue of girls' education was a potential competition with men for prestigious jobs. The purely academic debate conceals a controversy over real social issues.

PART FOUR

DEMAND FOR FEMALE EXPERTISE AND A NEW CONCEPTION OF THE SECULAR SCHOOL AT A TIME OF FEMINIST PRESSURE

(1900-1914)

Chapter 7

Asserting gender capital :

educational issues particularly addressed by female intellectuals

Introduction to Chapter 7

Studying France as it awakens at the dawn of the XX^e century to a feminist surge, Anne R. Epstein notes that women succeeded in making their way in the intellectual milieu by asserting their "gender capital"¹. By this she means their ability to express themselves on subjects where they are recognised as having specific expertise because of their gender. When they mobilise this capital, female intellectuals no longer express themselves in *spite of* their gender but *because of* it.

Firstly, it will be shown that they participate in the construction of a science of education aiming to reform pedagogical methods to adapt them to the nature of children, and this from a maternalist perspective in which they define themselves as 'natural' specialists in early childhood. It will then be emphasised that it is as women that they defend an innovative school model with regard to gender relations. Finally, it will be shown that it is in the name of an "intrinsically" feminine pacifism that they militate to make the school a space for building peace.

Most of these intellectuals see the secular school as an ideal micro-society, a prelude to the future society. In their view, the promises of democracy will only be fulfilled one day if they are first kept in the school. This implied that the school of the Republic had to emancipate itself from the frameworks it had inherited, which meant questioning norms such as the authoritarianism of the teacher, the evaluation and classification of pupils, the differentiated methods of schooling for girls and boys, the inculcation of a warmongering patriotism marked by the defeat of 1870, etc. The intellectuals attacked the doxa that presented war as a heroic adventure through which a nation triumphed; they also attacked gender prejudices, and sometimes even class prejudices. They wanted to bring the school system into line with the republican culture, whose lines had been shaken by the shock of the Affaire and the feminist push, at least in their eyes. Under the influence of feminism, these activists conceived of secular schools differently. For, as Florence Rochefort reminds us, there are "many elective affinities between the philosophical presuppositions of secularism and feminism, both nourished in a liberal melting pot of Enlightenment ideals, justice, equality, freedom"².

This study demonstrates the existence of a small milieu of female intellectuals who carry ideas for school reform. These women intellectuals constitute a feminine, if not feminist, avant-garde: they all share the idea that it is the essence of the secular school to challenge dogma and constantly reinvent itself in preparation for the society to come. They dream of making the school institution the crucible of a more egalitarian society and a more peaceful world. But these women are also professionals in the field. We will therefore analyse their speeches, but also their teaching practice, because, in their eyes, the battle is won first and foremost in the classroom.

1 Anne R. Epstein, "Gender and the rise of the female expert during the Belle Époque", art. cit.

2 Florence Rochefort, "Laïcité et féminisme, quels liens historiques?"

I- Contributions women à the construction of a science of education in the Belle Époque: intellectuals and pedagogues

When it was institutionalised as a university discipline, the science of education was essentially male. Between 1882 and 1914, the 15 chairs of pedagogy created in French universities were held by philosophy graduates³This effectively excluded women. According to Viviane Isambert-Jamati, the criteria for appointing a professor are never "a competence conferred by empirical mastery of educational problems"⁴ According to Viviane Isambert-Jamati, the criteria for appointing a teacher are never "a competence conferred by the [...] empirical mastery of the problems of education": the first specialists in the science of education are not field experts.

By focusing here on the women who participated in the construction of this science of education⁵The aim is to highlight the originality of their thinking as professionals in education. Unlike university professors, they pay specific attention to the reality of school life. Testifying to a particular sensitivity to early childhood, which is part of a discourse often tinged with maternalism, they make child psychology the basis for a questioning of several pedagogical dogmas inherited from the XIX^e century.

The turn of the century, marked by the creation of the Société libre pour l'étude psychologique de l'enfant in 1899 and by the Universal Exhibition of 1900, was fertile in terms of reflections fuelled by the feminist movement, but also by hygienism, which placed the child's body at the heart of pedagogical thinking. It was in this context that women intellectuals asserted their particular relationship to childhood, which was a matter of their gender capital: as women, they seemed naturally competent in this field, which was conceived as an extension of motherhood.

The women involved in the construction of this science of the child want to build a school in line with their social and political aspirations. The aim here is to highlight the interweaving of "science and activism"⁶ "in the profiles of the women studied. On the one hand, these women act as intellectuals by participating in the theorisation of a new science of the child. On the other hand, they are pedagogues and apply their ideas on a daily basis by seeking to "combine theory and practice on the basis of [their] own action"⁷ ".

A) *The conditions for a renewal of pedagogical thinking at the dawn of the XX^e century*

In a brochure published in 1906, Odette Laguerre and Ida-Rosette Sée, both editors of *La Fronde*, declared: "To the wanderings of a dogmatic and routine pedagogy

3 See Jacqueline Gautherin (preface by Viviane Isambert-Jamati), *Une discipline pour la République: la science de l'éducation en France (1882-1914)*, Bern, Switzerland, P. Lang, 2002, p. 26.

4 Viviane Isambert-Jamati, "Preface", in *Ibid*, p. XV.

5 Which are absent from J. Gautherin's thesis (as are primary and secondary school teachers), *Ibid*, p. 74.

6 Rita Hofstetter, *Genève : creuset des sciences de l'éducation (fin du XIX^e siècle - première moitié du XX^e siècle)*, Geneva, Droz, 2010, (dematerialized version, Introduction).

7 According to the definition of the concept of pedagogue by Jean Houssaye, "Introduction", in Jean Houssaye, (ed.), *Pédagogues contemporains*, Paris, Armand Collin, 1996, p.11.

Rational childcare, based on a new study of the child's needs, is beginning to take over.⁸ " In their view, although the child's right to education was recognised in France by the introduction of free and compulsory primary schooling, this policy was not immediately accompanied by a renewal of teaching methods and a reflection on the needs of the child. These authors therefore call for instructional methods to be adapted to the nature of the child⁹.

Pioneers such as Clarisse Coignet and Pauline Kergomard put forward similar ideas as early as the 1870s¹⁰. In the report that Clarisse Coignet wrote on behalf of the Ladies' Commission in 1871, she stated that after creating a democratic education system, the Republic should embark on the reform of teaching methods and distance itself from the dogmatic teaching inherited from an authoritarian regime¹¹. She praised the method advocated by the German pedagogue Friedrich Froebel, based on play. The philosopher also participated in the foundation of the Froebel Society in France, whose aim was to reform the wards. The association sent teachers to Belgium and Holland to be trained in innovative methods before they in turn ran kindergarten-inspired asylum rooms.¹²

A few years later, in 1879, Pauline Kergomard was appointed general delegate for the inspection of asylum wards and took part in the reform commission of this institution¹³. Unlike older personalities such as Marie Pape-Carpantier, she was not sparing in her criticism of the wards¹⁴. In 1882, her mission to study kindergartens in Swiss schools convinced her that France was lagging behind¹⁵.

If, as early as the 1870s, pedagogical issues were debated, Odette Laguerre and Ida R. Sée have the impression, at the beginning of the XX^e century, of being at a tipping point. Indeed, despite some attempts by innovative pedagogues¹⁶ Despite a few attempts by innovative pedagogues, the republican school was slow to produce a science of the child that would allow it to renew itself. Thus, in 1902, Pauline Kergomard repeated that the nursery school completely missed its objectives: "The work we do in our nursery schools is lamentable. I say this in all conscience, and with deep sadness¹⁷ ". The Inspector General regularly attends "baby contests" where small children are subjected to exercises

8 Ida R. Sée, Odette Laguerre, *L'Éducation féministe - La protection de l'enfance*, Lyon, Société d'éducation et d'action féministes, 1906, 32 p., p.1. We have no biographical information on Ida R. Sée.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 23-26.

10 See Catherine Rollet-Échalier, (preface by Alain Girard), *La politique à l'égard de la petite enfance sous la Troisième République*, Paris, PUF, 1990.

11 Clarisse Coignet, *Rapport présenté au nom de la Commission des dames chargée d'examiner les questions relatives à la réforme de l'instruction primaire* (appendix by Fanny Delon), Paris, imprimerie Paul Dupont, 1871.

12 Jean-Noël Luc, *L'invention du jeune enfant au XIX^e siècle: de la salle d'asile à l'école maternelle*, Paris, Belin, 1997, p. 377; see also the archives devoted to the Société des écoles enfantines, F/17/10893.

13 See his career file, F/17/23588/B.

14 According to Jean-Noël Luc, 'only Marie Matrat and Pauline Kergomard energetically rejected the past', in *L'invention du jeune enfant, op. cit.*

15 See his career file, F/17/23588/B.

16 See the Cempuis experience: Nathalie Brémand, "Paul Robin et son expérience à l'orphelinat de Cempuis", in *L'affaire Ferrer*, Castres, Centre national et Musée Jean-Jaurès, 1991, p. 50-62 and Christiane Demeulenaere-Douyère, *Paul Robin (1837-1912). Un militant de la liberté et du bonheur*, Paris, Publisud, 1994.

17 Pauline Kergomard, "L'enseignement à l'école maternelle", *Revue pédagogique*, June 1902.

of memorization and recitation, which she considers absurd and counterproductive for the intellectual future of young people¹⁸. On the other hand, the secularisation of asylum rooms, which became nursery schools in 1881, was very slow. At the turn of the century, many establishments were still run by nuns who had no training. True to her characteristically anti-clerical line, Pauline Kergomard reported in *La Fronde* on the idiocy of the nuns' teaching methods: use of the clapperboard, rote learning, abuse of religious history, and recourse to the image of a punishing God. She also presents the nuns as resistant to any control by the public authorities¹⁹.

For a long time, Pauline Kergomard called in vain for a reform of early childhood education. In 1898, she spoke of the "concerns which, for 18 years, [she] has never ceased to express in schools, in [her] reports to the Ministry, in [her] conferences, in congresses, in the press²⁰". She perseveres, considering that "it is the fate of the convinced to convince²¹". At the turn of the century, the Inspector General nevertheless had a few successes to her credit: it was largely thanks to her action that the nursery school curricula were revised in 1887 and placed greater emphasis than in the past on the importance of play in nursery school²².

A real revival of pedagogical thought occurred around childhood at the end of the XIX^e century. To begin with, in 1896, Ferdinand Buisson gave up the direction of primary education to take up the chair of Science of Education at the Sorbonne, left vacant by the death of Henri Marion. This surprising career choice - the chair of Science of Education is much less prestigious than the direction of primary education - testifies to Buisson's deep interest in pedagogy. From that time on, he sought to establish a dialogue with experts in the field. Pauline Kergomard was one of them. In a letter dated 5 November 1896, she declared: "I want to be in Paris in October for Buisson's course where I have a lot to learn - and I need to learn for myself and for others - and it will be a great pleasure²³". Three years later, she recounts the success of this teaching:

The "closed pedagogy conference" is [...] the model of its kind. M. Buisson begs his pupils to provide themselves with the material for the talks [...]; to submit to him, the teacher, and to the comrades, the questions which interest them, [...] their cases of

18 Pauline Kergomard, "La Tribune: À travers l'éducation, l'enseignement pour les petits", *La Fronde*, 17 March 1898.

19 Jean-Noël Luc, *L'invention du jeune enfant*, *op. cit.*, p. 389.

20 Pauline Kergomard, "La Tribune: À travers l'éducation, l'enseignement pour les petits", *La Fronde*, 17 March 1898.

21 Pauline Kergomard, "L'enseignement à l'école maternelle", *Revue pédagogique*, June 1902.

22 See the minutes of a meeting of the CSIP in 1889 (F/17/12969): "Mme Kergomard asked that the order of objects of teaching material [...] for nursery schools and children's classes be modified in order to better mark [their] true character. She puts the toy collections at the top of the list.

23 Letter quoted in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard*, *op. cit.*

pedagogical consciences. [...] It is my weekly feast during the winter; it is [...] one of the most vivid regrets that I take with me from Paris, when I leave for my tour²⁴.

Other pedagogues frequented Ferdinand Buisson's course, such as Dick May²⁵ and Marie Baertschi. Pauline Kergomard was pleased with the latter's dynamism:

The overloading of programmes has been put on the agenda by Miss Marie Baertschi, one who thinks and observes; [...] one who knows a lot, and who knows well what she knows; one who believes that what we learn must penetrate to our marrow in order to strengthen it; one who has received, in addition, the gift of persuading those who listen to her, and

M. Buisson hastened to give the floor to Miss Baertschi's supporters and opponents. He did even more; he opened to them the columns of the *Manuel Général de l'Instruction primaire* of which he is editor in chief²⁶.

A teacher at the Ecole Normale for about ten years, Marie Baertschi was aware that the breadth of the primary school curriculum was detrimental to her objectives. She raised this problem in Ferdinand Buisson's class and attracted a lot of sympathy: Miss Kieffer, then director of the Ecole Normale de Douai, agreed with her entirely, as did Pauline Kergomard. For these three civil servants, it was necessary to rethink the training of primary school staff and to found a real science of the child that future teachers would study.

B) The Free Society for the Psychological Study of the Child: a space for women's contributions to the development of a new science of the child

In 1899, some followers of Buisson's course founded the Société libre pour l'étude psychologique de l'enfant²⁷This was a laboratory for a science of the child that broke away from the science of education carried out by academics until then. Indeed, the chairs of pedagogy entrusted to philosophers since the 1880s failed to achieve their objectives: their content, far too remote from the realities of the field, was of no help to future teachers²⁸.

Faced with this failure, Ferdinand Buisson - president -, Pauline Kergomard - vice-president - and Marie Baertschi - general secretary - founded the Société libre pour l'étude psychologique de l'enfant. From the outset, the association brought together experts in the field, such as Suzanne Brès, former kingpin of the Pape-Carpantier School²⁹school, who became an inspector

24 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 5 August 1899.

25 See Patrick Cabanel, *Ferdinand Buisson: père de l'école laïque*, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

26 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 5 August 1899.

27 On this institution, Guy Avanzini, 'La société et ses présidents', *Recherches & éducations*, n°5, 2011, p. 77-83.

28 See Jacqueline Gautherin, (preface by V. Isambert-Jamati), *Une discipline pour la République*, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

29 Which served as the normal course of the asylum wards until its closure in 1889.

general of nursery schools, Émile Devinat, director of the Ecole Normale d'Enseignants de la Seine and master builder of the *École Nouvelle*, Adèle Dejean de la Bâtie, director of Fontenay, Aimée Fiévet, teacher at the Sophie Germain school, Denise Billotey, director of the Ecole Normale de la Seine and Marie Rauber, primary school inspector. Most of the women mentioned here met regularly, either as former Fontenay residents or as members of the Ladies' Committee of the Ligue de l'enseignement³⁰. In the first board of the Society in 1900, there were five women for 17 seats³¹. Women were numerous among the members - where they were in the majority - and very involved in the work of the association, where they played a major role.

When Pauline Kergomard presented the association to the readers of *La Fronde*, she explained that the Society was open to anyone interested in education: teachers, parents, scholars, etc.³². The Inspector General summarised the objectives of the Society in a conference entitled "Why should we know the nature of the child?³³ ? ". She was convinced that the school as it existed was unsuited to the nature of the child. Thus, "this child who should be running, playing, jumping, is forced to remain seated, immobilised". His physical development is neglected in favour of an education that Pauline Kergomard describes as force-feeding. For her, it was necessary to begin by observing the child, a task to which the association should devote itself. When the Society was founded, Pauline Kergomard expressed reservations about the two directions taken by Ferdinand Buisson. The latter's aim was to "bring together, for their mutual benefit, the psychologist equipped [...] with the most reliable experimental procedures, and the educator who lives with the children, observing them on the spot³⁴ ". To this end, the Society sent volunteers questionnaires which were then transformed into statistics. It was this "scientification" of the study of children that Pauline Kergomard feared. In *La Fronde*, however, she reproduced the first questionnaire drawn up by her colleague Suzanne Brès, inviting her readers to complete it³⁵. Marie Baertschi was responsible for collecting and analysing the questionnaires, which were sent to her personal address.

Before making questionnaires a source of the new science of the child, the latter wishes to test their validity. She embarked on a "study of the agreement that can exist between two observers studying, independently of each other, the same child³⁶ ". Is it not possible that two adults observing the same child judge him completely differently? Marie Baertschi organised this first survey as a test of the surveys. She went to schools in the Paris region and gave two teachers the same questionnaire

30 Marie Baertschi, Pauline Kergomard, Blanche Edwards-Pilliet, Denise Billotey, Aimée Fiévet, Suzanne Brès and Marie Rauber were members of both the Society for Psychological Studies and the Ladies' Committee.

31 Pauline Kergomard, Marie Baertschi, Suzanne Brès, Adèle Dejean de la Bâtie, Blanche Edwards-Pilliet. In 1901 and 1902, Aimée Fiévet, Denise Billotey and Marie Rauber joined the office.

32 Pauline Kergomard, "La Société libre pour l'étude psychologique de l'enfant", *La Fronde*, 27 November 1899.

33 Pauline Kergomard, "Why do we need to know the nature of the child?", *Bulletin de la Société libre*, January 1904, No. 14.

34 Ferdinand Buisson, "Quelques mots sur le but de la société", *Bulletin de la Société libre*, July 1901.

35 Pauline Kergomard, "La Société libre pour l'étude psychologique de l'enfant", *La Fronde*, 27 November 1899.

36 Mme Marie Fuster, "Première enquête ouverte par la commission des "sentiments moraux"", *Bulletin de la Société libre*, May 1904.

to observe the same group of pupils. They are asked to evaluate the qualities, defects, physical condition and intelligence of these pupils using the same grid. Marie Baertschi analysed the questionnaires and found that, on average, the two adults interviewed gave a similar opinion of the children in three quarters of their answers. She concludes that the method of collecting data through observation forms is quite reliable. She hopes that by multiplying this type of survey, the Society will be able to build a scientific database on French schoolchildren.

From the very beginning of the association, Marie Baertschi also played a major role in the internationalisation of its thinking. At the Universal Exhibition in Paris, the American school pavilion enabled her to measure the New World's advance in terms of pedagogy. Fascinated to discover that child psychology was taught to future teachers in the United States, she declared: "the Americans owed it to their active research in this field to create an incomparable system of education³⁷". As she speaks English, German and Italian, Marie Baertschi also acts as a translator. She publishes a review of *child studies* in the bulletin. She also presents the work of Earl Barnes, one of the founders of the discipline, and translates some of his studies. Finally, she monitors publications in English³⁸.

C) Child science: an extension of motherhood?

Marie Baertschi is committed to developing large-scale surveys, but does not disregard any qualitative approach to child psychology. Thus she published a "biographical study on children's drawings"³⁹. After having started to observe scribbles, she published a "biographical study on children's drawings". She thus reproduced the approach that Alfred Binet - who became president of the Society in 1902 - adopted with his two daughters when he analysed, through their babbling, the construction of child language. Binet was the only man in the association who used his fatherhood in this way in his work. However, the valorisation of motherhood is a recurrent element among his female colleagues, who use their gender capital on this occasion. Marie Baertschi explains that she uses her son and daughter as guinea pigs, which she regularly mentions in the newsletter. In 'Sentiments d'enfants', she describes the upheaval of her two-year-old nephew's arrival with her own children⁴⁰. Three years earlier, she had already painted a portrait of her five-year-old son, a child "living in complete freedom, not yet having learned anything, not at all in school"⁴¹. The article shows how much Marie Baertschi is keen to keep her children away from school influences. She is distressed by the upheaval that schooling represents for her son, who was previously spontaneous and talkative: "We know that before school the child

37 Marie Fuster, "The Study of Childhood in the United States", *Bulletin de la Société libre*, 15 October 1900.

38 See in particular Marie Fuster, 'Bibliography', *Bulletin de la Société libre*, 15 January 1901.

39 Mme Fuster, "Étude biographique sur les dessins d'enfants", *Bulletin de la Société libre*, 15 July 1901.

40 M. Fuster, "Sentiments d'enfants", *Bulletin de la Société libre*, January 1909.

41 Marie Fuster, "Perceptions of children, notions of things", *Bulletin de la Société libre*, February 1906.

is almost always an intrepid storyteller, and that after three months of school he no longer speaks⁴²". According to her, schoolchildren quickly lose their childlike soul: they "no longer offer the true mentality of the child in all its integrity, because they have undergone [...] the training of the school". The Secretary General of the Society condemned the disciplinary regime of the school. She recalls the constant need "of the little child to help himself with physical action, whatever cerebral work he does: grimaces, foot and leg movements". These studies lead to the conclusion that "our pedagogical methods need to be revised". The expertise that Marie Baertschi developed in this emerging science of the child rests on four pillars: her mastery of the bibliography available in *child studies*; her quantitative approach to child psychology through the data collected by questionnaires; her knowledge of teaching thanks to her professional experience; her own experience of motherhood which gives her legitimacy as a "child psychologist". Pauline Kergomard expressed herself both as a general inspector and as a mother, even as a grandmother⁴³. In the 1880s, she closely followed the education of her two sons at the Alsatian School. In *La Fronde*, she explained that she had complained many times to the headmaster about the amount of homework to be done, explaining that the pupils were not slaves⁴⁴. However, she was the only mother to protest, so widespread was the idea that children and adolescents should be treated like adults without taking into account their specific needs. Pauline Kergomard never hesitates to criticise the mass of "ignorant parents who confuse the cultivation of intelligence with force-feeding⁴⁵". However, she shares with most feminists the idea that motherhood gives women special skills in education. As Christine Bard writes, "the valorisation of female 'otherness' does not disappear [...] from egalitarian discourse: motherhood remains at the heart of their definition of 'sexual difference'⁴⁶". The valorisation of motherhood as a "divination"⁴⁷ Pauline Kergomard's appreciation of motherhood as a "divination" of the child's needs is complemented by the exaltation of her experience as a grandmother. She often spoke of her two-year-old granddaughter, who was "a hundred times more developed, developing herself, than her contemporaries in nursery schools⁴⁸". Whereas in kindergarten, it is 'a real crime against logic and against themselves, when [they] force [children] to read grammatical sentences⁴⁹ "her granddaughter is free to express herself by using nouns first, then

42 Marie-Éd. Fuster, "Perceptions of children, notions of things (continued)", *Bulletin de la Société libre*, March 1906.

43 On this subject, see Bérange Kolly, 'La mère, la directrice, la pédagogue et la lectrice : de l'utilisation du sexe comme variable pédagogique chez Pauline Kergomard', *Recherches en Education*, n°16, 2013, p. 124-130 and Linda L. Clark, 'Feminist Maternalists and the French State: Two Inspectresses General in the Pre-World War Third Republic', *Journal of Women's History*, 12, n°1, Spring 2000, p. 32-59.

44 Pauline Kergomard, "La tribune: À travers l'éducation: l'enseignement primaire élémentaire. The school", *La Fronde*, 18 April 1898.

45 Pauline Kergomard, "Why do we need to know the nature of the child?", *Bulletin de la Société libre*, January 1904.

46 Christine Bard, *Les filles de Marianne*, op. cit, p. 12.

47 In the words of Denise Billotey: "this marvellous divination of the needs of the being to whom she has given life", in "La femme éducatrice", *Revue pédagogique*, June 1914.

48 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 14 January 1899.

49 Pauline Kergomard, "Les écoles maternelles", *Revue pédagogique*, April 1900.

verbs, to which adjectives and possessives are then added. She only verbalizes situations that she has experienced, and is never forced to put words to abstractions. For Pauline Kergomard, this is the example on which the nursery school should be based.

In 1908, the inspector again shared her grandmotherly anecdotes after setting up her own 'nursery school' by looking after 15 children aged seven to two during the previous summer holidays⁵⁰. The children learned by playing and helping each other. Now, "why shouldn't what is excellent and practical for 15 children be applicable to nursery schools?"

Being a grandmother is a large part of Pauline Kergomard's intimate identity, but also of her public image.⁵¹ but also of her public image. Thus, when one of her granddaughters died in 1912, a group of kindergarten teachers wanted to place a wreath on the grave in support of the inspector general.⁵² But as the dead girl had received as many wreaths as "a king's daughter", Pauline Kergomard suggested that the teachers donate the money collected to the holiday camp fund. This anecdote illustrates the way in which Pauline Kergomard's love for her grandchildren was transposed to the anonymous children she was in daily contact with. The maternal affection that permeated her pedagogical thinking was also the object of cynicism on the part of her opponents. Thus, when she calls on nursery teachers to treat schoolchildren as their own children, she knows that she is taking the "risk of attracting a second ironic remark, deserved, it seems, by [her] poetic memories (oh! A mother's love... table always served)⁵³". This is the flip side of gender capital: while it offers women legitimacy to speak out on certain issues, it can also serve to discredit them for being overly sentimental.

D) Foreign models and educational patriotism in an internationalised reflection

The Universal Exhibition held in Paris in 1900 played a major role in the revival of children's science. It allowed the French to present their educational successes⁵⁴ but also to discover innovations from abroad, including the Froebel method - named after the German pedagogue of the first half of the XIX^e century -, *kindergartens* and other rivals of the French asylum room⁵⁵. While Pauline Kergomard welcomed the desire for educational innovation that was expressed in the wake of the Exhibition, she refused to allow foreign models to be reproduced in France. A patriot, she was wary of educational imports⁵⁶. It should be remembered that the newspaper she directed

50 Pauline Kergomard, "L'école maternelle", *Revue pédagogique*, January 1908.

51 She signed 'Mamie' in her letters to her younger friends. See her letters to Louise Renard, 21 September 1914, 19 February 1916, 7 May 1919, fonds Georges Renard, Ms2607, BHVP.

52 See Pauline Kergomard, "Remerciements", *L'École nouvelle*, 6 July 1912.

53 Mme Kergomard, "Écoles maternelles - réponse", *L'École nouvelle*, 12 January 1907.

54 There was an International Congress of Primary Education, of which Pauline Kergomard was vice-president of the organising committee. She collaborated with Suzanne Brès, Ferdinand Buisson and Denise Billotey of the Société libre. On the 1900 Exhibition, see Myriam Boussahba-Bravard, Rebecca Rogers (eds.), *Women in International and Universal Exhibitions, 1876-1937*, New York, London, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2018.

55 Ida R. Sée, "Pour les petits", *La Fronde*, 19 September 1901.

56 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 6 May 1899.

between 1881 and 1896 was entitled *L'Ami de l'enfance: organe de la méthode française d'éducation maternelle*. In 1902, in view of the popularity enjoyed by certain countries, she declared: "Does this mean that we would like to see the German programme adopted in France? Never in a million years! The genius of our children, made up of spontaneity [...] would not accommodate the minutiae of Froebel's 'occupations'. We need our own method, [...] very French⁵⁷." In the articles she published in *L'École nouvelle*, the *Revue pédagogique* or *La Fronde*, the Inspector General never provided precise criticism of Froebel's theory. She confined herself to objections of a high level of generality, reproaching, for example, the geometrical building blocks advocated by Froebel for being "the absolute negation of French common sense⁵⁸".

The Froebel method nevertheless appealed to many French pedagogues. Alice Hertz, a contributor to *Pages libres*, wrote several articles encouraging France to follow the example of the English schools that had adopted Froebel's recommendations⁵⁹. Born into a very wealthy Jewish family, Alice Hertz studied at the Lycée Racine between 1896 and 1900. She embodied the new generation of schoolgirls who had broken away from their family environment. Although she had a large dowry and her father did not understand her desire to continue her studies and work, she refused the model of bourgeois idleness and devoted herself to the education of young children. Married in 1904 to Robert Hertz, her "natural alter ego", she formed with him an intellectual couple studied by Nicolas Mariot⁶⁰. After their marriage, Alice and Robert Hertz spent a year in England. This was an opportunity for Alice to discover the kindergartens of the wealthy suburbs of London. She trained at the *Maria Grey Training College* and graduated from the *Froebel Institute*⁶¹. In 1906, she summarised this experience in *Free Pages* and described the training of future teachers according to the Froebel method⁶². According to her, English success was based on the fact that the teachers were in daily contact with the children in the *kindergarten*.

Passionate about early childhood education, Alice Hertz founded three kindergartens in the Paris region in 1907, using her own money⁶³. In 1910, she participated in the foundation of the Froebelian course at the Collège Sévigné: one year after Adèle Fanta created a kindergarten within its walls, the Collège opened a training course for nursery school teachers, known as "jardinières d'enfants⁶⁴". A German teacher and professor at the ENS de

57 Pauline Kergomard, "L'enseignement à l'école maternelle", *Revue pédagogique*, June 1902.

58 Jean-Noël Luc, *L'invention du jeune enfant au XIX^e siècle: de la salle d'asile à l'école maternelle*, *op. cit.*, p. 380.

59 See, for example, Alice Hertz, "Early Childhood Education", *Free Pages*, January 1909.

60 Nicolas Mariot, *Histoire d'un sacrifice : Robert, Alice et la guerre (1914-1917)*, Paris, Seuil, 2017, p. 49 and 27.

61 Fabienne Serina-Karsky, "La formation des jardinières d'enfants, une institutionnalisation conflictuelle (1910-1931)", in Bruno Garnier, Pierre Kahn (dir.), *Éduquer dans et hors l'école. Lieux et milieux de formation XVII^e-XX^e siècles*, Rennes, PUR, 2016, p. 171-183.

62 Alice Hertz, "An English Normal School: Pupil Mistresses in the Kindergarten", *Free Pages*, October 1906. On these issues, see Viv Ellis, Anne Edwards, Peter Smagorinsky (eds), *Learning Teaching: cultural historical perspectives on teacher education and development* (London: Routledge, 2009).

63 Nicolas Mariot, *Histoire d'un sacrifice : Robert, Alice et la guerre (1914-1917)*, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

64 See Fabienne Serina-Karsky's PhD thesis in Education Sciences (directed by Antoine Savoye), *Pratiques éducatives et bien-être de l'enfant à l'école : la contribution de l'Éducation nouvelle (1910-2010) : pour un nouveau paradigme éducatif*, Université Paris VIII, 2013, 410 p.

In 1911, in the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, Adèle Fanta presented the French Froebelian Union that she had just founded⁶⁵. The aim of the association was to study the conditions for adapting the Froebel method in France. The creation of this association and that of the Froebelian course at the Collège Sévigné received considerable coverage in educational journals. Thus Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben advertised the initiative on several occasions in the *Revue universitaire*⁶⁶. Adèle Fanta did the same at the International Congress of Women held in Paris in 1913⁶⁷. From 1913 onwards, the Union froebelienne française also published a monthly review to which Adèle Fanta and Alice Hertz contributed⁶⁸. In this project, both of them worked with Anna Amieux, the future director of Sèvres. In 1906, Anna Amieux was awarded a travel grant by the Albert Kahn Foundation, which enabled her to study the system of lessons in the United States.⁶⁹ She spoke regularly on the subject⁷⁰ and teaches the Froebelian course at the Collège Sévigné.

A new generation of women specialised in early childhood education in the Belle Époque, claiming the Frostelian heritage as their own. This approach was not confined to secular women teachers. As early as the foundation of the Union familiale de Charonne by the Catholic Marie Gahéry at the beginning of the century, the kindergarten adopted Froebel's principles⁷¹. Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur herself was seduced by these teaching methods when she visited the nuns' normal school in Bruges in 1898⁷². A decade later, in 1913, Lucie Félix-Faure Goyau gave a conference on childhood and the new methods of education in which she evoked the theories of Froebel and Montessori⁷³. She praised the book by Janet Erskine Stuart, the Superior General of the Congregation of the Sacred Heart, who encouraged educators to observe children in order to adapt their methods. Like Pauline Kergomard, Lucie Félix-Faure Goyau praised play, but criticised the science of education promoted by the laity for being too interested in the physical and physiological needs of the child and ignoring the needs of the soul. Thus, for Lucie Félix-Faure Goyau, the inductive method should lead the child to become aware of God. When the child is made to observe the sun, it must understand that it is thanks to God that the star shines. The speaker thus sought to invalidate the doxa widespread in Catholic ranks according to which the new pedagogies would be "incompatible with Catholic teaching

65 Miss Fanta, "Union froebelienne française", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1911.

66 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, 15 November 1910, 15 June 1912 and 15 December 1912.

67 Reported by Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "Une Assemblée de Femmes en 1913, le Congrès international de Paris (2- 7 juin)", *La Grande Revue*, 10 July 1913.

68 See Fabienne Serina-Karsky, "La formation des jardinières d'enfants, une institutionnalisation conflictuelle (1910-1931)", art. cit.

69 See his career file, F/17/24471.

70 See Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", 15 March 1911, 15 September 1911, 15 April 1912.

71 See Sylvie Fayet-Scribe, (preface by Émile Poulat), *Associations féminines et catholicisme*, op. cit, p. 151.

72 See the Viscountess of Adhemar, *Une religieuse réformatrice*, op. cit. p. 285.

73 Lucie Félix-Faure Goyau, "L'enfance et les méthodes nouvelles d'éducation", *L'Action sociale de la femme*, June 1913. The daughter of President Félix Faure and wife of the liberal Catholic historian Georges Goyau, she was very active among Catholic intellectuals. In 1903 she founded the Ligue fraternelle des enfants de France.

and would only tend towards physical and intellectual development through materialistic systems". On the contrary, she argues that the public school should not be the sole provider of innovative methods.

For her part, Pauline Kergomard was wary of this infatuation with the science of the child, and in particular of the competition with the group of Froebelians gathered around Adèle Fanta, Alice Hertz and Anna Amieux. In a letter to her sons, the Inspector General wrote in 1912:

Froebel's apostle - the poor thing! - Miss Fanta gives me a hard time. Calling herself an 'inspector of kindergartens', she runs around Paris and the provinces preaching the 'good word', the first word of which she ignores, according to those who know Froebel. [...] She calls herself an inspector of nursery schools and for a school director like Mrs Eidenschek [*sic*] (it is true that she is in the CS) to get carried away, the mess is organised⁷⁴.

Adèle Fanta appeared to Pauline Kergomard as her direct competitor. The Inspector General despised this woman, who, as a German teacher at Sèvres, did not have the field expertise that she herself had. Pauline Kergomard was disappointed by the support offered to her by Albertine Eidenschek, who was then elected to the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique. The Inspector General continued to plead for the French school to find its own solutions to educational problems. She found a strong echo within the Société pour l'étude psychologique de l'enfant, which embodied the science of education in the French style, whereas the Union froebelienne of Anna Amieux, Alice Hertz and Adèle Fanta was marked by an Anglo-German tropism.

A few years later, when he was mobilised in the trenches, Robert Hertz summed up the political issues linked to this emerging science of education in a letter to his wife, in which he began to doubt the contributions of Froebelian pedagogy:

It is not because he is a Kraut [...] nor even because the modern KG movement [*kindergarten*] started in Berlin - but the choice of a good flag is essential to whoever wants to make a good cause triumph. Are you not compromising true ideas [...] with the passing quirks and dogmas of a small pedagogical sect? Are not the resistances of people like Mme Kergomard (apart from personal reasons) partly legitimised by the desire to resist the invasion of a useless Tudish vocabulary and paraphernalia? What is good about Montessori is that she shook off tradition [...] to search directly, according to the experimental method - without bothering with what the teacher may have said. In order to comply with the spirit of Fröbel, should we not disembark Fröbel - which would allow us to cut the bridges (over the Danube) with Fanta⁷⁵ ?

74 Quoted in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.* p. 183.

75 Letter from Robert Hertz, 15 January 1915, quoted in Nicolas Mariot, *Histoire d'un sacrifice : Robert, Alice et la*

guerre (1914-1917), op. cit. , p. 238-9.

The culture of war having reactivated the hatred of Germany, Robert Hertz, until then his wife's main supporter, distanced himself from the Froebel method. He considered Adèle Fanta's loyalty to the German pedagogue to be a mistake and praised Pauline Kergomard's lucidity in preaching patriotism in education. During the Great War, the "anti-Boche" hatred gave credibility to the speech of the inspector general of nursery schools.

E) Hygienism and new pedagogy: the apology of the school in the open air

In addition to the influence of foreign innovations on French debates, the reflection on the school of the Belle Époque was affected by the hygienist movement: the school seemed to be the most appropriate place to 'regenerate' the nation. Several female intellectuals took up this question, their contribution to the debate appearing to be an extension of their role as mothers. It was thus to a woman - the teacher Alice Havette - that the section on school hygiene in the years preceding the war was entrusted in *L'École nouvelle*⁷⁶.

The teacher takes up various themes studied by Pauline Kergomard for several decades. In 1899, the inspector general was already calling for the establishment of a health monitoring system for children at school⁷⁷. In *La Fronde*, she insisted on the major role that the school doctor should play, and in the *Revue pédagogique* she called for a medical inspection code to be drawn up in order to rationalise the health monitoring of children in nursery schools⁷⁸. In agreement with Pauline Kergomard, Marie Baertschi also sought to reform the school system according to hygienic precepts. After attending the International Hygiene Exhibition in Dresden in 1911, she wrote in the *Revue d'Hygiène et de Police Sanitaire* about the steps to be taken in French schools⁷⁹. She mentioned shower-baths near schools, mains drainage for toilets, electric lighting and classroom ventilation. She praised the German system, which she presented as being better adapted to the nature of children, where there was no overwork, since schoolchildren had almost no work to do at home. She envies the German school, where lessons are grouped in the morning and the school canteens provide healthy and appropriate food.

These reflections on school hygiene sometimes come close to a hygienist and pedagogical ideal: the open-air school. As early as 1881, Pauline Kergomard explained that classes should be held outdoors whenever possible⁸⁰. In 1891, she was entrusted with a mission to establish "holiday classes" and campaigned to avoid reproducing the defects of school time during the holidays: it was necessary

76 The "Pedagogy and Hygiene" section appeared in May 1911. It was run by Alice Havette until 1914.

77 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 15 July 1899.

On this issue, see Séverine Parayre, *L'hygiène à l'école, une alliance de la santé et de l'éducation (XVIII^e-XIX^e siècles)*, Saint-Étienne, Presses universitaires de Saint-Étienne, 2011.

78 Pauline Kergomard, "L'école maternelle", *Revue pédagogique*, January 1908.

79 Mrs Ed. Fuster, "L'hygiène scolaire", *Revue d'hygiène et de police sanitaire*, 1912.

80 Pauline Kergomard, *Quelques mots d'hygiène scolaire, Conférence faite le 25 mai 1881, dans une des salles de*

l'hôtel de ville de Montauban, Montauban, Forestié, 16 p.

fun outdoor activities⁸¹. The issue gained visibility in the following decades. In 1907, Elsie Masson, an English-born intellectual and admirer of Ruskin who specialised in the Anglo-Saxon world in *Pages libres*, praised public parks in England and the United States⁸². Without being fooled by the Anglo-Saxon model, she hoped that France would follow the path of the open-air school. In 1905, she was already using the example of the *Ruskin School Home* to encourage French schools to open up to the outdoors⁸³.

As Jean-Noël Luc writes, this theoretical debate on the open-air school is part of a twofold logic: it is a question of breaking "with the urban environment, considered unhealthy, and with ordinary schools"⁸⁴ "The debate emerged in France in the mid-1980s. The debate emerged in France in a context of the fight against tuberculosis, the leading cause of death among 15-29 year-olds in Europe at the beginning of the XX^e century⁸⁵. One of the first open-air schools was built by Edouard Herriot, who created a school 8 km north of Lyon. Ida R. Sée wrote an article about it in *Pages libres* in 1907, when it was created⁸⁶. The aim of the school was to improve the physical condition of the most fragile children. They are monitored for health, are given a fortifying diet, are bathed daily and apply rules of hygiene often unknown in their family environment (such as brushing their teeth). As a good feminist, Ida R. Sée deplors the fact that the school is only open to boys: isn't it essential to take care of the health of little girls, future mothers, whose weaknesses will inevitably be passed on to their children?

During the Belle Époque, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello took advantage of the craze for open-air schools to renew her thinking on after-school initiatives. She presented a paper entitled "School in Nature" at the Fourth International Congress of Public Art held in Belgium in 1910.⁸⁷ ". Her starting point was a simple observation: "The open air of the common child is the street". The poor child must be saved from all the dangers that lurk there. In the absence of his mother, who works in a factory, the child learns to smoke and to fight. The street destroys "all the good seeds that the school tries to plant in young minds, the love of work, the taste for learning, the respect for oneself". Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello found the solution in England: "As soon as you get near even the darkest towns, [you see] the schools with their vast lawns where girls and boys are happily frolicking [...] practising hockey, cricket and football.

If Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello knew England, it was because in 1907 she obtained from her superiors the right to extend her leave in order to visit her daughter, an assistant at the college

81 Career file F/17/23588/B; Pauline Kergomard, 'La tribune: À travers l'éducation, Les vacances - Nécessité de vacances pour les externes', *La Fronde*, 21 and 22 July 1898.

82 Elsie Masson, 'Foreign Readings: Play Gardens', *Free Pages*, 16 November 1907.

83 Elsie Masson, 'An attempt at education: the Ruskin School-Home', *Free Pages*, 4 March 1905.

84 Jean-Noël Luc, "L'École en plein air: une histoire à découvrir", in Anne-Marie Châtelet, Dominique Lerch, Jean-Noël Luc (eds.), *L'École de plein air, , une expérience pédagogique et architecturale dans l'Europe du XX^e siècle*, Paris, éditions Recherches, 2003, pp. 7-20. See also Laura-Lee Downs, *Childhood in the Promised Land: Working-class movements and the colonies de vacances in France, 1880-1960*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2002.

85 Jean-Noël Luc, "L'École en plein air: une histoire à découvrir", art. cit.

86 Ida R. Sée, "Deux écoles lyonnaises", *Pages libres*, 5 October 1907.

87 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "L'école dans la nature", *Quatrième congrès international de l'art public, rapports et comptes-rendus*, Brussels, 1910.

of Holloway, while taking advantage of his trip to London to visit kindergartens and get ideas for his school's kindergarten class⁸⁸. On her return, she urged the authorities to open public parks for school children. In Lyon, she called for the creation of school patronages in the Parc de la Tête d'Or⁸⁹. The children would be taken there after school or on days off; they would have a snack and then play games borrowed from English customs. In addition to physical education, there would be courses in zoology through the observation of animals and courses in herbal medicine through the observation of plants. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello encouraged the new patronages of the 5^e and 1^{er} arrondissements to think seriously about her proposals. To those who oppose her on the need for children to do their homework, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello replies, like Pauline Kergomard and Marie Baertschi, that schoolchildren have every advantage in receiving the direct lesson of things and reading freely in the great book of nature.

F) Reflecting on the school norm in the face of unruly childhood: women and pedagogical care

All of these debates, particularly by women, are alien to the science of education as it exists in French universities. It must be said that the holders of the chairs of pedagogy all have a philosopher's training: their intellectual production is characterised by a high degree of generality and is accompanied by "a blindness to individual children, to learning procedures and to school situations⁹⁰". The issue of the 'unsuitable' child⁹¹ "The question of children who are 'unsuited' to the school environment is a blind spot in their thinking⁹²". Conversely, women who are interested in pedagogy pay particular attention to it. This can be explained, among other things, by the injunction to *care*⁹³ which encourages them to develop a strong capacity for empathy. Karen Offen has shown how this sensitivity to others served as an argument for the feminists of the Belle Époque to value the specific contribution of women in society. According to her, *care* is the central aspect of a feminism that she describes as 'relational'⁹⁴". This care, which is perceived as specifically feminine, is focused in particular on students with a special profile.

Pauline Kergomard, who set herself up as a child protector, defended unruly and even delinquent young people. When she took part in the second Congress on the Protection of Children in 1896

88 Letter from Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello to the administration, 21 February 1907, career file F/17/22067.

89 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "L'école dans la nature", *Quatrième congrès international de l'art public, rapports et comptes-rendus*, Brussels, 1910.

90 Jacqueline Gautherin (preface by Viviane Isambert-Jamati), *Une discipline pour la République, op. cit.*, p. 328.

91 It is difficult to find a neutral and appropriate vocabulary for these children. Most of the intellectuals studied here use the term 'abnormal'.

92 With a few exceptions: see the controversy between Buisson and Tarde on criminal youth in the *Revue pédagogique* in 1897. And yet this debate does not really adopt a science of education perspective. See Monique Vial (preface by Antoine Prost), *Les enfants anormaux à l'école, aux origines de l'éducation spécialisée 1882-1909*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1990, 231 p.

93 See the numerous works on *care* in gender history, notably Anne Hugon, Clyde Plumauzille & Mathilde Rossigneux-Méheust, 'Travail de care', *Clio. Femme, Genre, Histoire*, n°49, spring 2019.

94 Karen Offen, "Defining Feminism: A Comparative Historical Approach", art. cit.

In her speech to the Geneva Children's Forum, she said that a child who has committed an offence is not guilty: instead of being punished, he or she should be assisted and protected. For the Inspector General,

What aggravates the difficulties of discussion on such a subject is that many of those who approach it accept the dogma of original sin; that with sincere conviction they say: 'the child is born wicked'; - and that many others, who have no fixed ideas about the child's native perversity, but who have remained completely alien to the environment in which he suffers and is depraved, do not know how to trace the responsibility for the evil back to those who really incurred it⁹⁵.

To quote Jacqueline Gautherin, Pauline Kergomard has a Protestant - and anti-Catholic - way of conceiving education "based on the assurance of human perfectibility and centred on the person of the child⁹⁶. " Convinced that the individual owes his behaviour to his environment, Pauline Kergomard demanded that minors brought before the courts be taken in charge by educators. She insisted on the social causes of juvenile delinquency and refused to equate the child with a perverse soul.

During the revolt that took place in 1898 at the penal colony for minors in Aniane, Pauline Kergomard defended the mutineers and called for reform of the reformatories for young people. She pleaded for doctors and educators to collaborate in the care of the children. She wrote to the Under-Secretary of State for the Interior to convince him that "bringing back the lost [was] the work of educators, not of prisons⁹⁷ ".

Pauline Kergomard's thinking about delinquent children extends to unruly schoolchildren. In 1881, she declared that in nursery school, seven out of ten reprimands were for an infraction of "material discipline, which is all fake for the child⁹⁸ ". Most of the time, the pupil was punished not because he or she had intentionally misbehaved, but because he or she had disobeyed inappropriate instructions: for example, it was impossible for him or her to remain still and silent. Pauline Kergomard gives the example of her eldest son, who,

...] dropped his ruler and, picking it up, tickled his neighbour's leg, said to me with obvious sincerity: 'I assure you, Mother, that when I want to be still, I think about it so much that I no longer pay attention to the lesson'. Now that he is fifteen years old, he has no difficulty in staying still.

95 Pauline Kergomard, "Deuxième congrès de la protection de l'enfance à Genève", *Revue pédagogique*, Nov. 1896.

96 Jacqueline Gautherin, "Une polyphonie protestante dans le concert de la "Science de l'éducation" (1882-1914)", *History of Education*, 2016, no. 110, pp. 91-110.

97 Pauline Kergomard, intervention in the philanthropy and social economy section, 23 June 1900, *Actes du Deuxième congrès international des œuvres et institutions féminines*, *op. cit.* See also Pauline Kergomard, "About Aniane", *La Fronde*, 10 December 1898.

School discipline is at the heart of pedagogical thinking at the dawn of the XX^e century. Several intellectuals adopted a very political approach to the issue. Clarisse Coignet, Pauline Kergomard, Albertine Eidenschenk, Marie Baertschi were convinced that in the Republic, the school's mission was to inculcate individual autonomy, free thinking, and not passive submission to regulation. In their eyes, authoritarianism that arbitrarily imposes its rules has no place in the school of the Republic. Pauline Kergomard declared in 1900 that school indiscipline was the result of the stupidity of the rules⁹⁹. The Society for the Psychological Study of the Child also looked into indiscipline: in 1905, Marie Baertschi-Fuster and her colleague from Fontenay, Aimée Fiévet, undertook an investigation into unruly and rebellious children¹⁰⁰.

A few years later, noting that the child possesses a "prodigious faculty of inattention"¹⁰¹ "Who knows if this faculty is not an instinctive safeguard against the errors of our pedagogy? Similarly, at the end of her career in public education, Albertine Eidenschenk remembers an undisciplined childhood friend: "I always wondered what original pedagogical fault had been committed against her to make her the irreducible rebel that she had been"¹⁰². " Far from seeing the undisciplined pupil as unsuited to the school structure, these intellectuals consider, on the contrary, that indiscipline is the result of the school's unsuitability to the nature of children and adolescents. As experts in the field, they participated in this profound change in pedagogical thought: they adopted a pragmatic approach in search of concrete solutions and developed a capacity to question school norms during the Belle Époque.

G) Putting educational ideals into practice: being intellectual and pedagogical

This questioning of school norms is reflected in particular in a rejection of any authoritarianism on the part of the teacher. The intellectuals quoted here promote a form of authority that they describe as 'feminine', which rejects violence in favour of trust. Many of them insist, in speeches often tinged with maternalism, on the need to love pupils. Mathilde Salomon writes that "we only know well what we love"¹⁰³. Marie Baertschi said the same thing when she studied Fénelon: the latter "knew that one must love and be loved by the one being taught"¹⁰⁴. Like Mathilde Salomon, who in her letters to Salomon Reinach often spoke of "her daughters" at Sévigné, Marie Baertschi was close to her pupils.

99 Pauline Kergomard, "Un questionnaire adopté par la Société libre pour l'étude psychologique de l'enfant", *La Fronde*, 30 March 1900.

100 Mme Fuster and Mlle Fiévet, "Sur les enfants indisciplinés et rebelles", *Bulletin de la Société libre*, 1905, p. 154 (the document has not been reproduced in the microfiche in the BnF, the pages relating to this study are missing).

101 Mathilde Salomon, "Baccalauréat de jeunes filles", *Revue de Paris*, 1^{er} July 1908.

102 Albertine Eidenschenk, "Une école de filles dans la région parisienne il y a soixante ans", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, June 1932.

103 Mathilde Salomon, "L'éducation des jeunes filles à Port-Royal", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, August 1882.

104 M. B., "Étude sur la pédagogie de Fénelon", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1900.

This is partly why, in 1897, the inspector was suspicious of the influence of this teacher, who was so popular that she "provoked exaggerated tenderness in the girls¹⁰⁵".

In the same vein, the feminist, pacifist and socialist teacher Marguerite Bodin [*biographical sketch 8, p. 625*] describes in her book *Les Surprises de l'école mixte* (1905) how she created a family atmosphere in her country school. Convinced that educational success was based on love for the children, and despite a recommendation she had read in a pedagogical book, Marguerite Bodin was on first-name terms with them: "I want to be the mother of all these little people; I must therefore take on the language and attitude of them¹⁰⁶". She embraces the little boy who, expelled from the class because of his behaviour, returns crying and asking for forgiveness¹⁰⁷. She invites the children to come and sing at the piano on their days off¹⁰⁸.

Like Marguerite Bodin, Albertine Eidenschenk considered that first names should be the rule in primary school. In 1906, she co-signed a motion submitted to the CSIP calling for the lifting of the ban on first-name treatment in primary schools¹⁰⁹. The permanent section refused. In theory, any teacher who is on first-name terms with his or her pupils is therefore in breach of the rules of public education. The pedagogical books justify this practice by the fact that in the future, pupils could be placed in the honours... Marguerite Bodin takes offence:

Placed in the honours! You hear Jean and Jeanne Coste well¹¹⁰ get this idea into your head: one of your pupils, the most wretched of them all [...], in our admirable democracy, may one day become a repository of a particle of authority, [...] perhaps President of the Republic!... And then you see this imposing man, [...] addressed by you, a miserable little schoolmaster with a salary of 79.50 francs a month! These are the kinds of licenses that a well-organized society cannot tolerate.

O holy aristocratic prejudices infiltrated and perpetuated in our democratic Republic! Prestige of power! The cult of the *Au to ri té*, rooted in our brains shaped by twelve centuries of monarchy! [...] My children, we will make fun of prejudices; I will continue to be on first-name terms with you, and we will live fraternally as if we were all good in a democratic regime... This, perhaps, will hasten its coming¹¹¹.

Claiming disobedience to anti-democratic rules, Marguerite Bodin wants to make her class an ideal micro-society, in the image of the society she would like to see.

105 See the Inspector General's report of 1897, career file F/17/23692.

106 Marguerite Bodin, *Les surprises de l'école mixte*, Paris, librairie universelle, 1905, 324 p., p. 75.

107 *Ibid*, p. 65.

108 *Ibid*, p. 86.

109 Vow dated 28 December 1906, F/17/13643, CSIP minutes.

110 Here, Marguerite Bodin refers to the novel by the teacher Antonin Lavergne *Jean Coste*, published in 1901, which denounces the deplorable living conditions of primary school staff.

111 Marguerite Bodin, *Les surprises de l'école mixte*, *op. cit.* pp. 76-77.

Like Marguerite Bodin, Marie Baertschi saw education in terms of her republican culture. In a text published in 1903 in *L'École nouvelle*, she declared straight away that grades were anti-educational¹¹². She gave the example of two very weak girls, whose teacher had refused to mark their assessments for fear of discouraging them. The headmistress disowned her subordinate and gave the two girls a mark of 1/20, which seemed to Marie Baertschi "likely to completely distort the notion of justice in the minds of pupils, because it is 'grace', favour, substituted for equity. Thus the rich manufacturer believes he is being fair to the workers he exploits, because he is giving them alms from a charitable institution". Marie Baertschi is convinced that in a democracy, the causes of poverty must be sought out and fought at its roots, just as in schools, the reasons for failure at school must be understood and not sanctioned by the alms of a point which is only a humiliation. Having herself been educated in a grade-free school, Marie Baertschi calls for a profound change in a system corrupted by the omnipresence of evaluations. She even decides to ban grades in her own teaching activity¹¹³. To those who tell her that the classroom should be the school of life, and that life is hard, she replies: "In reality, what do we fear? That the child does not know early enough that life is ugly and stupid [...] and that, more often than not, evil triumphs over good¹¹⁴ ? " Is it not, on the contrary, in trust, in love and in solidarity that tomorrow's citizens must be raised?

I wanted to remind you that there is often a gulf between our ideas and our school practice. [...] If there is a discrepancy between these facts and our lessons, let us have no illusions: it is the facts that will prevail, that will leave their mark on minds and characters, and all our lessons will remain only formulas of appearance. [...] This is how, in preaching justice and solidarity, we so often make upstarts¹¹⁵.

Albertine Eidenschenk, who is also concerned by this question, refrains from giving out good points, considering that morality is all internal¹¹⁶. Pauline Kergomard also considered that the ranking of pupils and honorary awards were obsolete in the Republic¹¹⁷. Finally, Marguerite Bodin deplored the competition between children within a class: "[We are creating] generations of upstarts, with no other rule of conduct than the famous maxim: 'Get out of my way so I can get on with it'. [...] It is not with these children, trained to practice the 'every man for himself', that we can hope to found a more fraternal society.¹¹⁸ " The similarity of the discourses and pedagogical practices of these teachers is striking.

112 Mrs E. Fuster, "La justice à l'école", *L'École nouvelle*, 12 December 1903.

113 Her career file at the Ministry of Education makes no mention of this originality, but perhaps Marie Baertschi implemented this method at the Collège Sévigné, when she taught there between 1900 and 1910.

114 Marie Baertschi, "Variétés: Les contes de fée", *L'Écho de la semaine*, 1^{er} April 1900.

115 Mrs E. Fuster, "La justice à l'école", *L'École nouvelle*, 12 December 1903.

116 *Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, op. cit.* notes taken at Pécaut's talk on 31 January 1885, p. 60.

117 Pauline Kergomard, "Les écoles maternelles", *Revue pédagogique*, April 1900.

118 Marguerite Bodin, *Les surprises de l'école mixte, op. cit.*

This refusal to make school a place of competition was accompanied by a profound questioning of school discipline. Albertine Eidenschenk, for example, considered repression as a pedagogical failure. Valuing self-discipline, she sought to soften the regime of the teacher training colleges she directed¹¹⁹. Placing moral education above all other subjects, she considered her pupils' mistakes as personal failures¹²⁰. Like Marie Baertschi, she kept in touch with her former pupils who had become teachers by letter: both were a moral support for the teachers they had trained. Without going as far as this closeness to her pupils, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello also refused any brutal discipline in her school. At the prize-giving ceremony in 1885, the inspector declared:

Of the system of repression, the headmistress thought it necessary to implement only *reprimand*. She was right: [...] encouragement given at the right time is more effective than any punishment [...]. I can declare that these good results [at the Lycée de Lyon] are above all due [...] to the influence that [the headmistress] exerts on those who approach her¹²¹.

Following the example of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello with her secondary school girls, Marguerite Bodin also reorganised the disciplinary system in her school, moving towards greater liberalism. For example, she did not demand silence or immobility from her pupils, having herself suffered as a child from having to 'keep quiet'. The important thing for her is to see pupils who are happy to participate in the lesson¹²². In a public school system whose real function, Mona Ozouf reminds us, is "the republican impregnation of the child's conscience"¹²³ In a public school system whose real function is "the republican impregnation of the child's conscience", the teacher dreams of establishing a fully "democratic" discipline:

[It] will not be made of fear, but of love. I want it to be entirely voluntary, stemming from the desire to do well, not from the fear of punishment. [Discipline lies] in the moral authority of the teacher, in the confidence and affection he inspires, in the communion of ideas he maintains with his pupils and in their consent to his will¹²⁴.

When issuing prohibitions, Marguerite Bodin always makes sure to explain "why things are done"¹²⁵ "This is to avoid any feeling of arbitrariness. Moreover, as she explains in *La Fronde*, if children do something stupid, it is often because of "the compression of the instinct for freedom"¹²⁶ ". For her, the more rules the educator imposes on the child, the less sense of responsibility the child has: "Let us erase [...] our authority as reason grows in

119 See the inspector's remark in 1906, box 2T265, Lille Departmental Archives.

120 Inspection report of 1909, box 2T265, Lille Departmental Archives.

121 Speech by M. Gaudier, "Distribution des prix dans les lycées et collèges de jeunes filles", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, August 1885.

122 Marguerite Bodin, *Les surprises de l'école mixte*, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

123 Mona Ozouf, *L'école, l'Église et la République, 1871-1914*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

124 Marguerite Bodin, *Les Surprises de l'école mixte*, *op. cit.*

125 *Ibid*, p. 221.

126 Marguerite Bodin, "Questions/answers: the forbidden fruit", *La Fronde*, 28 January 1901.

the child". Moreover, the teacher does not present herself as an infallible authority: "I owe my children sincerity; I do not want to appear to them to be better than I am; the very weaknesses of the educator can cooperate in the work of education¹²⁷". In the same vein, Albertine Eidenschenk considers that "the teacher must treat the child as a person whom she respects. [...] Let her give the example of impartiality and retractions if necessary.¹²⁸". True to this line, Marguerite Bodin has no problem recognising that children are sometimes more competent than she is. She values their knowledge of meteorology inherited from their peasant parents¹²⁹ and allows herself to be guided by them to look for dead wood to heat the school in winter¹³⁰. After the war, she became a militant of the New Education in correspondence with Adolphe Ferrière¹³¹. After the war, Marguerite Bodin became a militant of the New Education movement in correspondence with Adolphe Ferrière, and adopted some of the innovations advocated by the movement during the Belle Époque. Her pupils often spent their breaks in the open field¹³². The teacher considered that "joy is moralising [and that] days when one has fun at school are not lost days¹³³". Moreover, in the account of the *Surprises of the Mixed School* that Odette Laguerre wrote for the *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, she praised the "Socratic process" that Marguerite Bodin adopted in guiding her pupils with questions that pushed them to critical thinking¹³⁴. The teacher was a follower of inductive methods and proscribed *ex cathedra* lessons¹³⁵. Marie Baertschi also considered that in nursery and primary education, "we rely too much on lessons, we are too concerned with *instructing*, not enough with *awakening*¹³⁶". According to her, the error of pedagogues is to "substitute the lesson for experience" in order to save time and make it easier. For example, in morality, justice and dignity cannot be taught: the only way to awaken these feelings is to solicit the initiative of children and entrust them with responsibilities.

Similarly, according to Marie Baertschi, intellectual discipline can only be acquired through constant exercise: "You only learn to think by thinking. Now, while he listens to the teacher's lesson or while repeating the lesson learned [...] the child does not think, his memory alone works.

Marie Baertschi insists on the importance of putting the child in a position to observe the world. She therefore militates against early learning to read. For her, "as soon as a child falls prey to books [...], he stops looking around, he unlearns the art of observation which is the first and fundamental condition of all intellectual life¹³⁷". The pedagogue considers it a "crime

127 *Ibid*, p. 97.

128 *Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, op. cit.* notes taken at Pécaut's talk on 14 Nov. 1884, p. 55.

129 Marguerite Bodin, *Les surprises de l'école mixte, op. cit.*, p. 100.

130 *Ibid*, p. 224.

131 See the foreword by Denise Karnaouch to Marguerite Bodin, *L'institutrice*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2012.

132 Marguerite Bodin, *Les surprises de l'école mixte, op. cit.*, p. 185.

133 *Ibid*, p. 229.

134 Odette Laguerre, "Compte-rendu: Les surprises de l'école mixte", *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, February 1906.

135 Marguerite Bodin, "Questions/answers: from the concrete to the abstract and the teaching of language", *La Fronde*, 25 March 1901.

136 Marie Édouard-Fuster, "Je n'instruis pas, j'éveille", *L'École nouvelle*, 16 August 1902.

137 Marie Baertschi, "Lectures d'enfants", *L'Écho de la semaine politique et littéraire*, 4 March 1900. See also "Les contes de fée", *L'Écho de la semaine*, 1^{er} April 1900.

In the words of the author, "it is an act of lèse-intelligence and lèse-education to immerse the child too early in books: it is to provide him with an occupation where he is passive instead of being in a position of active observation.

Marie Baertschi acted together with Pauline Kergomard to remove the injunction to literacy from the nursery school. Within the Société pour l'étude psychologique de l'enfant, they opposed Alfred Binet, who was in favour of early learning to read. They won their case: in the 1905 ministerial circular on nursery school, the time set aside for the first learning of reading was considerably reduced and relegated to the last place of the objectives¹³⁸.

By positioning themselves as experts thanks to their knowledge of the school sphere and their proximity to the world of childhood, several women participated in the Belle Époque in the creation of a science of education that respected the nature of the child. They set out to find a pedagogy worthy of a democratic school that valued free criticism and the development of the thinking personality. While exploiting their gender capital, they adopt a pragmatic and political approach to pre-school and primary education.

II- School as a crucible for new gender relations: intellectuals and feminists

In 1905, Madeleine Vernet declared that "coeducation is an essential chapter of feminism¹³⁹". It is true that in the Belle Époque, feminists were the first promoters of co-education¹⁴⁰ in primary school, but also in secondary and higher education. In her thesis on the introduction of coeducation in secondary schools between 1916 and 1976, Geneviève Pezeu analyses "the view of feminist activists as a particular category, [who] aspired to a change in society, demanding changes in educational practices¹⁴¹" and who make the

138 See Micheline Vincent-Nkoulou, *Pauline Kergomard (1838-1925) ou la grandeur civique*, *op. cit.*, p. 95 and Bertrand Ravon, "L'expertise débattue : l'exemple de la Société Libre pour l'Étude Psychologique de l'Enfant (SLEPE) face au conflit de l'écriture (1905-1910)", in Centre de recherches et d'études sociologiques appliquées de la Loire, *Les raisons de l'action publique entre expertise et débat*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1993, p. 53-66.

139 Madeleine Vernet, "La coéducation", in Madeleine Vernet (prefaces by Marcel Sembat and Marie Bonneval), *L'Avenir social*, *op. cit.* pp. 47-51.

140 The terms 'co-education' and 'coeducation' will be used interchangeably here. Although Marguerite Bodin uses it in the title of her book, the term 'co-education' only became popular in the 1950s. For a precise definition, see Geneviève Pezeu, *Coéducation, coenseignement, mixité : filles et garçons dans l'enseignement secondaire en France (1916-1976)*, thesis directed by Rebecca Rogers, Université Paris Descartes, 2018, 666 p., p. 28.

On coeducation in the Belle Époque, Florence Rochefort, 'Démocratie féministe contre démocratie exclusive ou les enjeux de la mixité', in Michelle Riot-Sarcey (ed.), *Démocratie et représentation*, Paris, Éditions Kimé, 1995, p. 181-202; Florence Rochefort and Michèle Zancarini-Fournel, "Laïcité, égalité des sexes et mixité scolaire", *Spirale - Revue de recherches en éducation*, 2007, n°39, p. 39-51; Yves Verneuil, "Coeducation and co-education: the polemic on the gemination of public schools in the first third of the XX^e century", *Le Mouvement Social*, 2014/3, n° 248, p. 47-69. For a historiographical review: Rebecca Rogers, 'State of play of co-education. Comparative Historiographies in Europe', *Clio*, 2003, n°18, p. 177-202.

141 Geneviève Pezeu, *Coeducation, co-teaching, co-education*, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

coeducation a "means of social transformation"¹⁴² ". It will show that, in their image, several intellectuals who thought about school at the turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries sought to make it a crucible of new social gender relations, notably - but not only - through coeducation¹⁴³. Co-education, the place of girls in the school system and the nature of the education they receive are also key issues for these activists. Many of them are even seeking to break the last taboo of boy-girl relations by calling for the introduction of sex education in schools.

While the latter form a very united front, they face many detractors who refuse to see school become an instrument for challenging the gender order. They stress the universalism of sexual difference, considering education separate from each sex

"as a necessary concession to nature, not as a contradiction to the universalist claims of republicanism"¹⁴⁴ ". Conversely, those who defend coeducation insist on the naturalness of gender mixing in society and the family. In their view, it is 'unisex' education that is fundamentally unnatural.

In this context, the activists' discourse is based on "the language of facts"¹⁴⁵ "in the words of Odette Laguerre. They insisted on the successes of the new educational models, whether through the example of the Cempuis orphanage run by Paul Robin, that of L'Avenir social founded by Madeleine Vernet or the concrete experience of Marguerite Bodin in her mixed class. Foreign examples also played an important role in this strategy of legitimising iconoclastic ideas. Although free education opened up prospects for these innovative experiments, many intellectuals were active within the education system. The analysis of their trajectory will show how their action is perceived by the institution.

A) The emergence of coeducation in school debates: the pioneers (1871-1900)

Two years after Célestin Hippeau published an apology for coeducation in the *Revue des deux mondes* based on the American example¹⁴⁶ Clarisse Coignet was commissioned to write a report on co-education¹⁴⁷. A pioneer, she set out most of the arguments in favour of coeducation as early as 1871, arguments that would be taken up again some thirty years later, when the debate really emerged in educational and feminist circles.

142 *Ibid.*

143 This includes Catholic intellectuals, such as the Viscountess of Adhemar. For the purposes of this thesis, we have not found any sources from the hand of a woman hostile to co-education.

144 Joan W. Scott, *The Paradoxical Citizen*, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

145 Odette Laguerre, "Les surprises de l'école mixte", *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, February 1906.

146 See Rebecca Rogers, 'L'impensable mixité de l'enseignement secondaire féminin en France au XIX^e siècle', in Rebecca Rogers (ed.), (preface by Geneviève Fraisse), *La mixité dans l'éducation, enjeux passés et présents*, Lyon, ENS éditions, 2004, 240 p., pp. 101-114.

147 Clarisse Coignet (appendix by Fanny Delon), *Rapport présenté au nom de la commission des dames chargée d'examiner les questions relatives à la réforme de l'instruction primaire*, Paris, Dupont, 1871, 143 p.

The philosopher reminds us that coeducation has been authorised since the Guizot law of 1833 for the smallest communes. The principle is already successfully applied in Germany, England, Holland, Switzerland and the United States. Clarisse Coignet fights one by one against the objections commonly made to co-education. To those who say that schools should prepare each sex for its social destiny, the philosopher replies that the Republic should treat each child as a human being: all citizens, regardless of their sex, have the right to a common educational background. Clarisse Coignet also mentions the need, in order to promote the advent of the republican couple¹⁴⁸ Clarisse Coignet also mentions the need to bring up future spouses in a fairly similar way in order to promote the advent of the republican couple. As for the challenge that coeducation would pose to good morals, the philosopher considers that it is the separation of the sexes itself that awakens the idea of evil: it "is bad in itself, like all educational measures that are acts of defiance"¹⁴⁹. Clarisse Coignet concluded that in the Republic, the social contract could no more ratify gender privileges than class privileges. The women's committee validated the principle of coeducation in primary education by 15 votes 'for' and one 'against'. However, this decision remained a dead letter. The school of the Third Republic was finally built on a model of gender separation.

Seven years later, in the summer of 1878, the International Congress on Women's Rights, through the voice of the first French baccalaureate holder, Julie-Victoire Daubié, spoke out in favour of coeducation. The Free Congress of Education, which met in the autumn of the same year, also expressed the wish for co-education¹⁵⁰. The 1889 Feminist Congress took a similar position. However, when Léopold Lacour reminded the International Women's Congress in 1896 of the need to introduce coeducation, his proposal was not well received in the context of the scandal that had shone on the Cempuis orphanage from 1894 onwards¹⁵¹. It was really at the end of the century that the issue of coeducation gained in scope and eventually gained unanimous support among feminists¹⁵². The two feminist congresses that met in 1900 argued for coeducation. But it was above all *La Fronde* that sustained the campaign in favour of co-education.

In 1898, Clotilde Dissard wrote three articles on the history of coeducation in France¹⁵³. Her aim was to legitimise this practice by showing its roots in French culture, at a time when its detractors were highlighting its incompatibility with national mores. According to the *Slinger*, the joint education of boys and girls would have "enjoyed

148 On the thought of marriage by the founders of the Third Republic, see Mélanie Fabre, 'Explorer des couples d'intellectuels: le dialogue de l'intime et du politique', in Raymond Dartevelle and Mélanie Fabre (eds.), 'Couples d'intellectuels, de l'intime au politique (1880-1940)', *Les Études sociales*, n°168, 2019/2, pp. 11-22.

149 Clarisse Coignet (appendix by Fanny Delon), *Report presented on behalf of the Ladies' Commission*, *op. cit.*

150 As Marie Bonneval reminds us in her afterword to Madeleine Vernet, *L'Avenir social*, *op. cit.*

151 See Laurence Klejman, Florence Rochefort (preface by Michelle Perrot), *L'Égalité en marche*, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

152 In the first version of the *Dictionnaire de pédagogie* published in 1882, only a few lines are dedicated to the subject, whereas the *Nouveau Dictionnaire* of 1911 devotes several pages to it. See Michelle Zancarini-Fournel, "Coeducation, gemination, co-instruction, co-education: debates in national education (1882-1976)", in Rebecca Rogers (ed.), *Co-education in education, past and present issues*, *op. cit.* pp. 25-32.

153 Clotilde Dissard (1873-1926) was the founder of *La Revue féministe* in 1895. She later contributed to *La Fronde* and the *Revue internationale de sociologie*.

once enjoyed greater credit in our country¹⁵⁴ ". Clotilde Dissard then chooses the most successful strategy to convince reluctant republicans: she demonstrates that the Catholic Church, the enemy of modernity, is at the origin of the demonisation of coeducation. It presents Catholicism as an eternal obstacle to progress, while the Reformation tried to make the principle of coeducation triumph¹⁵⁵. Clotilde Dissard also pays tribute to the heroes of the fight for coeducation, from Stuart Mill, a British philosopher, to the pastor Charles Wagner, via Léopold Lacour, and, of course, Pauline Kergomard¹⁵⁶. The Inspector General was the official standard-bearer for coeducation in *La Fronde* and in the feminist and educational congresses of the Belle Époque¹⁵⁷.

B) Coeducation, an incitement to sin of the flesh? Responding to the accusation of immorality

At the International Women's Rights Congress in 1900, a speaker expressed reservations about the generalisation of co-education to all levels of education. As Rebecca Rogers writes, "resistance to coeducation is [...] strong at the secondary level [...] because of the fear of the consequences of the proximity of young people disturbed by the sexual and psychological impulses of adolescence¹⁵⁸ ". According to Pauline Kergomard, the vicious circle of education in a vacuum must be broken, which, by creating frustrations, generates deviant behaviour, which in turn justifies the separation of the sexes. It is precisely because high school students are raised among boys that they behave badly:

As long as parents [...] get rid of [their children] and put them in *boxes* where they will be almost without air and almost without light, it is obvious that [...] when young people come out of these establishments, where women never enter, they [will] need, if only to see the face of a woman; and, my goodness! unfortunately, they [will] look for them where they can find them; and what they find is really very distressing¹⁵⁹.

While critics of co-education point to the potential sexual deviances that it would entail, Pauline Kergomard considers that it is, on the contrary, the principle of separation of the sexes that is at the origin of adolescents' unhealthy interest in sex. While the inspector criticises the

154 Clotilde Dissard, "La tribune: La coéducation des sexes en France, ses origines, sont histoire, ses tendances", *La Fronde*, 28 June 1898.

155 Clotilde Dissard, "La tribune: La coéducation des sexes en France", *La Fronde*, 29 June 1898.

156 Clotilde Dissard, "La tribune: La coéducation des sexes en France", *La Fronde*, 30 June 1898.

157 See Pauline Kergomard, "L'éducation de la jeune fille au Congrès des Œuvres et institutions féminines", *La Fronde*, 8 July 1900.

158 Rebecca Rogers, "La difficile mixité de l'enseignement secondaire", in Rebecca Rogers (ed.) (preface by Geneviève Fraisse), *La mixité dans l'éducation*, *op. cit.* pp. 99-100.

159 Pauline Kergomard, speech of 7 September 1900, in *actes du Congrès international de la condition et des droits des femmes*, *op. cit.* , p. 183.

boarding schools for men, it does not spare boarding schools for girls¹⁶⁰. She paints a portrait of a boarder:

"While her contemporaries, brought up in the family [...] recall the nonsense of their last valedictorian - which does no harm to anyone - the intern dreams of one of her companions in whom she believes she has found her soul mate.¹⁶¹ " Pauline Kergomard considers the attraction that girls may feel for boys of their own age to be perfectly normal, and shows, on the contrary, how unnatural it is to impose non-mixity on a daily basis: it would drive boys to prostitutes and lead girls down the path of homosexuality.

If, for Pauline Kergomard, we must move towards coeducation at all ages, this cannot be done without a profound change in the mentality of teachers, including in primary education: "The teachers who are now 45 years old were brought up in the normal schools of the Empire [...] It is obvious that this spirit was not conducive to coeducation, since it was eminently clerical. [...] It is obvious that this spirit was not conducive to coeducation, since it was an eminently clerical spirit¹⁶². " Making the Church the main culprit, Pauline Kergomard stated that the few co-educational schools operating in rural areas were not producing the expected results. On one visit, she saw boys and girls playing separately in the playground:

I said to the teacher, who was a woman from the time of the Empire, and even before:

- Don't you think, Madam, that if these children played together, the game would be more lively?

She said to me: "Madam Inspector General, what you are asking me is very delicate. Just think about it! Little boys, they sometimes have postures!

- It is obvious," I replied, "that in a mixed school the teacher's supervision is more delicate. [...] But don't you think that with good management you could get these children to play together?

Then she answered me:

- Well, ma'am, I have boys and girls, it never occurred to me to have them sleep together.

The idea of co-education in a harmless game inevitably raises fears of sexual abuse. On the contrary, coeducation activists claim that, far from inciting pupils to sin of the flesh, the mixed school desexualises relations between children. According to Marguerite Bodin, "in the studious life lived in common, the thought of sex is attenuated, even disappeared¹⁶³ ". However, applied by a teaching body imbued with mistrust, the coeducation that existed in France at the time was only a co-teaching or a coinstruction, that is, according to the definition provided by

160 Pauline Kergomard's critique of the boarding school is part of a long tradition in the XIX^e century. See Patrick Clastres, "L'internat public au XIX^e siècle: question politique ou pédagogique?", art. cit.

161 Pauline Kergomard, "La tribune: Encore l'internat, l'internat envisagé au point de vue féminin", *La Fronde*, 24 August 1898.

162 Pauline Kergomard, speech of 7 September 1900, in actes du *Congrès international de la condition et des droits*

des femmes, op. cit. , p. 183.

163 Marguerite Bodin, *Les Surprises de l'école mixte, op. cit.*

Geneviève Pezeu, a system "where pupils of both sexes are only brought together during school hours to receive a common instruction [...] outside of which all [relations] cease¹⁶⁴". Pauline Kergomard was not satisfied with this: she called for a true coeducation in which children would be mixed in all their activities and in which gender would no longer be a determining criterion in the organisation of school. She goes further by declaring that the generalisation of co-education is a political imperative:

We need [coeducation] if we want to be the great Republic born of the Revolution of 1789; we need coeducation so that people will be moral and know why. [...] We must have a new spirit that replaces [...] the spirit of the confessional, which, from education in common, which is almost the remedy of our French conscience, would make an abominable poison¹⁶⁵.

If the Republic is based on the virtue of its citizens, then virtue must be transmitted in schools, not by the deprivation of freedoms, but by the teaching of personal responsibility and individual dignity. The moral individual is not one who has been deprived of all the means to do evil, but one who controls his temptations alone and makes a conscious choice for the good.

C) Cempuis and L'Avenir social: concrete experiences of coeducation in debate

Defenders of the co-educational school want to make co-education an instrument of social transformation. It is no coincidence that the most striking experience at the turn of the century came from a militant of the International, who radically questioned the society in which he lived. Paul Robin ran Cempuis between 1880 and 1894. He took in young people from four to 16 years old. As Maria Vérone points out in *La Fronde*, this was the only educational experience before 1900 where coeducation was practised in France with a pedagogical objective and not for economic reasons¹⁶⁶. But in 1894, the orphanage was the victim of a press campaign: *La Libre Parole* described it as a "municipal pigsty", where boys and girls, mixed together on a daily basis, were encouraged to vice¹⁶⁷. Suzanne Brès, inspector general of nursery schools, was sent to the site: "Nothing could be more family-like [...]: the mixture of good comradeship and small brusquenesses which are very common among children in families [...] reigns [...]: they help each other, they fall out and make up without the slightest consideration of sex¹⁶⁸".

164 Definition of 1912 provided by G. F. Burness and reported by Geneviève Pezeu, in her thesis *Coeducation, co-teaching, co-education, op. cit.* p. 29.

165 Pauline Kergomard, speech of 7 September 1900, in *actes du Congrès international de la condition et des droits des femmes, op. cit.*, p. 183.

166 Maria Vérone, "L'enseignement primaire en Suisse", *La Fronde*, 16 July 1902 - co-education is mostly explained by the desire to avoid maintaining a girls' school and a boys' school on the same rural territory.

167 See Christiane Demeulenaere-Douyère, "Un précurseur de la mixité : Paul Robin et la coéducation des sexes", *Clio*, 2003, n°18, p. 125-132.

168 Quoted in *Ibid.*

Despite this report and the support of personalities such as Ferdinand Buisson and Pauline Kergomard, Paul Robin was dismissed in 1894. The scandal splashed his allies: the inspector general was attacked, writing that "the anarchist Robin had always found in Mme Kergomard a zealous defender and a faithful friend¹⁶⁹". It is true that the latter, in one of her reports, had presented Robin as "an original, innovative, propagandist spirit, served by an almost universal education, animated by a deep faith¹⁷⁰". Sent to Cempuis in 1892, she conducted an investigation which concluded, two years before Suzanne Brès, that this educational experience was relevant.

In 1898, in *La Fronde*, Mary Léopold-Lacour, wife of the feminist activist Léopold Lacour, sheds light on the scandal that shrouded the orphanage. She made the defence of Robin a feminist and Dreyfusian duty. For her, "the Affaire de Cempuis [is] four years older than the current Affaire¹⁷¹". Like the Dreyfus Affair, the Cempuis Affair was based on a huge slander that had the tacit support of a ministry - in this case the Ministry of Public Instruction - and the Chamber of Deputies, which, encouraged by a slanderous press campaign, preferred to prove public opinion right rather than conduct a fair trial against the scapegoat. Paul Robin found the same people against him as those who had raged against Dreyfus: *La Libre parole* dragged the nationalist right behind it. The intellectuals of *La Fronde* unanimously supported the director of Cempuis and, more generally, the principle of coeducation.

Other initiatives followed in Cempuis. Madeleine Vernet, who had denounced in *Pages libres* the treatment of wards of the Assistance publique, founded a mixed orphanage at her own expense in 1906. The aim was to offer poor children an education that would develop their personality and teach them not to be resigned but to fight. Like the Prévost Orphanage, where Robin and his wife - whom everyone called "mother" - raised the children as their own, Madeleine Vernet wanted to be the mother of all her wards. In these circumstances, any idea of separation of the sexes seemed to her to be heresy. However, she and her companion Louis Tribier had to close their mixed school, which operated within the walls of the orphanage. They had to send the children to a public school. As *L'Avenir Social* had the status of a boarding house, the couple was allowed to maintain the co-educational nature of the orphanage, but without a school, the work was cut back. Faced with administrative hassles, Madeleine Vernet launched an indictment of the French school system. According to her, by separating boys and girls, physical strength and moral energy are developed in the boy, while passivity and docility are encouraged in the girl. Moreover, education is always given more substantially to boys: "Let the fierce feminists think about it: we must claim for women [...] their intellectual liberation. [...] Preventing complete coeducation under the pretext of morals [...] hides the real reason, which is to make two separate and distinct teachings: that of girls and that of boys¹⁷²."

169 *L'Avenir du Lot-et-Garonne*, press clipping from the Pauline Kergomard file, F/17/23588/B.

170 Quoted in Mary Léopold-Lacour, "M. Paul Robin", *La Fronde*, 14 September 1898.

171 Mary Léopold-Lacour, "M. Paul Robin", *La Fronde*, 14 September 1898.

172 Madeleine Vernet, "La coéducation", in Madeleine Vernet, *L'Avenir social*, *op. cit.*

For Madeleine Vernet, the refusal of co-education is explained by the desire to keep girls' education at a discount and thus maintain their economic, political and social subordination. She is convinced that when the barriers between girls and boys fall in school, they will also fall in the world of work and in society. Like Paul Robin, the founder of L'Avenir social was part of an avant-garde ideology marked by feminism, socialism and free thought. Marie Bonneval, a rebel, trade unionist and former teacher, was her first supporter: "We want *free* beings in the future city? Let's free our children from gender prejudice, as well as from race prejudice, as well as from religious prejudice, as well as from any prejudice¹⁷³. " She praised the convergence of militantisms at the Avenir social.

D) A feminist victory: the birth of a national movement for coeducation (1905-1906)

Although L'Avenir social took up the torch of the Orphelinat Prévost, the latter continued to act as a deterrent to coeducation in the public school system. In 1906, Gabriel Compayré published an article in the *Revue pédagogique* opposing any generalisation of coeducation. He considered that "the only complete and authentic attempt that has been made in France [...] has not been such as to give it a good reputation¹⁷⁴. " Even though the media hype surrounding Cempuis had no basis in fact, a Rector of Public Education reused the event as an argument against the principle of coeducation. Compayré feared that the assimilation of education between girls and boys would divert women from their destiny. Coeducation would tend to create "This would lead to "a kind of moral hermaphroditism".

Gabriel Compayré wrote such an article for the *Revue pédagogique* in 1906 because he sensed a movement of opinion in favour of coeducation. Was it the founding of L'Avenir social in 1906 that motivated his warning? Was it the success of Marguerite Bodin's publication of *Surprises de l'école mixte* in 1905? Was it the wish of the Congress of Teachers' Associations held in Lille in 1905, which advocated a proactive policy of coeducation¹⁷⁵ ? What is certain in any case is that things are moving. As proof, the fact that the representatives of the primary school staff - including Albertine Eidenschenk - submitted a vow to the CSIP in 1906 to increase the number of mixed classes in small schools¹⁷⁶. The permanent section approved this request and recognised the educational value of dividing children by age group rather than by gender. However, it set a condition: the departmental council, the municipal council and the families must approve the initiative, which is initially only experimental. Thus, as Frédéric Mole points out, there is no reason to conclude that this

The "gemination policy" is accompanied by a questioning of public authorities about the

173 Marie Bonneval, "L'œuvre d'Épône et la Coéducation", in Madeleine Vernet, *L'Avenir social*, op. cit.

174 Gabriel Compayré, "La coéducation des sexes aux États-Unis", *Revue pédagogique*, October 1906.

175 See Frédéric Mole, *L'École laïque pour une République sociale*, op. cit. , p. 167.

176 Vow dated 12 October 1906, CSIP minutes, F/17/13643.

gender relations¹⁷⁷ ". Indeed, the arguments of pedagogical efficiency and cost reduction are much more mobilised by the administration than any desire to change gender relations.

What role did Marguerite Bodin's book play in this movement in favour of coeducation? Although the teacher had been advocating co-education in *La Fronde* since 1900, it was her book that made her famous. Marguerite Bodin, who shared the same convictions as Madeleine Vernet and joined L'Avenir social, also presented the school as the outline of a new society: "Gather children in a school: Here begins their apprenticeship to society."¹⁷⁸ " The teacher reminds us that the personality of a human being cannot be summed up by his or her gender, and that the school's mission must be to develop the originality of each individual:

Because we have one ideal of women and another of men, we keep girls on one side and boys on the other, thinking, without having practised it, that education together would be deplorable. [...] No, integral coeducation will not result in all minds being cast in the same mould! If you knew, on the contrary, how much it encourages originality of character ¹⁷⁹!

Pauline Kergomard goes further. She argues that children are the same when they are small, and that it is precisely education that teaches them the difference between the sexes. In a text published in 1899 in *La Fronde*, she de-essentialized the feminine and masculine genders, showing how the characteristics of femininity and masculinity are inculcated in girls and boys through systems of prohibitions and incentives¹⁸⁰. The Inspector General disapproves of this differentialist education. She is pleased that among her grandchildren, several boys love dolls and that, on the contrary, her granddaughter climbs trees. She addresses the educators: 'Will you have the [...] sad courage to develop, in [the boy], what you will stifle [...] in [the girl]? [Your first duty is to respect the faculties of the soul which are *all* in germ in both sexes. Shouldn't a girl learn to be brave, bold and strong as much as a boy should know how to be considerate towards his fellow men¹⁸¹ ? There are no qualities peculiar to one sex: all virtues should be taught to children.

In an article published in 1905 and entitled "Les facteurs sociologiques de la psychologie féminine", Madeleine Pelletier took up this idea of "psychological sex" inculcated in children from birth. Like Pauline Kergomard, she distinguished between biological sex and social sex. Convinced that the mentalities of boys and girls are originally the same, Madeleine

177 Frédéric Mole, "La "coéducation des sexes" en débat", in Françoise Thébaud and Michelle Zancarini-Fournel (eds.), "Mixité et éducation", *Clio*, 2003, n°18, p. 43-63.

178 Marguerite Bodin, "Questions/answers: education in the family", *La Fronde*, 17 February 1901.

179 Marguerite Bodin, "Questions/answers: coeducation", *La Fronde*, 3 March 1901.

180 Pauline Kergomard, "Éducation à rebours", *La Fronde*, 14 December 1899.

181 Pauline Kergomard, "La tribune: À travers l'éducation, la coéducation", *La Fronde*, 14 January 1898.

Pelletier defines feminist education as the suppression of all educational practices that tend to construct gender difference¹⁸². However, Madeleine Pelletier is an exception in promoting the masculinisation of little girls in a perspective of emancipation. The vast majority of coeducation activists were content to call for an end to unisex education, which was seen as a matrix of gender inequality. Thus, on the eve of the Great War, Pauline Rebour, a teacher in an upper primary school, declared in *L'École nouvelle*, although *she had* long been rather reticent about co-education¹⁸³ that "the main culprit [...] is education, not only because it raises little boys and girls for a different task, but also because it roots in them antifeminist prejudices¹⁸⁴". Raised side by side, boys and girls learn to see each other as equals. Marie Bonneviel writes: "We dream of *equality*? Let us prepare for it by common education in the school, so that individuals of both sexes can then consider themselves equal in society.¹⁸⁵"

E) Is coeducation synonymous with the assimilation of the curriculum between girls and boys?

If boys and girls are to be brought up equally, does this mean that they should be given an identical education? Is it not necessary for girls to be given special instruction, especially about the duties of motherhood? This is the opinion of some feminists, including Louise Debor in *La Fronde*¹⁸⁶. Pauline Kergomard, for her part, would prefer to make the hitherto female education mixed. Thus, she supported Suzanne Brès's proposal to the 1900 Primary Education Congress to include domestic education in the boys' curriculum: the long-term objective was to dissuade men from considering women as their servants¹⁸⁷. Odette Laguerre also defended home economics for boys:

Who then created this prejudice which makes so many men blush to be caught at home wiping dishes [...], and little boys think they are dishonoured by learning to sew? These are certainly not the feminists. On the contrary, they strive, through coeducation, to uproot it; [...] they declare that if housework is honourable for women, it is also honourable for men; that if it degrades anyone who does it, there is no reason why women alone should be obliged to do it¹⁸⁸.

182 See Claude Zaidman, "Madeleine Pelletier et l'éducation des filles", *Les cahiers du CEDREF* [Online], 15 | 2007, online 10 November 2009, accessed 31 July 2020, <http://journals.openedition.org/cedref/388> See also Bérengère Kolly, "Du féminisme dans et par l'éducation. Regard sur *L'Éducation féministe des filles* de Madeleine Pelletier (1914)", *Le Télémaque*, 2013/1, n°43, p. 127-138 and Christine Bard (ed.), *Madeleine Pelletier : logique et infortunes d'un combat pour l'égalité*, Paris, Côté-femmes, 1992, 209 p.

183 After the 1905 Congrès des amicales voted in favour of coeducation, *L'École nouvelle* declared: "We have gone too far" (Frédéric Mole, *L'École laïque pour une République sociale*, *op. cit.*, p. 180).

184 P. Rebour, "Propos féministes", *L'École nouvelle*, 8 March 1913.

185 Marie Bonneviel, "L'œuvre d'Épône et la Coéducation", in Madeleine Vernet, *L'Avenir social*, *op. cit.*

186 Louise Debor, 'Seconde lettre ouverte à Madame Maria Pognon', *La Fronde*, 29 November 1899.

187 Pauline Kergomard, "Enseignement primaire", *La Fronde*, 4 August 1900.

188 Odette Laguerre, "Chronique féministe: la femme au foyer", *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, May 1905.

Odette Laguerre adds that no woman should be considered as the 'legal and free servant of her husband' or as a 'machine for making children and soup'. These blunt words contrast with the dominant discourse that valorises women's domestic role in order to gain their consent to their reclusion in the private sphere. Juliette Rennes has shown how the feminists of the Belle Époque demystified this doxa: against the "house fairy", some spoke of the "queen of dishwater and socks with holes"¹⁸⁹ ". For feminists, it was a question of making their own names triumph over those of their adversaries. In this logic, Pauline Kergomard replied to a man who considered the husband to be the head of the conjugal union and the wife to be the head of the household: 'What do you mean by household? Do you think that the man should be the head of the family, and the woman the head of the kitchenware'¹⁹⁰ ? "

Similarly, the Inspector General noted in 1900 that although girls were taught sewing, which was said to be admirably suited to female skills, the chairmanship of the examination of sewing work sent to the World's Fair was given to a man¹⁹¹. Is sewing feminine when it comes to mending and masculine when it gives access to a prestigious position? For Pauline Kergomard, while it was necessary for young girls to be prepared for the tasks that awaited them in their adult lives, the solution did not lie in introducing home economics courses at school. Indeed, it is 'experience [that is] of primary necessity'¹⁹² ". But how can girls gain domestic experience in a system which locks them into boarding schools on a daily basis and keeps them away from family life? The home economics courses seemed to the inspector to be totally artificial.

At the International Congress of Primary Education in 1900, Denise Billotey, a member of the Society for the Psychological Study of the Child and future member of the Ladies' Committee of the Ligue de l'enseignement, spoke out in favour of co-education and the identity of instruction between girls and boys¹⁹³. She criticised the moral lessons that extolled the qualities of self-effacement and considered, on the contrary, that the encouragement of individual initiative and autonomy of conscience should be uniformly inculcated in all schoolchildren. But the idea of teaching the same morals to both sexes was not accepted. Thus, when in 1911 Louise Renard approached Pauline Kergomard for information on girls' high schools in preparation for a conference, the inspector general was distressed "to see that our secular school still swallows, in small doses, morals adapted to the so-called needs of women"¹⁹⁴ ".

In September 1907, Miss Rousson, a secondary school teacher, challenged at the Congress of the federation of secular youths in the Gard region the education that made the young girl a person who was "effaced in society, [...] a servant [...] of her husband and sons; resigned to her fate, since she was made to believe that the

189 Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature*, *op. cit.* p. 18.

190 Pauline Kergomard, *Libres entretiens de l'Union pour la vérité*, 5th series, n°1, 15 November 1908, p. 27.

191 Pauline Kergomard, "Une statistique suggestive", *La Fronde*, 7 January 1900.

192 Pauline Kergomard, "La tribune: Encore l'internat, l'internat envisagé au point de vue féminin", *La Fronde*, 24 August 1898.

193 Miss Billotey, "À propos de l'éducation morale des jeunes filles", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, January 1901.

194 Letter from Pauline Kergomard to Louise Renard, 28 July 1911, Ms2607, BHVP.

resignation is a virtue; incapable [...] of expressing a personal opinion, since she is taught that she should shun all originality as a sin¹⁹⁵. " Miss Rousson demands the right for girls to study the same subjects as boys. She mocked the discourse that consisted in limiting the content of teaching to avoid overwork: "Under the pretext of protecting them, they are treated as minors". According to her, the purpose of differentialist instruction is to deny women access to the same studies and careers as men. She concludes with a call for coeducation at all levels. But gender barriers are not the only ones that need to be broken down: "We want this education to be not [a] privilege [...], but to be extended to all [...], without distinction of fortune. It means asking for free education at all levels, with no other obstacle to the intellectual development of each woman than the limits of her own intelligence.

Like Miss Rousson, many intellectuals, including Pauline Kergomard, Marie Baertschi, Albertine Eidenschenk and Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, questioned gender privilege along with class privilege. As Nicole Mosconi reminds us, on the contrary, for those who wish to preserve the order of the sexes and the social order, "the question is to know whether [inequalities] (between the classes and between the sexes) [are] better preserved by ignorance or by a *moderate* knowledge that makes it possible to control the wild movements of revolt and to ensure a reasoned acceptance of one's 'condition'¹⁹⁶". In contrast, the female intellectuals studied here see school not as a means of ensuring acceptance of their condition by those in a position of domination, but as an instrument of social change.

F) Against the misogyny of a system: for a feminist education of girls

While coeducation plays a pivotal role in the struggle for feminist girls' education, it is only one element. In the eyes of its proponents, it would only have an effect if the whole system changed in depth. Pauline Kergomard deplored the misogyny of school textbooks and the advice given to teachers in educational journals. In 1899, she reproduced in *La Fronde* what she had just read in a magazine: "We have asked man for frankness, courage and justice. All other virtues we wish to find in women [...]. The truth is that, by her very nature, she is little inclined to practice these virtues¹⁹⁷. " The inspector insists: how can boys be taught to respect women when they are presented in educational literature as unjust, fearful and liars in essence!

The content of educational magazines and textbooks was debated during the Belle Époque¹⁹⁸. In her feminist column in *L'École nouvelle*, Pauline Rebour attacked the books

195 Miss E. Rousson, "L'éducation de la femme, rapport présenté au Congrès de la fédération des jeunesses laïques du Gard", *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, September 1907.

196 Nicole Mosconi, "Conclusion", in Rebecca Rogers (ed.), *La mixité dans l'éducation*, *op. cit.* pp. 197-212. Emphasis added.

197 Quoted in Pauline Kergomard, "Education à rebours", *La Fronde*, 14 December 1899.

198 See in particular Linda L. Clark, *Schooling the Daughters of Marianne, Textbooks and the Socialization of Girls in Modern French Primary Schools*, Albany, State University of New York Press, 1984, 224 p.

I am sorry when I see that the prejudices we are fighting against are found in our school textbooks [...] and especially in our moral lessons¹⁹⁹. " In 1913, she praised history textbooks that mentioned countries where women could vote, such as Australia and some American states: "[These books] will do us the great service of presenting to our pupils the reform that *has been carried out* which, good beyond such and such a frontier, will perhaps have one more chance of not being considered dangerous below it²⁰⁰. "

A year later, the French Union for Women's Suffrage put several wishes to the vote at its congress. Educational magazines were asked to stop giving dictation models that asserted women's inferiority. Similarly, school textbooks should be free of any anti-feminism. Finally, the congress wanted feminist propaganda to be used forcefully with teachers in the teacher training colleges, where male and female teachers were trained²⁰¹.

This desire to make school a springboard to female citizenship appears in the discourse of some pioneering women from the turn of the XX^e century. Thus, when Gustave Téry declared at the 1902 Congress of Secondary Education that "civic education has as its object the life of the city, i.e. politics²⁰² "Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello pointed out that this definition never mentioned young girls: she therefore demanded that civic education should also be a real preparation for citizenship in women's secondary schools. She declared that "women, far from being a negligible quantity, are an instrument that opposing parties know how to use admirably to propagate their ideas²⁰³ ". In this context, she called for young girls to be made aware of their future role as citizens and won the support of the congress.

In primary education, there was also a question of preparing girls for citizenship. Marguerite Bodin commented on the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen with her pupils, which provoked questions about women's rights²⁰⁴. The children conclude for themselves that in all political matters, men are both judge and party. Moreover, when it came to making a collective decision at the class level, Marguerite Bodin had all the pupils - boys and girls alike - vote: "You'd think she really intended to make her boys and girls familiar with this little ballot paper that we so happily put in [a] cap²⁰⁵. " Regardless of gender, students eventually ask why, if it works for the classroom, this universal vote does not exist at the national level²⁰⁶.

199 P. Rebour, "Propos féministes", *L'École nouvelle*, 8 March 1913.

200 P. Rebour, "Propos féministes", *L'École nouvelle*, 5 July 1913.

201 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben reported the wishes of the Congress in the "BESJF", *Revue universitaire*, July 1914.

202 Quoted in Maria Verona, "Les Congrès: professeurs de l'enseignement secondaire", *La Fronde*, 6 April 1902.

203 Quoted in *Ibid.*

204 Marguerite Bodin, *Les Surprises de l'école mixte*, *op. cit.*

205 *Ibid.*, p. 218.

206 See Odette Laguerre, "Les surprises de l'école mixte", *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, February 1906.

G) France behind? Mobilising foreign examples in feminist advocacy for school reform

In these pleas for the necessary reform of girls' education, foreign models are frequently mobilised. The United States, a pioneer country, plays a central role. After the publication of her account of her trip across the Atlantic, Marie Dugard became a constantly quoted reference by feminists. Her words are often misinterpreted as unconditional support for coeducation and feminist education, even though she never intended her book to be a plea for the American model.

In 1894, back in France, Marie Dugard published an article in the *Revue pédagogique* entitled "De la coéducation des sexes aux États-Unis"²⁰⁷. Rather suspicious of the practice on her arrival, Marie Dugard was forced to note that the atmosphere in mixed schools was "The discipline is even higher than in single-sex schools. Discipline is even higher than in single-sex schools"²⁰⁸. Marie Dugard has some reservations, however. When she attended a lesson given by a female teacher to a mixed class, she was challenged by the teacher's childishness and inability to address young men²⁰⁹. She concludes that a woman cannot get all that boys are capable of intellectually, because of a lack of manly energy. This remark is not without piquancy when one knows Marie Dugard's pedagogy, which is as unmotherly as possible²¹⁰. The inspectors, who noted that she had "a lot of authority over her pupils, but an authority that is neither gentle, nor persuasive, nor friendly"²¹¹ The inspectors, who noted that she had "a lot of authority over her pupils, but an authority that is neither gentle, nor persuasive, nor kind", declared that "there is nothing feminine in her teaching, except the lightness and gentleness of her speech"²¹².

At the end of her American survey, Marie Dugard concludes that coeducation is impracticable in France. For her, the success of co-education across the Atlantic was due to the fact that it had been initiated by *settlers*, whose mindset had nothing to do with that of the Old Continent. Despite this reservation, in the years that followed, Marie Dugard's work was constantly taken up by feminists. Thus, Mary Léopold-Lacour quoted her at the 1900 feminist congress²¹³ In the same year, Denise Billotey used her words at the International Congress of Primary Education²¹⁴ In 1911, Mrs. S. Poirson devoted a chapter to it in her book in favour of coeducation²¹⁵.

On the contrary, opponents of co-education sought to discredit the coeducation experiment in the United States. In the spring of 1903, *La Revue* published the results of a study on

207 M. Dugard, "De la coéducation des sexes aux États-Unis", *Revue pédagogique*, February 1894.

208 Marie Dugard, *La Société américaine*, Paris, Hachette, 1896, pp. 245-247.

209 M. Dugard, "De la coéducation des sexes aux États-Unis", *Revue pédagogique*, February 1894.

210 See Louise Weiss's description in *Souvenirs d'une enfance républicaine*, *op. cit.*, p. 69-71.

211 Inspector's assessment, 18 January 1924, Marie Dugard's career file, F/17/23835.

212 Inspector's assessment, 5 May 1888.

213 Mary Léopold-Lacour, speech of 7 September 1900, in *actes du Congrès international de la condition et des droits des femmes*, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

214 Miss Billotey, "À propos de l'éducation morale des filles", *Revue pédagogique*, January 1901.

215 See Geneviève Pezeu, *Co-education, co-teaching, mixité*, *op. cit.* p. 22. The book by S. Poirson is entitled *La Co-éducation. Ses causes, ses effets, son avenir*.

girls in American universities and concludes "the Krack of the Intellectual and [the] failure of co-education in the United States²¹⁶". *The Review* states that as teenagers, girls are initially better than boys because of their early brain development, but that in the world of work, when it is no longer a question of assimilating knowledge but of producing original work, women reveal their inferiority. The number of eminent women is much lower than the number of men of value in the careers open to both sexes indiscriminately. Odette Laguerre reacted in *La Fronde*: "It is above all through their success that American women students have compromised their cause. [...] If they had been content with modestly taking second place, there would never have been a protest against coeducation. Faced with the controversy triggered by her article, *La Revue* commissioned Andrée Téry to conduct a counter-study²¹⁷. The latter addressed French university professors to obtain their opinion on the success of their female students²¹⁸. Alfred Croiset, Dean of the Faculty of Letters in Paris, and Emile Duclaux, Director of the Pasteur Institute, spoke out strongly in favour of coeducation at all levels, as did Emile Faguet, despite his political and social conservatism. Harlor, who reported the matter in *La Fronde*, concluded that France was ready for "coeducation at all levels²¹⁹". "

In the years that followed, supporters of coeducation broadened the spectrum of foreign references. In the *Revue Universitaire*, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben mentioned all the examples she knew of abroad: Germany in 1910²²⁰Switzerland in 1912²²¹Italy in 1913²²². The Italian example helps to counter a common objection to coeducation, which is that co-education is the preserve of Protestant countries. On the eve of the war, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben even used the Argentine example: "The traditional respect of the Anglo-Saxon races for women exists in Latin Argentina²²³". The author points out that France was lagging behind in the face of these "new countries, where the conquests of democracy are immediately applicable".

The coeducation model was joined by a competing system, that of the girls' universities, which were founded in Great Britain and the United States in particular. French intellectuals found it difficult to position themselves in relation to these initiatives, which, despite their non-mixed nature, appeared to be a source of progress. In 1894, Marie Dugard presented the University of Wellesley, where female students studied the same subjects as their male counterparts (ancient languages, philosophy, sciences - with dissections!) and left the institution with diplomas to be used on the job market.

216 See Odette Laguerre, "Is it a Krack?", *La Fronde*, 13 June 1903.

217 See Harlor's account of this affair, "Coeducation", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} January 1904.

218 On this subject, see Carole Christen-Lécuyer, "Les premières étudiantes de l'Université de Paris", *Travail, genre et sociétés*, n°4, 2000, p. 35-50.

219 Harlor, "Coeducation", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} January 1904.

220 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJF", *Revue universitaire*, May 1910.

221 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJF", *Revue universitaire*, February 1912.

222 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJF", *Revue universitaire*, December 1913.

223 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJF", *Revue universitaire*, March 1914.

work²²⁴. In 1911, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben describes the college of Vassar but, visibly embarrassed, refrains from making any judgement²²⁵. Are there areas where non-mixed education would be beneficial?

Although American women's universities were not the object of outright attacks by French feminists, the latter remained sceptical about this model. When in 1900, at the Congress of Women's Works and Institutions, Inspector General Foncin proposed the creation of two separate medical schools for girls and boys, Blanche Edwards-Pilliet frankly opposed it and won the support of the congress²²⁶. At a time when girls' high schools were accused of deliberately keeping their students away from prestigious degrees and careers, the idea of separating female students from male students was not well received. Feminists are wary of any specifically female education.

Rather, it is co-education in higher education that is held up as a model. Louise Renard wrote in *La Femme nouvelle* in praise of the American system²²⁷. The relationships between young men and women are described as healthy and based on open camaraderie. For the author, the co-education of adolescents and young adults contains the seeds of a new couple, a couple of equals, far from the marriage of interest to which she is very resistant²²⁸ :

It often happens that male and female students marry each other. And it is said that this makes excellent households, where cases of divorce are extremely rare [...]. Young men have a high regard for young girls [...] because they have found them to be harder workers than themselves. [...] Once married, the husband will be rather proud of the wife²²⁹.

The issue of marriage is a recurrent one in the debates on coeducation. In 1911, Louise Renard delivered a lecture in which she advocated a reform of the matrimonial model and of female education, which was subordinate to it²³⁰. She would like the young girl of the XX^e century to decide her own destiny: 'I dream of her [...] choosing her future life partner with full knowledge of the facts. To achieve this result, mixed education is still the best we have found.²³¹.' This mix promises great changes:

The two halves of humanity [...] will be able to look at each other on the same level. [...] It will not be ... the duel of two sexes ... separated by their ideas, their habits, their traditions. [...] Each sex recognising the other as being of equal value - with qualities

224 M. Dugard, "Two Days at Wellesley College", *University Review*, February 1894.

225 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, November 1911.

226 Session of 22 June, proceedings of the *Second International Congress of Women's Works and Institutions*, *op. cit.*

227 Louise-Georges Renard, "Sociology: American Education", *La Femme nouvelle*, May 1905.

228 See Mélanie Fabre, "C'est un roman d'amour vécu qui vaut bien ceux qu'on invente": Louise et Georges Renard, amour et politique", *art. cit.*

229 Louise-Georges Renard, "Sociology: American Education", *La Femme nouvelle*, May 1905.

230 Louise-Georges Renard, "Les mères et les filles dans l'évolution sociale actuelle", *La Française*, 12 Nov. 1911.

231 Louise-Georges Renard, "Jeunes filles", *La Fronde*, 25 January 1898.

different, men and women will treat each other with a mutual esteem that will make the marriage stronger and, I think, the home happier²³².

Several intellectuals extended this observation by establishing, like Louise Renard, a link between mixed schools and the promotion of the couple of equals. This is the case of Madeleine Vernet, an advocate of free union²³³ who considers that "unisex" education, because it inculcates mistrust of the other sex in adolescents, inevitably produces "fist-pumping households²³⁴". Madeleine Vernet and Louis Tribier, obliged to give in to marriage, did so only with regret, in order to save L'Avenir social, and with the certainty that the mixed school would be the foundation of a new matrimonial order²³⁵.

H) Sex education in schools: breaking the last taboo

The new concept of the couple that is emerging in feminist circles is not without its own questions about the place of sex education in schools²³⁶. Since the ideal of the little white goose, innocent because ignorant, is increasingly considered archaic, should we not break with this tradition completely by addressing questions relating to procreation and motherhood during school time? At a time of debate on co-education, can we continue to act as if boys and girls should never be confronted with sexuality?

At the turn of the century, the campaign for the abolition of prostitution was on the feminist agenda. It was accompanied by a denunciation of sexual double standards. In addition, there was concern about the number of girl mothers²³⁷. In addition to this social problem, there was also the venereal disease, which was reflected in a worrying increase in the number of syphilitic patients. In this context, as Virginie de Luca Barrusse explains, "sex education is conceived as an instrument of reproduction and preservation of the race, but must not be an instrument of debauchery²³⁸".

Sex education was also part of the fight against infant mortality and the preservation of mothers' health. As early as 1900, the Congress of Women's Works and Institutions considered introducing maternal education and sexual hygiene into the curriculum for the recruitment of female teachers. It was proposed that doctoral candidates be used to present these subjects.

232 Draft of the lecture 'Mothers and Daughters in Present Social Evolution' at the Collège libre des sciences sociales, Ms2543, BHVP.

233 See Madeleine Vernet, "Réponse sur *L'Amour libre*", *Pages libres*, November 1907.

234 Madeleine Vernet, "La coéducation", in Madeleine Vernet, *L'Avenir social*, *op. cit.*, p. 47-51.

235 Madeleine Vernet quoted by Albert Thomas, "À l'avenir social", *L'Humanité*, 23 October 1909.

236 On the period that followed, see Yvonne Knibiehler, 'L'éducation sexuelle des filles au XX^e siècle', *Clio. Histoire femmes et sociétés* [Online], 4 | 1996, online 01 January 2005, accessed 07 September 2020. <http://journals.openedition.org/cliio/436>.

237 Many of the intellectuals quoted here advocate for the right to paternity research. See in particular Odette Laguerre, "Recherche de la paternité", *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, March 1905.

238 Virginie de Luca Barrusse, 'Le genre de l'éducation à la sexualité des jeunes gens (1900-1940)', *Cahiers du genre*, 2010/2, n°49, p. 155-182.

issues in women's teacher training colleges²³⁹. Blanche Edwards-Pilliet went further: she wanted young girls to be taught about embryogenesis. Some of the delegates were opposed to this innovation. Clarisse Coignet, a pioneer in the defence of coeducation, took offence at any teaching that might harm the innocence of teenage girls: "Oh, don't touch the girls!²⁴⁰ ! ". The doctor insists: "The young girl must be kept in an ignorance that is called innocence, and which has only led to her ignoring the things she should know - the rest we all know she knows.²⁴¹ ." Clarisse Coignet persists in refusing any scientific teaching of sexuality and motherhood for girls, considering that this task belongs to the mother. Even if it means denying a lifetime of convictions about the intellectual equality of boys and girls, she declares that, in any case, "one hardly ever does serious science with young girls²⁴² ". Unsurprisingly, Pauline Kergomard defended Blanche Edwards-Pilliet, but did not win the support of the Congress. The subject was too hot, even in those who favoured reforming female education.

Five years after the Congress, Elsie Masson took up the fight again in *Free Pages*, proposing the introduction of sex education in primary schools. She used the example of the *Ruskin-School Home* and praised the educational practices of its headmaster²⁴³. On the subject of this "question of primordial importance [...] which a cowardly modesty has caused to be completely ignored in present-day education", she quotes the founder of the *Ruskin-School Home* and proves him right:

Until our civilisation looks the sexual problem squarely in the face, it will continue to threaten it [...]. As the sexual instinct takes hold of the child, nothing will teach him more easily the respect and the innate purity of the sexual functions, than these lessons on flowers in the open air. I note to my children's credit that I can talk about these matters in a class where boys and girls are mixed together, without the shadow of a smile or a meaningful glance passing between them. [The real future of our schools lies not in the separation of the sexes, but in their cooperation... It is not by hiding what cannot be hidden, but by [...] looking it in the face [...] that the sexual problem can be adequately resolved.

Pauline Kergomard took the same line. When Louise Renard asked her about girls' schools, the inspector general denounced their prudishness:

Not so many years ago, physiology was taught in girls' schools with the help of a neutral skinner. [...] This neutered science is not suitable [...].

239 See Louise Debor, "L'enseignement de l'hygiène aux femmes", *La Fronde*, 11 August 1900.

240 The debate is reported by Anne Martin-Fugier in *La Bourgeoise*, *op. cit.*

241 *Ibid.*

242 *Ibid.*

243 Elsie Masson, 'The Ruskin-School Home', *Free Pages*, 4 March 1905.

All the countries that count are at the moment dealing with sex education; there has been talk of a survey [...] and I have just written to the Ministry to find out whether the project is going ahead, or whether it has melted away on the way. I don't think I'm mistaken in telling you that for boys, there have been several conferences along these lines [...]. As for the girls, only one, I believe, and of the highest order (scientifically chaste, or rather chastely scientific) was given by Mme Leroy Allais [...]. The only serious thing I did was to the section of the National Council of Women: I put sex education under study, and our wishes will be presented at the first general assembly²⁴⁴.

Pauline Kergomard's letter demonstrates the difficulty of dealing with sexuality in a purely scientific manner in front of a female audience: the mannequin that the young girls observe is asexual, the lectures must be 'chastely scientific'. Jeanne Leroy-Allais, who published *Comment j'ai instruit mes filles des choses de la maternité* in 1907, was also the author of a book on morality, as if the two disciplines were intrinsically linked. Indeed, "as it is promoted, sex education is a set of recommendations [...] that should enable young people to measure the consequences of the sexual act for themselves, for their family and for society²⁴⁵" In other words, health prophylaxis and moralizing recommendations go hand in hand.

For her part, Pauline Kergomard made a clear choice between two competing modes of managing sexuality: one favouring internal family discussion; the other favouring the action of doctors and educators distributing sexual information in the name of the country's collective interest²⁴⁶. Aware of the failure of many families, the Inspector General opts for the second option. But as she points out, almost all sex education initiatives up to that point had been aimed at boys. Sex education remained controversial for girls, whose modesty had to be respected.

When, in 1912, the Inspector General wrote the preface to Dr Lucien Mathé's book entitled *L'Enseignement de l'hygiène sexuelle à l'école*, she declared: 'L'Éducation sexuelle est encore - au XX^e siècle - un épouvantail pour trente millions de Français au moins²⁴⁷'. She denounced the "mountains of prejudice" that condemn schools to remain hostile to it. However, Pauline Kergomard knew that families could not be relied upon in this respect: the bourgeois mother was paralysed by "dangerous prudishness" and the common woman was often unable to provide explanations. Moreover, "how can one demand that her tiredness, her exasperation in a single room, where all the acts of sexual life become rude, create and maintain an atmosphere of delicacy, self-respect and respect for others?"

244 Letter from Pauline Kergomard to Louise Renard, 28 July 1911, Ms2607, BHVP.

245 Virginie de Luca Barrusse, "Le genre de l'éducation à la sexualité des jeunes gens (1900-1940)", art. cit.

246 *Ibid.*

247 Pauline Kergomard, preface to Lucien Mathé, *L'Enseignement de l'hygiène sexuelle à l'école*, 2nd edition, Paris, 1912, pp. V-XII.

Pauline Kergomard was aware of the seriousness of the 'sexual question' in working-class circles. She regularly recounted heartbreaking anecdotes in *La Fronde*: prostitutes who had barely reached puberty, 13-year-old girls about to become mothers, "and not knowing who they should blame for their pregnancy: 'Maybe it's Daddy; maybe it's my brother; do I know? We're sleeping together'²⁴⁸... " Her work with the French Union for the Rescue of Children brings her into contact with children who are sometimes sexually exploited. Faced with such a reality, is it acceptable that "children of both sexes [...], having obeyed the school obligation, leave school without having learned why young men and women are required to respect themselves²⁴⁹ ? "

The Inspector General therefore supports Dr Mathé's work and believes that the chapters on puberty, chastity and venereal diseases should be taught at school by the school doctor. In girls' schools, she suggested that these lessons be given to a medical doctor appointed by the Ministry.

In 1913, during the International Women's Congress, the inspector reiterated this proposal. But Marie Bonneval, Séverine and Louise Compain were opposed to the intervention of a doctor in schools, and asked that sex education be attached to the scientific education for which teachers were responsible. Furthermore, the inspector general's wish to make sex education a discipline in its own right was rejected by the National Council of French Women, of which Pauline Kergomard was president of the Education section, where she had succeeded in imposing the demand for coeducation in 1905. Her proposal was finally rejected by the Tenth International Congress of Women on the eve of the Great War²⁵⁰.

Pauline Kergomard was disappointed to encounter so many opponents on this central issue. Mothers whose children attend "laïque" are already protesting against the teaching of childcare "which forces their daughters to see naked newborn children of both sexes²⁵¹ "in the nurseries they visit. Once again, for Pauline Kergomard, "this is due to the prudishness of our Catholic morals²⁵² " ! According to her, the republican school nevertheless carries in its genes the need to be always in the vanguard of social evolution, even if it means clashing with prejudices, as it did when it proclaimed itself secular in the 1880s. The Inspector General attacked the remnants of Catholic morality which would hinder any evolution in the field of morals. It is true that Catholics were united in their opposition to coeducation and, *a fortiori*, to sex education. A rare exception is the Viscountess of Adhemar, who declares in the chapter "Dogmatics of Love" in her 1896 book that the adolescent girl must be made aware of the realities of sexuality before being confronted with them²⁵³. It is on this point that she is attacked by her co-religionists: "Mme d'A...

248 Pauline Kergomard, "Encore l'internat - hors d'œuvre nécessaire", *La Fronde*, 25 August 1898.

249 Pauline Kergomard, preface to Lucien Mathé, *L'Enseignement de l'hygiène sexuelle à l'école*, *op. cit.*

250 Two reports were consulted. One is anonymous, "Communications féministes : 10ème congrès international des femmes", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, November 1913; the other by Jeanne Couzet-Benaben, "Une assemblée de femmes en 1913, le Congrès international de Paris", *La Grande Revue*, 10 July 1913.

251 Pauline Kergomard, preface to Lucien Mathé, *L'Enseignement de l'hygiène sexuelle à l'école*, *op. cit.*

252 Pauline Kergomard, "Encore l'internat - l'internat envisagé au point de vue féminin", *La Fronde*, 24 August 1898 - See also Tolla, "L'éducation physique des jeunes filles", *La Fronde*, 31 July 1901.

253 Mme d'Adhémar, *Nouvelle éducation de la femme dans les classes cultivées*, Paris, Perrin, 1896, 292 p.

does not hesitate to delegate to the teacher the task of intimate revelations. [...] Is it not the mother, and the mother alone, who must deal with these most serious and delicate questions?²⁵⁴ ? "

Four years later, in *La Femme catholique et la démocratie française*, Mme d'Adhémar did not lower her weapons, and this time made a plea in favour of co-education. According to her, the scandals that had taken place in France - a thinly veiled reference to "the pigsty at Cempuis" - proved nothing against coeducation if it was practised in the presence of a strong religion. In contrast, the *SGEE Bulletin* shows strong opposition to coeducation²⁵⁵. The practice was presented as immoral and a violation of the law. The vicar of Arras protested against the CSIP's decision to experiment with it on an exceptional basis²⁵⁶. The debate on sexual instruction was seen as the triumph of vice in the public school.

1) Trajectories of feminist teachers: facing the institution

When they emanate from public education officials, how are these iconoclastic speeches on coeducation, sexual instruction or the introduction of feminism in schools received by the administration? While Pauline Kergomard, the most involved in these issues, enjoyed a great deal of freedom of tone thanks to her status as inspector general, several of her colleagues encountered difficulties. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, for example, irritated the rector, who declared in 1901 that she was "compromising the school by her deserved reputation as an exalted feminist²⁵⁷". In 1903, he disapproved of her choice to introduce more than 20 boys into the primary classes of her school, in the midst of the little girls²⁵⁸. The headmistress alone took the decision to introduce coeducation in her school. It was not until 1916 that the first circular officially authorised the admission, subject to conditions, of boys and girls to primary classes in colleges or lycées not dedicated to them²⁵⁹. But it was above all the public statements made by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello that annoyed. The Inspector General complained that she had made "an unpleasant speech at the feminist congress [of 1900], which, fortunately, was ignored by the families of her pupils²⁶⁰". The headmistress demanded that the school-leaving diploma should allow female students to enter higher education. If such an *apparently* unsubversive statement displeased the administration, it is easy to understand why the headmistress of the Lyons high school decided to express herself in *La Fronde* and *La Femme nouvelle* under a pseudonym.

Like that of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, the file of Léa Bérard, a Sevrier agrégé de lettres, shows the disapproval of the administration. Her hierarchy takes a dim view of the

254 Review of his work by C. Huit, "Mélanges et notes", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, May 1896.

255 See in particular L. Lescœur, "L'éducation secondaire des jeunes filles et la question des examens", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, August 1884.

256 F. Lejeune, vicar of Arras, "La coéducation des sexes", *Bulletin de la SGEE*, April 1909.

257 Rector's assessment, 29 May 1901, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's career file, F/17/22067.

258 Rector's assessment, 7 May 1903.

259 Geneviève Pezeu, *Coeducation, co-teaching, co-education, op. cit.*, p. 11.

260 Inspector General's assessment, 12 May 1901, F/17/22067.

In 1904, she founded *La Femme nouvelle*, to which many feminists known for their expertise on educational issues contributed, such as Madeleine Vernet, founder of L'Avenir social, Madeleine Carlier, co-president of the Société de l'éducation pacifique, Louise Renard, then a contributor to *La Petite République*, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, who took up her pseudonym as a rebel, and Albertine Eidenschenk, soon to be a member of the CSIP²⁶¹.

As early as 1894, Léa Bérard had the idea of creating a *Revue de l'Enseignement Féminine*, which,

While having a pedagogical character, it will make room for the "Rights and duties of women in society".²⁶² ". In a letter requesting the collaboration of Georges Renard, she describes her project:

"The Bulletin de Sèvres that we used to receive [...] has ceased to exist²⁶³. We intend to replace it by a publication which would be addressed, not to a restricted public, but to the staff of all secondary and [...] higher primary or vocational education for girls²⁶⁴. " Doubtless disappointed by the lack of audacity of Camille Sée's journal devoted to secondary education for girls, Léa Bérard took advantage of the interruption in publication of the Bulletin des sévriennes to create a new organ. The fact that she asked for the collaboration of Georges Renard is revealing of her state of mind: she addressed a former communard who had become a socialist and feminist intellectual²⁶⁵. The former Sevrier defended a social, secular and woman-friendly Republic. This was not without its tensions. In that same year, 1894, the administration requested that Léa Bérard be removed from her position as head of the Abbeville college because she and her husband were collaborating on a newspaper representing "the advanced faction of the Republican party²⁶⁶ "This was the secular left, which was attacking Spuller, the Minister of Public Education, who was engaged in a policy of rapprochement with the Catholics. The Bérards' supposed collaboration with this paper was likely to "discredit the girls' college". For the time being, Léa Bérard gave up founding her magazine.

It was not until 1904 that she finally realised her project by calling her monthly *La Femme nouvelle*. The title was already a programme. As Florence Rochefort writes, during the Belle Époque, "the term 'new women' covers [...] the many women's experiences of an unprecedented freedom of movement and speech, including [...] the feminists who are concretely concerned with women's collective access to equality and autonomy²⁶⁷ ". The expression "new woman", displayed on the front page of the magazine, has a strong ring to it. The publication does not present itself as a social magazine: it "will deal seriously with serious matters²⁶⁸ ". Despite the

261 In her career file, the denunciation of her 'secularist' activism takes precedence over that of her feminist commitment, F/17/23836/B.

262 Letter from Léa Bérard to Georges Renard, 12 March 1894, Ms2607, BHVP.

263 It seems that the *Bulletin de l'Association des élèves de Sèvres* ceased publication between 1890 and 1901.

264 Letter from Léa Bérard to Georges Renard, 12 March 1894.

265 See her "Lettre aux femmes", *La Revue socialiste*, November 1894. For an analysis, Mélanie Fabre, "C'est un roman d'amour vécu qui vaut bien ceux qu'on invente": Louise et Georges Renard, amour et politique", art. cit. See Letter from Léa Bérard to Georges Renard, 12 March 1894.

266 Letter from the Inspecteur d'Académie de la Somme to the Rector of Lille, 16 May 1894, F/17/23670.

267 Florence Rochefort, "Dreyfusisme et femmes nouvelles", art. cit.

268 Léa Bérard, "Notre programme", *La Femme nouvelle*, 15 April 1904.

Although she was a good-natured supporter of the programme presented in the first issue, Léa Bérard once again met with hostility from her superiors. It must be said that many of the contributions were daring, from those of Albertine Eidenschenk who considered that the Republicans had expanded women's education for selfish reasons and were now incapable of carrying out their emancipation²⁶⁹The article goes on to denounce bourgeois marriage by comparing the social ball to a slave market²⁷⁰to Léopold Rocher's apology of Marguerite Bodin's book on coeducation²⁷¹. For his part, the rector declared that Léa Bérard was "a little too active. Not only does she teach, but she publishes small manuals of psychology and morals, and she directs the *Revue Nouvelle* (for the use of young girls)²⁷². " Was it because of pressure from her hierarchy that, a year after the launch of the magazine, Léa Bérard wrote to Louise Renard to hand over the management²⁷³ ? Louise Renard refused, and the publication ceased in 1906, without however exhausting Léa Bérard's dynamism.

The latter created domestic education courses attached to the high school in Montpellier. The aim was to provide young girls with lessons in childcare and home economics. But in 1908, the headmistress of the school considered that Léa Bérard was "a little too enterprising, she was involved in many social and feminist works which took up her time²⁷⁴ ". That same year, the rector asked her to stop the experiment because, according to Léa Bérard, "certain newspapers [had] talked too much about our pupils²⁷⁵ ". Léa Bérard decided to abandon the project, but the criticism against them continued. In 1909, she was accused of being "too inclined to treat her pupils as grown-ups²⁷⁶ In 1909, she was accused of being "too inclined to treat her pupils as grown-ups" and of having "sometimes indulged in bold opinions with them that have moved their families". Despite her 'brilliant and original mind²⁷⁷ "She showed too much self-confidence and asked her pupils to develop their personalities and live their lives²⁷⁸.

Recognised in spite of everything for her skills, Léa Bérard produced reports on domestic economy for the Ministry in the years before the war: she wanted to improve the preparation of young girls for their future life by teaching them, without taboos, about motherhood and childcare.²⁷⁹ She also wrote articles for *La Française*, the organ of the National Council of French Women. However, her feminism is most evident in her contribution to the renovation of the historical discipline in the sense of revalorising the role of women. Thus,

269 In *La Femme nouvelle*, Albertine Eidenschenk, "La femme nouvelle - culture morale", April 1904; "La femme nouvelle", May 1904; "La femme française et la République", January 1905.

270 Madeleine Carlier, "Sociologie: deux jeunesses", *La Femme nouvelle*, July 1904.

271 Léopold Rocher, "Les surprises de l'école mixte", *La Femme nouvelle*, February 1906.

272 Rector's assessment, 24 April 1905, F/17/23670. The rector is mistaken about the real title of the magazine.

273 Letter from Léa Bérard to Louise Renard, 12 July 1905, Ms2607, BHVP.

274 Director's assessment, 19 March 1908, F/17/23670.

275 Letter from Léa Bérard to the Director of Secondary Education, 4 September 1908.

276 Director's assessment, 15 March 1909.

277 Director's assessment, 15 March 1911.

278 Rector's assessment, 12 April 1911.

279 See the letter to the Minister of 22 January 1912 in which she asked for a post as inspector general of domestic education. She wrote a report in 1908 on the situation in France and another on the Brussels Exhibition in 1910.

From December 1913 onwards, she organised a course in women's history at the Montpellier Faculty of Arts annex²⁸⁰. She spoke about the role of women in the Protestant Reformation, the figure of the worker in the struggles of the proletariat, and the female monastic orders. Although a feminist, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben was reluctant to approve the initiative:

The idea is [...] to study particularly the influence of women in history. [This is the first time the attempt has been made. It is presented as a conquest of feminism; but, from another point of view, it is the opposite of a conquest, since there is today on the contrary a movement to assimilate more and more the teachings given to girls and boys²⁸¹.

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben vacillated between supporting the idea of revaluing the role of women in history and refusing to make the teaching given to young girls specific, at the risk of providing them with an education that was too far removed from that of boys. In reality, Léa Bérard was simply carrying out a project put forward by Camille Sée when he created the women's lycées. As Nicole Mosconi recalls, he deplored the fact that the history curriculum had been modelled on that of boys: 'If you look through it, one thing will strike you: the word woman is never to be found there. [Yet it would not have been useless to highlight the influence that women have gradually taken in our customs, in society and even in politics²⁸². " As a result, school culture does not offer young girls heroines with whom they can identify. High school girls only find "male role models²⁸³".

In this perspective, Léa Bérard's initiative is resolutely feminist, although it contrasts with republican universalism by highlighting a particular category of historical actors. By advocating a history of women, Léa Bérard challenges the feminism of Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben. In the words of Joan W. Scott, "the whole history [of feminism] as a political movement rests on this paradox: the need to affirm and reject both 'sexual difference'²⁸⁴". In Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben's eyes, the history of women does not appear as constitutive of human history, but as a deviation from the norm. This norm is that of the male-centred historical discipline. While there is talk of assimilating the curricula between girls and boys, she can only envisage a copy of the male model by the female high schools.

Feminist interpretation of the school system and the content taught, coeducation, sexual instruction: these are all debates in which intellectuals belonging to the

280 Léa Bérard had published: *Résumés d'histoire avec rapprochements et indications utiles, à l'usage de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, Paris, A. Fouraut, 1891-1893, 3 vols; with E. Blum, *Cours de morale théorique et notions historiques pour l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles (4e année)*, Paris, Alcan, 1903, 316 p.

281 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, February 1914.

282 Quoted by Nicole Mosconi, *Femmes et savoir*, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

283 According to Nicole Mosconi's formula in *Ibid.*

284 Joan W. Scott, *The Paradoxical Citizen*, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

These women intellectuals are part of the secular and feminist avant-garde and see the school as an instrument of social change. By wanting to make it the crucible of new gender relations, these intellectuals challenge gender prejudice, class prejudice and religious doxa in one fell swoop.

III- Building peace in schools: intellectuals and pacifists

If Marguerite Bodin, like many of the intellectuals studied in this thesis, was a feminist, freethinker and socialist activist, she was also a great name in Belle Époque pacifism. In 1902, she wrote an enthusiastic letter to Élie Ducommun, secretary of the International Peace Bureau, in which she declared: "The times are favourable to our ideas, it is up to us to take advantage of them to strike [a] great blow²⁸⁵". The beginning of the 20th century appears indeed as the dawn of a new era marked by the conversion of a republican avant-garde to pacifism. Teachers played an important role in this movement. Jean-Paul Martin, a specialist in the Ligue de l'Enseignement, considers that on this issue, "the Ligue [was] constantly pushed forward by its own base²⁸⁶".

It is true that the Third Republic, born on the ruins of the Franco-Prussian war, was initially driven by the desire for revenge, but in the decades that followed it faced several shocks that converted part of its base to pacifism. Thus, the Boulanger affair in 1889-1890 raised the threat of an authoritarian and militaristic regime carried through the ballot box. Ten years later, the Dreyfus affair reiterated this threat. But in 1899, the first international peace conference in The Hague gave hope to pacifists. This optimism lasted until 1905, when the Tangiers coup dealt a blow to peace activists by reactivating nationalism in the country.

From the end of the 1890s, many feminists were active in the pacifist ranks. The foundation of the Société de l'Éducation pacifique by Marguerite Bodin and Madeleine Carlier in 1901 reinforced the visibility of women's action in this movement. They were joined by many intellectuals who sought to transform places of instruction into schools of peace. However, it must be said that historiography has not yet taken any interest in them. Marie-Michèle Doucet, author of a thesis on women in the post-war pacifist movement, states: "Despite the interest of the subject, there are few studies on how French women [...] participated in the discussions surrounding peace²⁸⁷". Her observation is all the more true for France during the Belle Époque, where the historiographical void is surprising²⁸⁸.

285 Letter from Marguerite Bodin to Élie Ducommun, secretary of the International Peace Bureau in Berne, 10 June 1902. Archives of the International Peace Bureau, B.136-D.13. This sub-section owes a great deal to Frédéric Mole, who entrusted me with a copy of this correspondence during a colloquium in Geneva in June 2019. I thank him warmly for this!

286 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, op. cit.

287 Marie-Michèle Doucet, *Prise de parole au féminin : la paix et les relations internationales dans les revendications du mouvement de femmes pour la paix en France (1919-1934)*, history thesis under the direction of Carl Bouchard, Université de Montréal, May 2015, 336 p., p. 8.

288 *Women's peace studies*, which emerged in the 1980s, did not lead to any extensive work on women in the French pacifist movement before the Great War.

However, women intellectuals at the turn of the century considered the preservation of peace to be a 'natural' domain for women. After showing the role played by the Affaire in the conversion of intellectual and teaching circles to pacifism, we will look at the creation of the Société de l'Éducation pacifique, by studying its objectives, its means of action, as well as the trajectories of four female intellectuals involved in this association: Marguerite Bodin, Madeleine Carlier, Odette Laguerre and Albertine Eidenschenk. Finally, it will be shown that certain school subjects such as modern languages and history are at the heart of the pacifists' desire for reform. All the activists share the conviction that without a profound renovation of education, the pacifist cause is doomed to failure.

A) Women and the pacifist ideal: a 'natural' alliance

In 1899, Pauline Kergomard wrote in *La Fronde*: "We - the women in whose name I speak - refuse to believe that war is necessary²⁸⁹". Indeed, at the turn of the century, pacifism appeared to be a feminine, even feminist, cause. From its foundation in 1897, *La Fronde* included articles with a pacifist tone. The same was true of the other feminist journals that were created in the following years, such as *La Femme nouvelle* and *La Revue de morale sociale*. This convergence of the feminist movement and the pacifist struggle was not limited to France. Thus, in 1904, in a letter to Georges Renard, Odette Laguerre noted that "feminism [...] everywhere is allied with the pacifist movement²⁹⁰". It was, moreover, as a feminist that she insisted on the need to "combat militarism which [...] consecrates the superiority of virile and brutal force and, consequently, the inferiority of women²⁹¹". For her, war contains the seeds of male despotism and female degradation: it is therefore on behalf of women that the cause of right must be pleaded against that of force. The anthropologist Charles Letourneau serves as a scientific back-up for Odette Laguerre. According to him, "it is war which, by developing in men the brutal instincts, the thirst for domination, by separating them from the woman retained in the home by maternal care, has determined the evolution of the sexes in two opposite directions, preparing the man for despotism and the woman for slavery²⁹²".

In the same way, the alliance between pacifism and feminism is so logical for Madeleine Vernet, "that it is not debatable²⁹³". The pacifism of the founder of *L'Avenir social* is rooted in a maternalist feminism. Since it is a woman's destiny to give birth to a child, it is not a matter of

For a comprehensive approach, see Ruth Roach Pierson (ed.), *Women and Peace: Theoretical, Historical and Practical Perspectives*, London, New York, Croom Helm, 1987, 249 pp. Contrary to what his title suggests, Richard J. Evans does not focus on the relationship between feminism, socialism and pacifism in *Comrades and sisters: feminism, socialism and pacifism in Europe, 1870-1945*, Brighton, Wheatsheaf books, New-York, St Martin press, 1987, 203 p.

289 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 20 May 1899.

290 Letter from Odette Laguerre to Georges Renard, 12 April 1905, Ms2607, BHVP.

291 Odette Laguerre, "Féminisme et politique", *La Fronde*, 15 March 1903.

292 Odette Laguerre, "Le féminisme et les grands problèmes actuels", *La Fronde*, 25 May 1903.

293 Quoted in Christine Bard, *Les filles de Marianne*, *op. cit.*

life, its vocation is then to defend it. As Marie-Michèle Doucet writes, women "They claim peace in the name of their motherhood, whether real or potential²⁹⁴". The *topos* of the mother destroyed by war appears regularly, as in the speech Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello gave in Lyon in 1902 to encourage women to join pacifism:

Can a woman, without her heart breaking, evoke the picture of the battlefields [...] where dying men [...] call, as they expire, for the poor mother who does not hear them [...]! No, it is not so that they should perish [...] that we brought them into the world [...]. It was for the works of life that we gave birth to them. [We, the republican women who dare to hate war, [...] want to unite so that wars may cease, so that youth may live²⁹⁵.

In this speech presented to the UPL, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello also stressed the importance of education in the success of the pacifist struggle. Albertine Eidenschenk was of the same opinion: "the progress of pacifist ideas would be even more rapid if all women, to whom this generous cause should be particularly dear, were to propagate it in the family and especially in education²⁹⁶".

In fact, women were very active in pacifist action. When in 1903, Odette Laguerre analysed the publications of the International Bureau of Berne, she noted, "with pride, many names of women among the presidents of Peace Societies²⁹⁷". But if, in the eyes of feminists, questions of war and peace are quite naturally the responsibility of women, this evidence is not shared everywhere. Thus, when at the 1902 Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement, a teacher from Lyon called for the abolition of the exemptions from military service enjoyed by teachers, arguing that in the Republic, the burden of defending the nation could not rest exclusively on the working classes, she drew the wrath of a colleague, who considered that women should not be involved in military matters²⁹⁸. While the male members of Congress were both judge and jury on the subject of military service, the women proclaimed their neutrality and formed a victorious majority in favour of equality before the blood tax. The dissenting schoolteacher declared: "We have the right to take an interest [in military matters] as mothers and wives... and we have just proved that we have a greater sense of patriotic duty than you, gentlemen, since we want compulsory military service for all.

294 Marie-Michèle Doucet, *Prise de parole au féminin, op. cit.*, p. 5.

295 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "Présentation de M. Richet" (speech of 26 March 1902), *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1902, n°4.

296 A. Eidenschenk, "Revue des revues: "Pour la paix"", *La Femme nouvelle*, April 1905.

297 Odette Laguerre, "Le mouvement pacifique", *La Fronde*, 6 May 1903.

298 Odette Laguerre, "Congrès de la Ligue de l'Enseignement", *La Fronde*, 2 October 1902.

If women's voices were heard in these debates at the beginning of the XX^e century, it was also because the political context was favourable. The Boulangist crisis and the Dreyfus Affair profoundly challenged the place of war and the army in republican political culture.

B) The weight of the Affair in the conversion of Dreyfusards to pacifism

At the turn of the 1890s, the Boulangiste crisis showed that the Caesarist threat, backed by the army, still hung over democracy. Haunted by the memory of the plebiscite in favour of Napoleon III, Pécaut, at Fontenay, asked his pupils to choose sides in this time of political crisis. Albertine Eidenschenk, who was a tutor at the time, recorded his morning talks:

Let us not forget [that in 1851] our country abandoned itself to the shame of a dictatorship, and that it is possible that the same thing will happen again. [...] A few months ago, did we not see the country throw itself at the feet of a man whose popularity was not justified by anything? [Were not the ignorant as well as the cultivated classes ready, out of hatred of democracy, to re-establish and undergo the most debasing Caesarism²⁹⁹ ?...

Albertine Eidenschenk quotes Pécaut's words in another context, in 1899, when Déroulède had just carried out an attempted coup d'état and the nationalist movement was gaining ground, demonstrating the temptation that the idea of an authoritarian government supported by arms held sway over opinion. If Boulangism was the first shock, it was the Dreyfus affair that catalysed the pacifist commitment of many Republicans. Jean-Paul Martin writes that many teachers "are convinced that the secular school, as it was conceived in the 1880s, bears a heavy responsibility for the rise of nationalism which, at the time of the Affaire, almost swept away the Republic³⁰⁰". Indeed, the public school cultivated military virtues, love of the fatherland and regret for lost provinces. The Affaire shattered the consensus on these subjects.

In 1898, in *La Fronde*, Pauline Kergomard ridiculed the school battalions and military exercises included in the primary school curriculum³⁰¹. The following year, she considered that the military spirit was the opposite of the spirit of school and democracy:

Contemporary education pursues an ideal [...] of humanity, and [...] people are indignant because the vocation for carnage and devastation is diminishing! France must take its side: [...] it is impossible to be thinkers and killers of men at the same time. [...] We have instituted a government whose code is law and

299 Albertine Eidenschenk, "Le devoir présent", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1899.

300 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, *op. cit.*

301 Pauline Kergomard, "À travers l'éducation, la coéducation", *La Fronde*, 16 January 1898; "À travers l'éducation:

l'enseignement primaire élémentaire. Les programmes", *La Fronde*, 17 April 1898.

justice, liberty, equality, fraternity; [...] "the military vocation" is the negation of these principles; I repeat that one must choose between it and them³⁰².

Pauline Kergomard considered the military spirit and the republican school to be incompatible. She adheres to a teleological reading of history: it is the mission of the Republic to build a future of peace and its school plays a central role in this project. However, like all those who criticised militarism at the turn of the century, the Inspector General was obliged to guard against the reproach of anti-patriotism: '[We must not] confuse the 'military vocation' with *patriotism*, that is to say with our irreducible attachment to our country [...]. France is [...] a hotbed of ideas that we *want to perpetuate* [...] against *all odds; even at the cost of war!* She aligns herself with the position of Buisson, who declared in 1905 that the school must make every Frenchman a patriot ready to defend the nation while cursing war and its barbarity³⁰³.

Moreover, for Pauline Kergomard, the army and the school had become two rival institutions as a result of the Affaire. However, they were both instruments of mass control. A child who left school was required to do military service in the years that followed. But did the republican school and army pursue the same goals? The Inspector General considers that during the three years spent compulsorily in the army, the first duty of the conscripts towards the Fatherland is to "cultivate their intelligence³⁰⁴". To do this, books had to be available to them. This, according to Pauline Kergomard, is where the problem lies: "For us at the Ligue [...] the *good book* is the one that is imbued with the secular spirit; [...] it is the one that will continue the work begun at school and continued in adult education. But will the army's leaders agree to introduce these books into the regiment's libraries? Do they agree with the republican pedagogues on the political ideals that should govern the supervision of the masses?"

Madeleine Vernet shared Pauline Kergomard's concern. She considered that military service was unravelling the work accomplished by primary school. In 1903, in *Pages libres*, she recounts her journey in the same carriage as three uneducated conscripts:

Military service [...] will replace their naivety with deplorable dumbing down. [...] No, military service does not educate the peasant. If he stays three years in the army, they are three years of nightmare for him. The pranks of his comrades, the brutality of the corporals [...], the authoritarian discipline that governs them, all this seems to the peasants to be an ordeal that they endure because they have to, and that - passive by nature - they undergo passively. [...] They are ordered to obey, and they obey. For them, a leader is a demigod against whom there is no argument: the captain has replaced the priest³⁰⁵.

302 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 20 May 1899.

303 See Yves Santamaria, *Le Pacifisme, une passion française*, Paris, A. Colin, 2005, p. 42.

304 Pauline Kergomard, 'XIX^e Congrès de la Ligue de l'Enseignement', *La Fronde*, 5 November 1899.

305 Madeleine Vernet, 'Letter from a Cauchoise to a Parisian', *Pages libres*, 31 October 1903.

Madeleine Vernet was not the only one to lean towards a certain antimilitarism. The same was true of Pauline Kergomard, who put forward a final argument, common to the writings of activists: the Ministry of War was a drain on the state budget, without contributing to the dissemination of republican values. The Inspector General points to the salaries of army executives, and mentions in parallel the miserable wages that the real pillars of the Republic, the teachers, have to live on. For her, "our financial system should be completely overhauled; we should put the 'arts of peace' before the 'art of war' but [...] it is subversive to the last point³⁰⁶". In the same way, Odette Laguerre wrote in 1904 that it was only by committing itself frankly to disarmament that the State would release the budget necessary for the economic and social reforms that millions of workers were waiting for³⁰⁷.

These pacifist intellectuals are convinced that social progress is inseparable from peace. Feminism, socialism and pacifism converge in those who question the bellicose patriotism inherited from the founding fathers of the Republican school.

C) Questioning the heritage of the founders of the republican school: the controversy between Mrs Paul Bert and Odette Laguerre

As Jean-Paul Martin shows, the dawn of the XX^e century was characterised by "a very lively movement to condemn the textbooks that had embodied school patriotism for previous generations - those of Lavissee, Paul Bert, Compayré [...], accused of 'poisoning' the minds of young people by their 'chauvinistic' tendencies³⁰⁸". In 1904, Gustave Hervé published an anti-militarist school textbook which led to a debate in the Assembly and the press before being banned³⁰⁹. The author was a member of the editorial board of *La Revue de l'Enseignement primaire*, which displayed its pacifism, as did *Les Annales de la jeunesse laïque*. In 1902, this review called for statistics on the men and resources destroyed by wars, which it believed to be edifying³¹⁰.

However, it was in the *Annales de la jeunesse laïque* that Mrs Paul Bert defended her late husband in 1904, whose books were then banned from educational literature. Joséphine Bert recounts that two years earlier a publisher had asked her permission to publish a biography of her husband. She gladly agreed. The project was finally abandoned because of the chauvinism of a manual by Paul Bert entitled *L'Instruction publique à l'école* (1882). Joséphine Bert was worried about "such a state of mind among educators" and considered that, as war was still a threatening evil, anti-militarism was suicide: "Humanity [...] is composed, apart from

306 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 22 July 1899.

307 Odette Laguerre, Madeleine Carlier (preface by Frédéric Passy), *Pour la paix, lectures historiques, à l'usage de l'enseignement élémentaire et des écoles normales*, Paris, Librairie générale de l'enseignement, 1905, p. 189.

308 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, *op. cit.*

309 See Danielle Tucac, "L'histoire ou l'éducation du patriote républicain", in Daniel Denis and Pierre Kahn (eds.), (preface by Pierre Nora), *L'École républicaine et la question des savoirs*, *op. cit.* pp. 125-146.

310 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, *op. cit.*

of the fatherland, of rival nations. To disarm oneself as long as the adversaries remain armed [...] is to surrender. [...] Many generations will pass without seeing the dawn of new times.³¹¹ "

Paul Bert's widow also denounced the ingratitude of the representatives of the secular school towards her husband: "Excommunicated and blacklisted during his lifetime by the Church, after his death by part of French democracy [...]! By what he called the 'enlightened democracy', by the teachers". It is true that before being scorned by the educators of the Belle Époque, Paul Bert's book had attracted the wrath of the conservative press for its boldness - particularly on the subject of the French Revolution - when it was published in 1882³¹². At a time when "the party struggle over educational issues has never been more acute³¹³ "Joséphine Bert refused to allow her husband, a great defender of school laws, to be equated with the nationalist party. She deplored the fact that, thanks to the Affaire, the Republicans had abandoned the patriotic idea to the militaristic right. She warned teachers that they must not allow their writings, their supporters or their schools to be "smeared with the name of 'fatherless' [...] since, while awaiting the era of universal solidarity, love of the fatherland is the closest thing to love of humanity".

Odette Laguerre, a regular contributor to the *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, reacted immediately to Mrs Paul Bert's article. She reassured her that there was no reason to worry about "the decadence of patriotic feeling in schools³¹⁴ "All this is nothing more than an "absolutely undeserved suspicion that the enemies of republican institutions are trying to cast on the teaching staff". Odette Laguerre recognises, however, that patriotism as it is taught in 1904 has nothing to do with the patriotism that animated hearts in the aftermath of Sedan:

It is no longer the bellicose and revanchist patriotism which [...] dominated [...] all school life, and instilled in the children a hatred of the Prussian [...]. This blind patriotism, [...] made up above all of national ignorance and vanity [...] is in decadence, [...] and that is fortunate. [...] The school no longer wishes to be an accomplice in future Caesarian attempts; it no longer wishes, by cultivating militaristic tastes, to risk one day awakening the beast of prey which slumbers in the heart of every man.

Like all her pacifist colleagues, Odette Laguerre sought to show that secular schools did not rhyme with anti-patriotism, at a time when the Hervé affair tended to equate pacifism with hatred of the fatherland in public opinion³¹⁵. According to her, teachers remain patriotic "As were the great revolutionaries of 1792 and 1848 who, while cherishing their own country, allowed their sympathies to spill over beyond its borders³¹⁶ ". Odette Laguerre inscribed the

311 Mme Paul Bert, "À propos de patriotisme", *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, June 1904.

312 Mona Ozouf, *L'école, l'Église et la République*, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

313 Mme Paul Bert, "À propos de patriotisme", *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, June 1904.

314 Odette Laguerre, "L'éducation pacifique à l'école", *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, July 1904.

315 On the Hervé affair, see Gilles Heuré, *Gustave Hervé, itinéraire d'un provocateur, de l'antipatriotisme au pétainisme*, Paris, la Découverte, 1997, 364 p.

316 Odette Laguerre, "L'éducation pacifique à l'école", *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, July 1904.

She concluded by acknowledging the fundamental role played by Paul Bert in the construction of the secular school, while affirming that the Republic is an idea constantly on the move, which only pays tribute to its pioneers by going beyond them. She concludes by acknowledging the fundamental role played by Paul Bert in the construction of the secular school, while affirming that the Republic is an idea constantly in motion, which only pays tribute to its pioneers by going beyond them:

We must neither disdain nor forget those who were the guides, [...] and who, as bold pioneers of civilisation, went up against the prejudices of yesteryear to pave the way for us. Paul Bert was one of them. And the generations, freed by him, will have to honour him as a precursor, even though they will have long since exceeded the limit he reached, in the unceasing effort to improve.

Odette Laguerre adopted this pacifist line in *La Fronde* in 1901. She is notably the author of an article entitled "Patriotism and militarism" in which she declares:

One can be a patriot without hating or despising foreign peoples, without having the cult of the sword and the fixed idea of revenge, without believing that M. Jules Lemaître embodies the soul of France, [...], General Mercier, the honour of the army [...] without thinking, finally, with Joseph de Maistre [...] "that war is a useful scourge for mankind..."³¹⁷.

The Dreyfus affair fuelled Odette Laguerre's anti-militarist feelings. Here she condemns Lemaître, a nationalist and anti-Dreyfus writer, Mercier, the Minister of War who was an accomplice in the State plot, and the reactionary thinker Joseph de Maistre. *La frondeuse* considers them militarists, not patriots. She distinguishes between the two: "[Patriotism] is the sovereign nation [...]. Militarism is the sovereign army of the nation. Not only is patriotism [...] distinct from militarism, but it gains infinitely from distancing itself from it." The texts published by Odette Laguerre during the Belle Époque demonstrate the extent to which the patriotic ideal spreading among advanced republicans diverges from the conception of the founders of the Third Republic school. Jacques and Mona Ozouf note this change at the turn of the century: when teachers "speak either of the Revenge or of the fatherland, [they] are clearly aware of constituting a new generation, bearing other values and other hopes"³¹⁸. The Société de l'Éducation pacifique, the organ of pacifist militancy in the schools of the Belle Époque, embodied this evolution.

317 Odette Laguerre, 'Patriotism and militarism', *La Fronde*, 22 December 1901.

318 Jacques and Mona Ozouf (with V. Aubert and C. Steindecker), *La République des instituteurs*, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

D) The origins of Madeleine Carlier and Marguerite Bodin's Society for Peaceful Education: a women's educational and pacifist initiative

Congrès des amicales de Bordeaux, summer 1901: a teacher proposes a motion against the "warlike chauvinism"³¹⁹ of history lessons in school. This woman acclaimed by the congress participants was Marguerite Bodin, who took advantage of the congress to announce the creation, with the feminist activist Madeleine Carlier, of the Society for Pacifist Education³²⁰. The latter expressed herself in *La Fronde*: "From the earliest age, the efforts of educators who want progress must prepare in the minds of their pupils the happiness of future generations. [Later on, one fights against prejudices, sometimes ineradicable³²¹. " The programme of the Society for Peaceful Education thus insists on the role of the school in spreading the pacifist ideal:

Those who have sought to propagate the doctrines of peace have found that the greatest obstacle [...] results from the prejudices of education which, instead of enlightening the conscience of men in their early years, has obscured and altered it. [...] We therefore appeal especially to the assistance of teachers, schoolteachers and schoolmistresses³²².

The two founders were convinced that "a society that was half-pedagogical, half-pacific would meet with more enthusiasm from teachers than a purely peaceful association". Madeleine Carlier and Marguerite Bodin's intuition was right: the society was soon a great success. In 1902, Marguerite Bodin was delighted with the publicity given to the initiative by the major press organs, which were widely read by teachers: "the excellent *Revue de l'enseignement primaire* devotes an article to us in almost all its issues, four of its editors are committed to us; a short while ago, on Sunday 8 June, *La Fronde* devoted its lead article to us; the departmental newspapers inserted articles by our collaborators³²³". The Société de l'éducation pacifique also benefits from the support of the Ligue de l'Enseignement. It should be said that Lucien le Foyer, a pillar of the League, is a benefactor member of the Society. In 1902, it was he who urged the Ligue members to join the pacifist societies during the Ligue's Congress in Lyon³²⁴.

Memberships poured in, both from teachers' associations and from post-school initiatives. In 1904, Marguerite Bodin informed Élie Ducommun that the association had provided the universities with

319 See *Deuxième congrès des Amicales d'instituteurs et d'institutrices publics de France et des colonies tenu à Bordeaux les 7, 8, 9, 10 août 1901 : rapport général*, Paris, Bibliothèque d'éducation, 1902, 192 p.

320 Denise Karnaouch devotes a biographical note to Marguerite Bodin in Christine Bard, Sylvie Chaperon (dir.), *Dictionnaire des féministes, op. cit.* but there are several errors.

321 Madeleine Carlier, "Questions/answers: Éducation martiale", *La Fronde*, 14 July 1901.

322 Programme of the Society for Pacifist Education, reproduced in correspondence with Élie Ducommun of the International Peace Bureau (IPB) in Bern. BIP Archives, B.136-D.13.

323 Letter from Marguerite Bodin to Élie Ducommun, 10 June 1902. Élie Ducommun, secretary of the International Peace Bureau in Berne, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1902 for his commitment to the resolution of conflicts between states through arbitration. The correspondence between Madeleine Carlier, Marguerite Bodin, Odette Laguerre and Élie Ducommun ended in 1906, when Élie Ducommun died.

of the Yonne a series of views for peaceful conferences with projections³²⁵. But the Society gave priority to action through the school, in particular through the reform of school content and teaching methods for history and morals. The two founders targeted the teaching world: "After the start of the school year [in 1901], we sent personal letters to each of the presidents of the Amicales, addressing them our programme. More than 40 associations are now our members.³²⁶ "

The influence of the Peace Education Society extended beyond national borders. From the outset, the association not only had the support of Frenchmen - such as Théodore Ruysen and Lucien le Foyer, respectively president and secretary of the Association de la paix par le droit, Félix Martel and Jules Payot, respectively Inspector General and Inspector of Education, Gaston Moch, president of the French Peace Bureau, Maurice Bouchor, a great name in popular education - but it also benefited from the support of foreign associations such as the Austrian Society of Friends of Peace, the Swedish Women's Association for Peace and the English Peace Union. The cosmopolitanism of the association is reflected in concrete transnational collaborations. In 1904, for example, Élie Ducommun informed Madeleine Carlier and Marguerite Bodin of a German professor's desire to make contact with them. The latter wanted to make active propaganda to the teachers in his country and asked about projects already undertaken elsewhere. Marguerite Bodin puts herself at the disposal of her German counterpart and explains to Élie Ducommun that she has, at the same time, been solicited by the English³²⁷. British pacifist activists asked her to address an appeal for universal peace to English teachers in the name of the Peace Education Society. The aim was for the amicales of each French department to sign the document, which was then countersigned by the presidents and senators of the English pacifist committee, before being sent to the English teachers. Marguerite Bodin was delighted: all the delegates present at the annual meeting of the Fédération des amicales françaises agreed to sign. At the same time, Marguerite Bodin was appointed delegate of the Fédération des amicales to defend pacifist ideas in Liège at the Belgian Teachers' Congress. Thanks to her transnational correspondence and her mobility, her career became international.

In parallel to her work as president of the Society for Peaceful Education, Marguerite Bodin continues her work as a teacher. She explains to Élie Ducommun the difficulty of carrying out both activities at the same time: "I am so overworked that I write while running; my profession as a teacher, the school works, my home would already be enough to keep me busy, and peaceful propaganda is taking on an unhoped-for extension, I no longer know where to turn³²⁸ ". Initially a teacher in the Yonne, Marguerite Bodin sought to move closer to the capital:

325 Letter from Marguerite Bodin to Élie Ducommun, 14 March 1904, BIP Archives, B.136-D.13.

326 Letter from Madeleine Carlier to Élie Ducommun, 30 August 1904.

327 Letter from Marguerite Bodin to Élie Ducommun, 8 May 1905.

328 Letter from Marguerite Bodin to Élie Ducommun, 10 June 1902.

Apart from the family reasons which make me want to arrive in Paris, there is also the question of propaganda. In a small provincial village [...] I find myself in a nationalist milieu, and I am obliged to be cautious, which makes it terribly difficult for me to act. [...] This minimal treatment obliges me to do all sorts of interior work which takes up my time and exhausts me, not to mention the fact that in order to contribute even a little to the costs of propaganda, I have to take what is necessary. What a misfortune that we do not have in the Municipal Council of Paris or in one of the Seine a sincere pacifist who is willing to facilitate my future propaganda! [...]

I applied for Seine et Oise. It was all by itself: the Inspector of the Academy, [...] a pacifist, [...] appointed me on 1 May in Versailles after having consulted me about my wishes. I chose the least tiring post, because I feel the need to spare myself [...]: [the] Seine et Oise is so nationalistic! It is in Versailles that the famous Gauthier de Clagny flourishes, the great destroyer of peaceful teachers, but as I am only an assistant here, I am ignored, which is what I want. [...] What a pity that I do not have the material independence which would give me health and leisure. There is so much to do for the good cause and the groundwork is so well laid!

As a teacher, Marguerite Bodin was subject to local political authority, which was sometimes very hostile towards pacifists. The 'famous' Albert Gauthier de Clagny, whom she distrusts in this letter, is a nationalist deputy for Seine-et-Oise and vice-president of the Ligue des patriotes. Marguerite Bodin therefore chose a position as assistant, which subjected her to the potentially harassing authority of the headmistress, but which removed her from the gaze of local politicians. However, she did not endure for very long the lack of independence that her deputy position forced her into. Appointed a few years later in the Oise region to head a school with one mixed class, she was delighted to be queen in her own kingdom and to no longer have to ask the principal's permission to buy "even a ball of wool³²⁹". It was when Marguerite Bodin was head of her mixed class that she was freest to act as a pacifist. She recounts in *Les Surprises de l'école mixte* that in their games, the children used to form two camps, the German and the French. The teacher dissuaded them and divided them into blue and red teams, which she joined: "lively boys, lively girls, struggling peacefully with skill and agility³³⁰". She also taught her pupils the Marseillaise of peace, developed by Paul Robin in Cempuis. Instead of the refrain known to all French people, Marguerite Bodin's pupils sang: "No more weapons, citizens! Break up your battalions! Sing, sing, and may peace fertilise our furrows³³¹!".

329 Marguerite Bodin, *Les Surprises de l'école mixte*, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

330 *Ibid.*, p. 238.

331 *Ibid.*, p. 300.

E) Odette Laguerre and the Society for Peaceful Education: "A collaborator of a dedication and activity beyond all praise"

Already the author of several pacifist articles in *La Fronde*, Odette Laguerre covers the creation of the Société de l'Éducation pacifique by describing Marguerite Bodin as a "woman of great heart and energetic will"³³². She describes Marguerite Bodin as a "woman of great heart and strong will" in an article in which she reproduces the association's programme. She did not stop there: she quickly made herself available to the creators of the work and founded a local section in the Ain, where she lived. In December 1902, Madeleine Carlier declared: "We have found in our secretary of the Ain section, Mme Odette Laguerre, [...] a collaborator of a devotion and an activity beyond all praise"³³³. "

Based in a small town about a hundred kilometres from Lyon, Odette Laguerre described herself to Georges Renard as leading the "singular life of a country journalist"³³⁴. She wrote: "I am not a writer but simply a propagandist, and [...] living in the countryside, I do not have to be a woman of the world but only a 'housewife'".³³⁵ ". Although she refused to be called a writer, Odette Laguerre had several publications to her credit. She wrote her first book in 1888³³⁶. It was a set of secondary school courses for mothers who wanted to educate their daughters at home. She was a historian in particular, which is shown in a work from 1890 entitled *Biographies d'hommes illustres et récits d'histoire de France*³³⁷.

After becoming an intimate of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello during the Affair, Odette Laguerre played a pivotal role in Lyon's republican circles: she was the link between the Société de l'Éducation pacifique (Peaceful Education Society) of Marguerite Bodin and Madeleine Carlier, the Université populaire lyonnaise (Lyon People's University) presided over by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, and the Société d'éducation et d'action féministes (Society for Feminist Education and Action), of which she was the initiator. On Sunday 9 November 1902, she attended the demonstration for peace organised by the UPL in the presence of Frédéric Passy, founder of the Society for Arbitration between Nations and honorary president of the Society for Peaceful Education. Victor Augagneur, Mayor of Lyon, presided over the day. Odette Laguerre was delighted that "the female element [was] brilliantly represented"³³⁸. A week later, she gave two lectures, first at the UPL, then at the headquarters of the Association des dames lyonnaises, as secretary of the Ain section of the Société de l'Éducation pacifique:

Mrs. Odette Laguerre, whose status as a writer has been asserting itself for some years now [...], gave the most elegant commentary on the Peaceful Education programme and moved

332 Odette Laguerre, "L'éducation pacifique", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} June 1902.

333 Letter from Madeleine Carlier to Élie Ducommun, 6 December 1902, BIP Archives, B.136-D.13.

334 Letter from Odette Laguerre to Georges Renard, 19 February 1905, Ms2607, BHVP.

335 Letter from Odette Laguerre to Louise Renard, 18 April 1905.

336 Odette Laguerre, *L'Enseignement dans la famille, cours complet d'études pour les jeunes filles*, Paris, Firmin-Didot,

1888-1894.

- 337 Odette Laguerre, *Biographies d'hommes illustres, grands patriotes, grands voyageurs, grands inventeurs et récits d'histoire de France*, Paris, Firmin-Didot, 1890, 445 p.
- 338 Odette Laguerre, "Pour la paix", *La Fronde*, 11 November 1902.

The audience was deeply moved by his appeal to human brotherhood. At the end of the two meetings, Mme Laguerre and Mlle Courvoisier, a teacher in Anse, secretary of the Rhône section of the Education Pacifique, received numerous adhesions, which once again affirmed the tendency of minds to react against bellicose teaching³³⁹.

Convinced that teachers should be given priority, Odette Laguerre published an article in *La Fronde* in 1903 with the programmatic title: "Par l'école"³⁴⁰. This text was the starting point for a series on the professional education of teachers. In it, Odette Laguerre denounced the She was also concerned about the "excessive scruples which, under the pretext of respecting school neutrality, make the normal school curricula exclude the vital problems which fascinate and torment contemporary consciousness". La frondeuse, who wanted to make women teachers the initiators of the new world, would like to see them reflect on feminism, the workers' movement and peace-building in teacher training colleges. She wanted the teacher training colleges to be the pillar of a pacifist reform of popular education. In her view, two subjects are central to this goal: the place of foreign languages needs to be reassessed and the teaching of history needs to be reformed.

F) Language learning in schools: a way to build peace

As part of her series on the professional training of teachers published in *La Fronde*, Odette Laguerre visits the Ecole Normale de Chambéry³⁴¹ which was very sympathetic to pacifist ideas and joined the Association de la paix par le droit. The teacher candidates regularly go on excursions to Switzerland, where they become familiar with a culture other than their own. Odette Laguerre is delighted by this and urges the headmistress to go further: she would like to see the learning of the languages used in Switzerland included in the curriculum. She even dreams of having Esperanto, the international language of peace, included in the curriculum:

"At this point in our conversation, I forget my role as an interviewing journalist and take on the role of propagandist, which is much more in keeping with my abilities. Odette Laguerre praised Esperanto as a language "not intended to replace others, but to be superimposed on them, as a uniform and universal means of communication"³⁴². She hopes that the language will soon be officially recognised as an international idiom and that it will be taught in every school in Europe. Confident, she said that on that day, "a great advance will have been made in democratic education, a great step will have been taken towards the brotherhood of peoples".

Odette Laguerre was not the first to use language teaching as an element of pacifist activism. As early as 1898, Pauline Kergomard paved the way, declaring that the attention paid to

339 Undated, unsigned document, correspondence between Madeleine Carlier and Marguerite Bodin and Élie Ducommun, BIP Archives, B.136-D.13.

340 Odette Laguerre, "Par l'école", *La Fronde*, 19 November 1903.

341 Odette Laguerre, "Les écoles normales d'institutrices", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} May 1904.

342 Odette Laguerre, "L'éducation démocratique", *La Fronde*, 9 June 1903.

to foreign languages, "better than all speeches, would lead us to universal peace³⁴³". The following year, it was the Anglophile Mathilde Salomon who emphasised the role of languages in building peace³⁴⁴. She gave a lecture in which she declared that hatred and jealousy, skilfully fostered by political power, first seized ignorant minds. The only way to counteract these warlike instincts, she said, was to enable as many people as possible to become familiar with a foreign culture by studying its language. According to Mathilde Salomon, this study had a double effect: it aroused sympathy for the people studied and encouraged exchanges of all kinds between nations.

According to the director of Collège Sévigné, "foreigners are a pure abstraction until you know their language; when you do, you realise that they are human beings singularly [*similar?*] to ourselves". Thus, 'in France itself, antipathy towards foreigners is very strong [and] can be attributed in large part to the persistent ignorance of foreign languages among the French'. For Mathilde Salomon, foreign languages were essential in the training of teachers, who would then advocate fraternity between peoples. She therefore spoke out at the CSIP in favour of strengthening the place of modern languages in the entrance exam for teacher training colleges³⁴⁵. Similarly, high schools should make room for these subjects, because "knowledge of languages in the governing classes would also serve to preserve peace³⁴⁶". In summary,

if there is one class whose action is entirely beneficial, it is that of the language teachers. They never cease to work in the interests of peace, whether they intend to or not, and as their influence is continuous, [...] its accumulated importance may be compared to the more apparent, more brilliant action of diplomacy.

With this in mind, Mathilde Salomon submitted a proposal to the CSIP in 1899 for Italian and Spanish to be added to the choice of modern languages offered to baccalauréat candidates³⁴⁷. Although the proposal was not officially presented from a pacifist perspective, it responded to the desire of the headmistress of Sévigné to broaden the horizons of French high school students and to encourage them to study the culture of neighbouring countries, which should no longer be considered as rivals.

G) Reforming history teaching: a common struggle of pacifists

If foreign languages are on the pacifist agenda, history is another discipline that attracts attention. Thus, after having discovered feminism through pacifism³⁴⁸ Maria Pognon,

343 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 28 December 1898.

344 Draft of Mathilde Salomon's lecture, 'Women and Peace - 1899', personal papers.

345 See the minutes of the discussions of 1896-1897, F/17/12973.

346 Draft of Mathilde Salomon's lecture, 'Women and Peace - 1899', personal papers.

347 Vow submitted by Henri Bernès, Mathilde Salomon, Émile Girard and Brother Exupérien on 19 July 1899, F/17/12975.

348 Laurence Klejman, Florence Rochefort (preface by Michelle Perrot), *L'Égalité en marche*, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

president of the Ligue pour le droit des femmes and a member of the board of the Société française d'arbitrage entre les nations, announced in 1897 in *La Fronde* that her association was offering a prize of one thousand francs to the author of the best history book for elementary schools, written in a dual spirit of justice and patriotism³⁴⁹.

A few months later, Mathilde Salomon wrote a note on this subject for presentation to the CSIP. To begin with, she expressed her disappointment that the teaching of history was so Franco-centric: "in our era of such continuous rapprochement [...] between peoples, it seems strange to ignore one's neighbours so much³⁵⁰". The headmistress of Collège Sévigné wanted teachers in the future to be 'less concerned with dates and military events [...] than with enlightening their pupils about the development of the nation, its hard-won experiences, its progress and setbacks'. If, by cultivating a fascination for warrior heroes, history can create a predisposition to Caesarism in pupils, on the other hand, when it is better conceived, it allows

The aim is to "develop a critical sense, [...] the only guarantee of independent thought, necessary [...] for future citizens". For Mathilde Salomon, it is therefore a question of changing the content of the teaching, by opening it up to foreign areas and limiting the place reserved for wartime history, as well as reforming the spirit of the discipline so that it fits better into the republican culture.

Marguerite Bodin addressed the same question at the Congrès des amicales de Bordeaux in 1901. Among the three wishes she submitted to the assembly was a motion to reduce the place of history-battle in schools, preferably by teaching the progress of civilisation through the centuries³⁵¹. Before debating this issue in Bordeaux, Marguerite Bodin took advantage of the forum opened by *La Fronde* to set out her own pedagogical choices. Abandoning the accounts of battles, she introduced children to the "elite of thinkers and artists and the crowd of brave workers to whom we owe our civilisation³⁵²". But since it is not possible to erase war from historical teaching, she starts from the principle "[that] it is necessary [...] to tell the whole truth and not to forget the account of the horrors [because] the current representations of war are absolutely falsified". Marguerite Bodin and Madeleine Carlier affirm that historical teaching must expose the suffering that is consubstantial to war, "which affects the victors almost as cruelly as the vanquished³⁵³". Instead of praising warlords, they advised exalting peaceful glories, which had not been included in school textbooks until then. The idea was to replace the old models with new figures with equivalent evocative power. Voltaire, Hugo, Pasteur and Quinet were thus promoted to the rank of peaceful heroes and national glories.

349 Maria Pognon, "La justice internationale par l'école primaire", *La Fronde*, 10 December 1897.

350 Mathilde Salomon, "Note sur l'enseignement primaire - moyen d'en relever le niveau, de le rapprocher du secondaire afin de rapprocher les classes et de préparer l'éducation postcolaire", undated, probably 1899, personal papers.

351 Other wishes are: 1) to inspire respect for the law in children, to convince them of the need for an arbitration tribunal, 2) to remove paintings depicting scenes of carnage from schools.

352 Marguerite Bodin, "Questions and Answers: Martial Education", *La Fronde*, 14 July 1901.

353 Programme of the Society reproduced in the correspondence between Marguerite Bodin, Madeleine Carlier and Élie Ducommun, BIP Archives, B.136-D.13.

But the activists of the Peaceful Education Society also wanted to introduce children to the anonymous heroes, workers and slaves, to whom Western civilisation owes its material progress. Odette Laguerre thus considers that true patriotism was not born in "the smoke of battles"³⁵⁴ "but in "the labour of the social hive". This patriotism is tinged with workers' internationalism, as when Odette Laguerre declares that there is "no contradiction in fighting militarism and respecting the fatherland [because] it is not necessary for the fatherland to die for Humanity to live". As on other questions, the influence of Jaurésienne is noticeable in Odette Laguerre³⁵⁵.

The history programme proposed by the Société de l'Éducation Pacifique (Peaceful Education Society) met the aspirations of the rebel. Madeleine Carlier and Marguerite Bodin not only wanted to demonstrate "the atrocity and immorality of war between civilised peoples, but to imbue [the child] with the feeling of human brotherhood towards all the peoples of the earth, without distinction of race or colour"³⁵⁶ ". The aim is to explain to children that the moral precepts that apply to individuals also apply to nations. But is war anything other than the systematisation and legitimisation of theft and murder, which are forbidden in society? But to teach this, Marguerite Bodin, like Maria Pognon, was sorry that there was no adequate school textbook. She wrote to the International Peace Bureau:

A good friend of mine, a teacher of merit, has the manuscript of a book which is the result of 25 years of work. This book, intended for elementary classes, the only ones most children attend, [is] a long cry of humanity, and pedagogically speaking it is perfect [...]. May it find a publisher. But when it comes to sponsoring a book with new ideas, publishers get the runaround. I have written to Mr Ruysen [president of the Association for Peace through Law] to examine this work³⁵⁷.

Despite attempts by Marguerite Bodin, the book seems never to have been published. It must be said that it was precisely in 1904 that the controversy surrounding the pacifist teaching of history broke out. In addition to the Thalamas affair, which crystallized around the figure of Joan of Arc, which was disputed by Catholics and Republicans, the Gustave Hervé affair was unleashed. At the same time, at its 1904 Congress, the Ligue de l'enseignement decided to revoke its slogan "Pour la Patrie, par le livre et par l'épée" (For the Fatherland, by the book and by the sword), which was considered too martial. This pacifist push led to the creation of the Union des instituteurs laïques patriotes (Union of Patriotic Lay Teachers), which sought instead to rehabilitate war imagery in schools. But in 1904, the publication of the Manifesto of Patriotic Teachers, "far from curbing the

354 Odette Laguerre, 'Patriotism and militarism', *La Fronde*, 22 December 1901.

355 Odette Laguerre testifies to her admiration for Jaurès in *La Fronde*. See "Actes nécessaires", 9 June 1902; "Où en est l'affaire Dreyfus", 15 June 1903; 'L'issue', 1^{er} July 1903.

356 See the programme in correspondence received by Élie Ducommun, BIP Archives, B.136-D.13.

357 Letter from Marguerite Bodin to Élie Ducommun, 14 March 1904.

the pacifist wave, is only [...] pushing it to the limit³⁵⁸ "according to Jean-Paul Martin. In short, the question of pacifist education is divisive.

H) For peace, *the pacifist history manual by Odette Laguerre and Madeleine Carlier*

At that time, Odette Laguerre and Madeleine Carlier started writing their own history book for teacher training colleges and elementary schools. Published in 1905, *Pour la paix* was designed as a working tool for teachers. The aim was to open up a third way between the classic historical teaching that put war at the centre of the subject and the anti-militarist and anti-patriotic approach of Gustave Hervé, which damaged the image of pacifism in public opinion. The project is mainly led by Odette Laguerre, who benefits from the participation of Madeleine Carlier for some chapters as well as for the foreword³⁵⁹. Odette Laguerre got Frédéric Passy, President of the French Society for Arbitration between Nations, to write the preface. In it, he stated that the chapters were written with "a tact and a measure that make them excellent propaganda tools³⁶⁰".

True to her socialist convictions, Odette Laguerre announced that she wanted to "highlight the benefits of work, [...] pay homage to the civilisers, creators, workers, whether famous or obscure, of human progress³⁶¹". The book follows a chronological narrative, from antiquity to the contemporary situation in the Transvaal. The final chapter is devoted to an account of the peace movement, from its origins to its latest developments. The author describes the Middle Ages as a time of war and condemns the Crusades, showing that in the name of religion, soldiers "believed themselves entitled to fight, persecute and slaughter those who did not share their beliefs³⁶²". Odette Laguerre adds to her condemnation of the war a denunciation of anti-Semitism. According to her, "of all the bad feelings caused by ignorance and fanaticism, hatred of the Jews was one of the most violent³⁶³". The chapter begins in the past tense, but continues in the present, as the author discusses the ravages of modern antisemitism, including the Kitchineff pogrom of 1903. In this regard, Odette Laguerre underlines the pioneering role of France, recalling that the French Revolution was the first to integrate the Jews into the nation in 1791: "French Jews are no more foreigners than French Protestants. They are citizens like the others. They have given France illustrious men. [...] If they have certain defects, it is mainly due to the existence imposed on them by centuries of

358 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, *op. cit.*, p. 414.

359 These chapters are: Wars in the XVII^e and XVIII^e centuries, The Spanish War and the Siege of Saragossa, A Nurse's Diary in the War of 1870, Two Memories of Solferino, In China and In the Transvaal.

360 Frédéric Passy, "Préface", in Odette Laguerre and Madeleine Carlier, *Pour la paix*, Paris, librairie de l'enseignement, 1905, 200 p., p. 9.

361 Odette Laguerre and Madeleine Carlier, *Pour la paix*, *op. cit.*, *Ibid.*, p. 8.

362 *Ibid.*, p. 38.

363 *Ibid.*, p. 42.

persecutions³⁶⁴. " Odette Laguerre takes the opportunity to pay tribute to intellectuals, who are presented as role models to children:

[They are] men of heart who, alone against an ignorant or misguided multitude, dared to denounce iniquity [...]. So did *Voltaire* in defending Calas and Sirven; so did the outlaws of 2 December who accepted, like *Victor Hugo*, *Quinet*, *Louis Blanc*, *Charras*, the sufferings of exile, rather than pact with crime [...]; so did *Zola* and all those who, with him, [...] braving the public opinion aroused against them, courageously embraced the cause of a Jewish captain³⁶⁵.

Fascinated by the mobilisation of intellectuals and by their victory over the state lie, Odette Laguerre recognises herself in their community. She is also convinced that intelligence is in the process of triumphing over ignorance: "Today, it is the book that fights war; it is through the book that people [...] get to know each other and will end up loving each other [...]. You will see that the book will be stronger than the cannon and that one day it will silence it³⁶⁶. " While Odette Laguerre and Madeleine Carlier praise men of letters and science committed to justice, they sometimes attack head-on certain great names in the national pantheon. *Pour la paix*, for example, devotes a chapter to debunking the Napoleonic legend: "Behind the smoke of military glory, we see the work of blood and destruction. Napoleon has cost France and humanity dearly³⁶⁷. " This black vision of Napoleon's epic was the consensus of the pacifist movement. A few years earlier, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello had already protested about the persistence of the golden legend of Napoleon, which fuelled the fascination for war:

We cannot understand that republicans still maintain at this time *that war is a necessary evil*. [If this is so, it is because the Republic [...] has fed enthusiastic youth with stories of battles [...]; the most beautiful pieces of which it has made the intellectual nourishment of schoolchildren are not [...] alas! the Napoleonic legend!³⁶⁸!...

One cannot but be struck by the primacy of politics in Odette Laguerre's and Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's reading of war. Thus the headmistress of the Lyons high school declares that "only monarchs and monarchists [...] can love war [which] increases their empire". Similarly, in Odette Laguerre's book, armed conflicts are conceived as legitimate or illegitimate according to the

364 *Ibid*, p. 45.

365 *Ibid*, p. 133.

366 *Ibid*, p. 63.

367 *Ibid*, p. 111.

368 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "Presentation of Charles Richet", *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1902, n°4.

political regime that supported them. Thus the soldiers of the second year are presented as examples of civic consciousness in action, in contrast to the soldiers of Napoleon, who would have complied with the orders of a tyrant driven only by an appetite for personal glory.

I) From the small patriotic heart of 1870 to the pacifist soul of 1900: three stories of conversion

As a good republican, Odette Laguerre includes Napoleon I and Napoleon III in the same criticism of imperialism. For her, the defeat of Sedan in 1870 was the distant result of the *hybris of* Napoleon's conquests. The crime of the Second of December and its consequences are, according to the author, "gloomy memories that the French cannot forget and which should be enough to preserve them forever from militaristic madness, to teach them also the danger that a country runs when it hands over its destiny to a single man³⁶⁹". This condemnation of Napoleon's legacy masks the sometimes tortuous personal itineraries of the militants. Thus, in her foreword to *Pour la paix*, Madeleine Carlier returns to her own youthful fascination with the Napoleonic legend:

Brought up among the recent memories of the invasion, I had, as a child, all the anger and resentment of an ardent and patriotic little heart. [...] Hence my boundless enthusiasm for Napoleon and his conquests; for all these victories of the past seemed to us to be the revenge for the humiliation of recent defeats³⁷⁰.

Madeleine Carlier gradually managed to detach herself from this fascination with military glory. However, she is convinced that 'not everyone does this inner work. Many remain forever under the influence of the first education³⁷¹'. Albertine Eidenschenk recognises herself in this sentence. When she reviewed *Pour la paix* in *La Femme nouvelle*, she drew a parallel with her personal history. Born in 1864, she was six years old at the time of the Franco-Prussian War. She remembers: "We had an enthusiasm for Napoleon whose ardour was matched only by blindness, and a passionate cult for the instrument of just revenge, the army. Of these feelings, in which all was not pure, [...] we have the right to say loudly what experience and reflection have eliminated³⁷²". Like Albertine Eidenschenk and Madeleine Carlier, Odette Laguerre remembers her patriotism during the 1870 war:

My childish soul shuddered and bled at our defeats. I even conceived the grandiose project of imitating Joan of Arc and set off one fine day, wearing my father's boots, through the snowy countryside, to deliver Paris! Unfortunately I was stopped by a

369 Odette Laguerre and Madeleine Carlier, *Pour la paix*, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

370 Madeleine Carlier, "Foreword", *in Ibid*, p. 11.

371 *Ibid*, p. 12.

372 A. Eidenschenk, "Revue des revues: "Pour la paix"", *La Femme nouvelle*, April 1905.

stream, which made me reflect on the difficulties of this singular expedition and, finally, invited me to retrace my steps³⁷³.

Odette Laguerre's banter about her appetite for military glory contrasts with the naturalism of her descriptions of atrocities. Life has taught her the gap between the myth and reality of war.

It is not insignificant to see three female pacifist activists simultaneously expressing the memory of their fascination for war on the occasion of the 1870 war. These autobiographical developments serve several purposes. First of all, the conversion story - here from militaristic nationalism to pacifism - always has an edifying value. The testimony of someone who has gone astray can serve as an example. Furthermore, Albertine Eidenschenk, Madeleine Carlier and Odette Laguerre all insist on the weight of their early education in their relationship to war. It was by dint of reflection that they gradually unravelled the militaristic prejudices that had been inculcated in them. Their youthful experiences shed light on their commitment as adults.

The conversion to pacifism of Odette Laguerre, Madeleine Carlier and Marguerite Bodin can be explained in part by the attention they paid to international events. All of them were struck by the massacres that took place in Armenia between 1894 and 1896, which gave rise to an international mobilisation. Madeleine Carlier devotes a chapter to it in *Pour la paix*. Odette Laguerre evokes it in *La Fronde*, where she places the tragic fate of Armenia in the too long catalogue of oppressed peoples: "It is this law of death [...] which would like to eternalise all inequalities, which allows the annihilation of the Finnish nationality, after that of Poland, which allows the slitting of the throat of Armenians, which authorises the persecutions against the Jews³⁷⁴".

Similarly, the Boer War, which ran from 1899 to 1902, played an important role in the pacifist dynamic. It was one of the first times that the atrocities of war - and in particular the abuse of civilians - were given such media coverage. Thus, despite her Anglophilia, Mathilde Salomon became involved in a committee supporting the Boers³⁷⁵. In *Pour la paix*, Odette Laguerre admires the Englishwoman Miss Hobhouse, who not only treated the sick in the camps but also made their plight known to her own country and the rest of Europe³⁷⁶. For her part, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello pays tribute to the Boers at the UPL. She praised this people who wanted "to live free or die, whom nothing made capitulate, not even the appalling fate of their women and children reduced to captivity³⁷⁷".

Women peace activists build a common culture and provide the same interpretation of international news. For them, wars abroad, whose atrocities are increasingly reported by the press, demonstrate the relevance of the pacifist struggle. But the Tangier crisis,

373 Odette Laguerre, "Le désarmement", *La Fronde*, 15 January 1903.

374 Odette Laguerre, "Loi de mort, loi de vie", *La Fronde*, 7 March 1902.

375 See his private notes for the year 1900, personal papers.

376 Odette Laguerre and Madeleine Carlier, *Pour la paix*, *op. cit.*

377 Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, "Presentation by M. Richet" (26 March 1902), *Annales de l'UPL*, July 1902.

during which William II opposed France's desire to establish a protectorate over Morocco, reactivated mistrust of Germany, and even, in some quarters, a desire for revenge, which pacifist activists found difficult to address.

J) The thorny issue of Revenge among women peace activists

While Odette Laguerre and Madeleine Carlier did not say a single word about the Revanche in their book published in 1905, Marguerite Bodin, who published *Les Surprises de l'école mixte* the same year, was radical on this issue. In her primary school history lessons, she was wary of any Revenge: she explained to her pupils that, just as Napoleon was not all of France, Bismarck did not represent all of the German people³⁷⁸. She showed her students that there was always more common interest between soldiers of two opposing armies than between the rank and file of the same army. For example, she said that in 1870, just like the French, German soldiers said: 'We would like to be at work, near our wives and children; we do not like war³⁷⁹'. The teacher states that war only serves the powerful: "Emperor Napoleon wanted it to consolidate his dynasty, because he hoped for victory. The empress Eugenie, in 1870, joyfully exclaimed: 'It's my war!³⁸⁰'.

The condemnation of the 1870 war goes hand in hand with the criticism of the regime that was engulfed in it. By showing the absurdity of a war provoked by the pride of two men, Marguerite Bodin comes to show the stupidity of the idea of revenge. Just as on an individual level, revenge must give way to justice, in diplomacy, revenge must give way to arbitration³⁸¹. But this proposal is not unanimous: revenge remains a divisive issue that pacifists find difficult to address. They were accused of abandoning Alsace-Lorraine. Albertine Eidenschenk found it difficult to take a position:

Perhaps [...] the horror which is spreading [...] for the great human slaughters will help [...] in the peaceful solution of the Alsace-Lorraine question; perhaps, alas! we have come to accept our dismemberment, to come to terms with our defeat, and even to look upon those who come to remind us that Alsace is still annexed to Germany as unwelcome.³⁸² !

As for Odette Laguerre, one cannot fail to notice her silence about the Revanche in *Pour la paix*. This can no doubt be explained by her desire to disseminate her

378 Marguerite Bodin, *Les Surprises de l'école mixte*, op. cit, pp. 80-81.

379 *Ibid*, pp. 170-171.

380 *Ibid*.

381 Alphonse Aulard declared himself in favour of settling the Alsace-Lorraine question through international arbitration (Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, op. cit., p. 406).

382 A. Eidenschenk, "Le devoir présent", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, July 1899.

It is necessary to adopt the most consensual posture possible. To do this, she had to adopt the most consensual stance possible. In this context, the theme of the Revenge was too divisive for Odette Laguerre to risk devoting a chapter to it. A more detailed analysis of her intellectual production reveals that this concealment of the Revenge is entirely strategic in *Pour la paix*. Indeed, Odette Laguerre allows herself great freedom of tone on this issue in *La Fronde*:

I do not understand why our opponents can be reproached for this conquest as an iniquity, and compare the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine to the partition of Poland! Poland had not sought war. [...] France declared war on Prussia. Now, to declare war [...] is to recognise, in advance, the right of the victor. [...] The iniquity is that a people should have paid for a man, that Alsace-Lorraine should have been the ransom for Napoleon's faults. [...] It is to the imperial regime that we must hold a tenacious grudge, and not to Germany³⁸³.

Odette Laguerre suggested that the Alsace-Lorraine question should be settled by bi-national arbitration. She supported a proposal by a German league to return Alsace and Lorraine to France in exchange for colonial territories: such an agreement "would allow a political alliance between the two peoples and this rapprochement could serve as the basis for a European federation³⁸⁴". Odette Laguerre hoped to see the major European states unite around a peace project³⁸⁵. As early as 1902, she declared that Germany, "yesterday's enemy"³⁸⁶ Germany, "yesterday's enemy", should now be considered as a "tomorrow's ally". Like her, Albertine Eidenschenk also hoped to see Europeans unite for peace. In 1904, she called for the concrete sanction of Franco-Italian rapprochement to be the disarmament by each country of its Alpine border. For her, this would be "the first step [...] towards the Federation of Europe³⁸⁷".

K) Between the promotion of the civilising mission and the disapproval of wars of conquest: pacifist activists facing colonisation

As in *Revenge*, the peace activists walk a fine line when discussing colonisation. Their republican convictions force them to define France as "the teacher of nations"³⁸⁸ "At the same time, they were reluctant to defend a principle of conquest, which inevitably involved violence against civilian populations and looting. At the same time, they were reluctant to defend a principle of conquest, which was inevitably accompanied by violence against civilian populations and looting.

383 Odette Laguerre, "Le désarmement", *La Fronde*, 15 January 1903.

384 Odette Laguerre, "La question de l'Alsace-Lorraine et la paix", *La Fronde*, 10 June 1903.

385 Odette Laguerre, "Le désarmement", *La Fronde*, 15 January 1903.

386 Odette Laguerre, "L'éducation pacifique", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} June 1902.

387 A. Eidenschenk, "Revue des revues: "Désarmons les Alpes"", *La Femme nouvelle*, June 1904.

In *Pour la Paix*, Odette Laguerre and Madeleine Carlier consider that European civilisation, imposed on the peoples of Asia and Africa by gunfire, is of little benefit to them, "because they are not prepared to receive and adapt to it"³⁸⁹. Colonisation is not attacked in its very principle, but only in its modalities. Odette Laguerre thus considers that colonial expansion has been "disastrous for the enslaved indigenous races [because it has] led to their suffering [...], partial destruction and sometimes total disappearance"³⁹⁰. She refers to the crimes perpetrated by the British in India, but also to the unspeakable tortures practised in the Belgian Congo. She declares: "One thinks one is dreaming in front of these pictures of horror, and one cannot admit that such crimes are accomplished, nowadays, by men who call themselves civilised"³⁹¹. But the author of *Pour la Paix* does not only denounce the crimes committed by France's neighbours. Quoting Jean-Marie de Lanessan, who in 1905 chaired the commission in charge of the Brazza report on the abuses perpetrated in the French Congo, she demonstrates that violence is everywhere in the colonies: "The most civilised man [there] becomes [...] comparable to children in their relations with their domestic animals"³⁹²! Odette Laguerre calls for an end to brutal colonisation, considering that the natives should be seen "no longer as enemies and brutes, but as backward brothers whom we must treat with gentleness [...] and whom we will win over to our civilisation by making them feel its benefits"³⁹³.

A year before the release of *Pour la paix*, Odette Laguerre had already denounced the excesses of French colonisation in Asia in *La Fronde*. She condemned the brutality that Catholic missionaries were allegedly inflicting on pagans. She accuses the French administration of covering up the exactions perpetrated by the missionaries and protests that, by virtue of colonial ambition, Catholic propaganda is "subsidised by the government of the Republic"³⁹⁴. Once again, it was not the principle of conquest that she criticised, but the Republic's compromise with Catholicism, which was presented as the instigator of colonial violence.

Albertine Eidschenk's discourse on Western domination in the East is equally ambiguous. In 1904, she declared in *La Femme nouvelle* that all the sympathy of Europeans must go to the whites in the ongoing conflict between the Russians and the Japanese: to the "yellows", "to these foreigners, these barbarians, if we owe justice, we owe no more"³⁹⁵. But following this speech, which endorses the idea of a hierarchy between the races, Albertine Eidschenk writes

There is no reason to believe that the brains of the yellows, if inferior to ours, must always remain so. If, from the scientific and industrial point of view, we are superior to the Yanks, it is not so certain that we are superior from the moral point of view.

389 Odette Laguerre, Madeleine Carlier, *Pour la Paix*, *op. cit.*

390 *Ibid.*

391 *Ibid.*, p. 76.

392 Jean-Marie de Lanessan, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 77.

393 *Ibid.*, p. 77.

394 Odette Laguerre, "Les protégés de la Mission", *La Fronde*, 31 January 1903.

395 Albertine Eidschenk, "Une revue des revues: "Blancs contre Jaunes", *La Femme nouvelle*, April 1904.

[...] Let us not therefore allow the sacred principle [...] of the equality of human beings, despite the colour of their skin [...] to be weakened: this would open the door to all kinds of injustice.

The introduction and conclusion of Albertine Eidenschenk's text are contradictory. She hesitates between adhering to the racist discourse of the Republic to justify French expansion and reserving any idea of a hierarchy of races. But she never comes to a point of fundamentally criticising France's colonial project. She rejoiced in the arrival of the French in Africa, thanks to which 'Negro children [...] come into the world with lighter eyes and acquire features that bring them closer and closer to the white races'. Imbued with the racist ideology of the Republic, Albertine Eidenschenk believed in the beneficial influence of France in the colonies. Thus, when she reviews *Pour la paix*, she does not retain from the book her criticism of contemporary colonial violence, but that of the colonisation of the New World, three centuries earlier³⁹⁶. This is another example of the embarrassment of women peace activists in the face of contemporary colonisation. But sometimes the colonial enterprise is more frontally condemned, as in some press accounts of *For Peace*.

L) The reception of For Peace, a feminist and pacifist book

Odette Laguerre's and Madeleine Carlier's work was supported by leading socialist intellectuals, such as Eugène Fournière in *L'Humanité* and Georges Renard in *La Petite République*. The latter insisted at length on the role of women in preserving peace: it was impossible for women in France "not to take part, like their sisters in other nations, in the holy crusade against the use of brutal force"³⁹⁷. The socialist thinker's praise of the women authors of *For Peace* is very gendered. For example, he celebrates their grace, gentleness and patience. Odette Laguerre and Madeleine Carlier themselves emphasise the feminine character of their pacifist commitment. Both wrote separately to Georges Renard on 12 April 1905, two days after the publication of his text in *La Petite République*, to thank him. Madeleine Carlier expressed her gratitude and sent the programme of the Société de l'Éducation pacifique³⁹⁸. Odette Laguerre was delighted that Georges Renard had recognised the specificity of the women's movement in the pacifist movement and concluded: "Thank you, then, for my collaborator, for me and for all women"³⁹⁹.

Pour la paix was also supported by Marie Bonneval, who had long been involved in pacifist, feminist and socialist circles. In the first half of 1905, she published a review in the *Revue Socialiste* in which she praised the two authors as

396 Albertine Eidenschenk, "Revue des revues, "Pour la paix", *La Femme nouvelle*, April 1905.

397 Georges Renard, "Les femmes et la paix", *La Petite République*, 10 April 1905.

398 Letter from Madeleine Carlier to Georges Renard, 12 April 1905, Ms2607, BHVP.

399 Letter from Odette Laguerre to Georges Renard, 12 April 1905.

"two real educators"⁴⁰⁰ ". From a very anti-colonial perspective, she underlines the correlation between the subjugation of peoples produced by war and the servitude in which women live: "*Colonisation* [is] another form of ... *penetration*, always brutal". From this, according to her, stems the convergence of pacifism and feminism. In both struggles, it is a question of obtaining the rule of law against the rule of force. A few months after its publication in the *Revue socialiste*, *Les Annales de la jeunesse laïque* reproduced Marie Bonneval's text almost identically. The prologue is slightly different: it has to be said that between the two publications, the Tangier coup had shifted the lines. The pacifist trend, which had been triumphant since the beginning of the century, was confronted with a nationalist backlash. Marie Bonneval therefore wrote in 1906:

For a moment stopped by the worries raised by the Moroccan question and the threatening attitude of Germany - worries skilfully maintained and exploited by the nationalist clan - peaceful propaganda [...] is going to resume its course. [...] It is therefore the moment to recommend to teachers, for the beginning of the new school year, a book which should be introduced into all the schools of France: *Pour la Paix*⁴⁰¹.

Marie Bonneval herself applied the advice she gave to teachers as a teacher. In 1905, Louise Renard wrote in *La Petite République* about a history lesson given by Marie Bonneval that she had witnessed. According to the publicist, by praising Rousseau, Voltaire, Mme Roland and all those who "have raised the soul of the people, [Marie Bonneval] inculcates in these young girls peaceful notions that will be indelible, and really there will be no way of making them into little chauvinists"⁴⁰² ". Like other pacifist activists, Marie Bonneval acted both as an intellectual, publishing her thoughts, and as a teacher, applying her precepts with her pupils, and doing so in a very charismatic way, according to Louise Renard's account.

Many educationalists were committed to peace at the dawn of the 20th century, making this struggle a naturally feminine, and *a fortiori*, feminist cause. At that time, "the secular school was in the grip of a great pacifist effervescence which placed it in the vanguard of republican evolution"⁴⁰³ ". It is true that these intellectuals constituted an avant-garde that shifted the lines of republican culture: they renewed the heritage of the founders of the secular school - such as Paul Bert - by rejecting their bellicose patriotism in favour of a peaceful patriotism inspired by Ferdinand Buisson or Jean Jaurès, as opposed to the anti-patriotism of a Gustave Hervé; they confronted the question of the Revenge and relations with Germany, which were central to the ideological underpinnings of the Third Republic; they criticised the army and military service, conceived as institutions competing with the school, which fuelled fighting

400 Marie Bonneval, "Un bon livre de propagande", *Revue socialiste*, January-June 1905, pp. 472-476.

401 Marie Bonneval, "L'éducation pacifiste", *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, September 1906.

402 Louise Georges Renard, "Une école professionnelle", *La Petite République*, 1-15 August 1905.

403 Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, op. cit.

rearguard action. These intellectuals were attentive to international events and were part of a dynamic aimed at building peaceful diplomatic relations. But their action in favour of pacifist education also responded to national logic: it was a question of fighting against the Caesarist temptation which threatened the Republic with an authoritarian regime.

Powerful after the Dreyfus Affair, the pacifist movement lost ground from 1905 onwards. A new generation of activists emerged, including Marthe Chenon, head of the *École de la paix* founded in 1905, Marthe Bigot, Lucie Colliard, Marthe Pichorel, Hélène Brion, Marie Mayoux, Gabrielle Bouët and Marie Guillot, who were initially involved in teacher unionism, and who maintained their pacifist ideals during the Great War⁴⁰⁴. Although the press focused from 1905 on the unionist teachers, who were the most virulent in their denunciation of militarism, the intellectuals studied here remained no less active in the decades that followed, following the example of Albertine Eidenschenk, Odette Laguerre and her daughter Hélène⁴⁰⁵ who became leading pacifists in the 1920s. The optimism of the beginning of the century collapsed with the war, but the need for peace became all the more pressing.

Conclusion of Chapter 7

By studying educational issues particularly invested by women in the Belle Époque, the aim was to analyse the way in which these actresses mobilised their gender capital to project themselves into public life. Several women took advantage of their status as early childhood specialists to take part in the construction of a science of the child at the beginning of the XX^e century. Similarly, it was in the name of their femininity, which often led them to identify with the feminist struggle, that several of them campaigned to make the school the crucible of new gender relations. It is again as women and mothers that they act in the peace campaign, to ensure the protection of the life they transmit. The argument of their femininity is central to the discourses they mobilise to legitimise themselves in these areas where they are over-represented. This observation tends to lend credence to the idea that there is a specificity to the commitment of female intellectuals compared to their male counterparts. However, far from being confined to exclusively "female" fields, most of them move towards subjects where their voice is not expected. Thus, while these activists mobilise their gender capital to set themselves up as guarantors of peace, they also put into practice a form of transgression when they take on the theme of war, a masculine territory par excellence. Although the action of these women seems to be part of a gendered division of the intellectual world, it in fact goes beyond the strictly female universe and sometimes takes on a

404 See in particular Max Ferré, *Histoire du mouvement syndicaliste révolutionnaire chez les instituteurs des origines à 1922*, Société universitaire d'éditions et de librairie, Paris, 1955, 355 p. and Loïc le Bars, *Première Guerre mondiale : le pacifisme des instituteurs syndicalistes*, Vulaines-sur-Seine, Éditions du Croquant, 2015, 318 p.

405 Christine Bard, *Les filles de Marianne*, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

subversive. This is true even in the *a priori* depoliticised field of educational science, which many approach in a political way by studying indiscipline, consent to authority, and by envisaging the school community as a preparation for democratic citizenship.

Their feminist and pacifist commitments are part of a movement to promote "These activists can be called intellectuals in that they demonstrate their ability to deconstruct dominant discourses. These activists can be described as intellectuals in that they demonstrate their ability to deconstruct dominant discourses. Moreover, they sometimes venture onto subjects that are not very consensual, where they express a minority or even dissident opinion, such as on sexual instruction or French colonisation.

By analysing the actions of these women, we can see that "there is indeed an 'intellectual society', which develops its own tools, its own networks⁴⁰⁶". This intellectual society, although mixed - let's not forget the men, such as Ferdinand Buisson or Georges Renard, who gave substantial support to these women's struggles - was highly feminised. This was particularly true of the Société libre pour l'étude psychologique de l'enfant and the Société de l'éducation pacifique. These women's networks are also visible through the various reviews that some women write in the press about works published by others. These cross-reviews are tools used by these activists to legitimise each other. *Les Surprises de l'école mixte* and *Pour la paix* are thus commented on extensively in the press by intellectuals who value the contribution of these texts signed by their fellow activists.

Finally, it should be noted that the same names appear repeatedly in the various fields studied here, whether they relate to the science of education, feminism or pacifism. Pauline Kergomard, Albertine Eidenschenk, Mathilde Salomon, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Madeleine Vernet and Odette Laguerre, among others, were active in all three fields. The diversity of their fields of intervention contributes to their construction not only as experts in a specific field, but as intellectuals capable of "thinking the field of the human totality⁴⁰⁷". For, in addressing issues of early childhood and adolescent education, gender relations and peace-building, these women intellectuals tackle the 'structural realities' of Belle Époque society.⁴⁰⁸ "of Belle Époque society. In this way, they subverted their gender capital, which they mobilised as an instrument of legitimisation, in order to address global issues.

406 Pascal Ory, Jean-François Sirinelli, *Les intellectuels en France de l'Affaire Dreyfus à nos jours*, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

407 Marie-Christine Kok-Escalte, "Féminisme et sémiotique: les intellectuelles en France, un engagement spécifique?"

408 Marie-Christine Kok-Escalte writes that, for men, the driving force behind commitment is 'a contextual event', whereas for women, it is rather 'a reality inscribed in the long term': 'One could say that on the one hand there is an accident to be reduced and on the other, a structural reality to be broken' (*in Ibid.*).

Chapter 8

Struggles of public education officials and the birth of feminist and corporatist solidarity

Introduction to Chapter 8

Several women who campaigned for the reform of the secular school also became involved in the defence of its staff, particularly female staff. During the Belle Époque, they thus became the spokespersons for women teachers, thanks in particular to the visibility they acquired in widely read magazines. At the same time, the question of the election of women to the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique crystallised the issues relating to their entry into exclusively male places and provoked reflections on the representation of women in the bodies of public education. At the turn of the century, women appropriated these professional elections: candidates for the CSIP publicised their ideas in what were similar to electoral campaigns, and sometimes put themselves on stage in their new role, so rare, as elected women.

Whether they write columns in newspapers or are elected to the CSIP, these intellectuals seek to establish a dialogue with the teaching community in order to relay the demands and proposals emanating from the field. In this way, they bring new issues to the forefront of public debate, such as the injustices to which women are statutorily subjected, regardless of their category within public education. Legitimised by the support they receive in the teaching profession, these spokespersons highlight the mechanisms of discrimination suffered by women in the institution, which are then unthought of in the public debate. Aware that women are harmed because they are not represented, these women intellectuals refuse to delegate to men the management of the problems in which they are directly involved. Their own experience as teachers, principals or inspectors in the ranks of public education makes them particularly aware of the difficulties specifically encountered by women in this professional environment. It is therefore once again as women and in the name of gender capital that they speak out on these issues. Convinced that the docility of their colleagues is detrimental to the cause, they call for boldness and female solidarity. However, these women intellectuals do not constitute a monolithic block: they mobilise different arguments according to their own sensitivity and experience.

In order to analyse the struggles of these women who participated in the birth of a feminist and corporatist solidarity in public education, it will first be necessary to show the way in which some of them established themselves as intellectuals through their action - if not their activism - in the press as well as at congresses, where they found choice forums. We will then study the way in which a handful of women succeeded in sitting on the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique and defending women's interests in a body that was initially thought of as male. In a third phase, we will look at the unifying campaign of the Belle Époque, the fight for equal pay, against the backdrop of which vindictive female personalities asserted themselves. This founding matrix, the fight for equal pay, was the catalyst for other struggles in defence of women civil servants in the public education system, which we will study in a final section.

part. These debates are led by female intellectuals who, thanks to their visibility in the public sphere, their professional skills and their empirical knowledge of educational issues, acquire legitimacy and become spokespersons for the female teaching profession.

I- Representing women teachers: women intellectuals in the press and at conferences

The turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries was marked by the appearance of more and more women in the hitherto very masculine press environment¹. Some of them stood out because of their level of education, their prestigious professional status and their militant influence. This paper will focus on those who defend the interests of women teachers in the public arena, in a context where the 'women's issue' is gaining in visibility, and where newspapers from both the general press and the educational or corporatist press are creating 'women's' columns, which are run by women. These columns offer their authors the means to gain a loyal readership and to establish a dialogue with them. Albertine Eidenschenk thus established herself as the spokesperson for female primary school teachers in *L'École nouvelle* and Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben as the spokesperson for female secondary school teachers in the *Revue universitaire*. Pauline Kergomard was a key figure in *La Fronde*, a feminist daily that courted women teachers.

This phenomenon of the visibility of a handful of women intellectuals is not confined to the publishing world. Many of them enter congresses, especially pedagogical ones, to participate in debates on the school and defend their corporatist interests.² Several of them enter congresses, particularly pedagogical ones, to participate in debates on the school and to defend their corporatist interests. The aim is to study the way in which these women constructed themselves as intellectuals by making a place for themselves in the world of the press and by taking the floor in assemblies that had previously been very masculine.

A) Talking about women teachers and talking to women teachers: La Fronde's project

From its inception, *La Fronde* sought to appeal to women teachers. Thus, its launch poster shows a woman of popular appearance carrying a book - it is easy to see a schoolteacher - alongside a bourgeois woman, a worker and a peasant. The "frondeuses" saw schoolteachers as the bearers of a new society. Odette Laguerre wrote in June 1902: "I would like to see our dear great *Fronde* in the hands of all the schoolteachers, called upon to create in the village the new Eve, the free woman of the free city³".

1 This is explained in particular by the creation of feminist journals, including Hubertine Auclert's *La Citoyenne* (1881), Céline Renooz's *La Revue scientifique des femmes* (1888), Maria Martin's *Journal des femmes* (1891), Marguerite Durand's *La Fronde* (1897), Léa Bérard's *Revue de morale sociale, d'ambition transnationale* (1899), and Jane Misme's *La Française* (1906). See also Christian Delporte, *Les journalistes en France, 1880-1950, Naissance et construction d'une profession*, Seuil, Paris, 1999, 456 p.

2 Their presence in international congresses has been the subject of a recent book: Myriam Boussahba-Bravard,

Rebecca Rogers (eds.), *Women in International and Universal Exhibitions, 1876-1937*, *op. cit.*

3 Odette Laguerre, "Le féminisme au village", *La Fronde*, 18 June 1902.

The daily newspaper offered reduced subscription rates to women teachers and offered ten of them the chance to travel to Paris to attend the Women's Rights Congress in 1900. *La Fronde* also echoed their demands by launching the battle for equal pay. It thus appeared to be the first press organ to support the interests of the Black Hussars of the Republic. In 1904, Marguerite Durand was pleased with the progress made:

How far we have come since the time when the *Fronde*, dedicated above all to women educators and designed for them, was prohibited even in the lycées and the teacher training colleges! [...] How many teachers wrote to me: "I am obliged to hide my *Fronde*, but what propaganda I am doing for it! And in fact, the *Fronde*, barely in its second year, had more than 3,000 subscribers among the female teaching staff, whose most authorised members, under their signature or anonymously, became its regular and assiduous collaborators⁴.

Among the female teachers who write in the newspaper are Pauline Kergomard, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, but also teachers or former teachers such as Maria Vérone and Marguerite Bodin⁵.

Although Pauline Kergomard was an early contributor to *La Fronde*, she was not always in favour of this type of editorial initiative. Thus, when she was contacted by Céline Renooz in the spring of 1888 to participate in the launch of *La Revue scientifique des femmes*⁶ "I am, from a scientific point of view, radically infirm, I am only an inventor in education, and you would have too pitiful a collaboration in me. I am working for the cause as an apostle of goodwill, that's all⁷." Céline Renooz considered Pauline Kergomard's refusal as an "excess of modesty"⁸ Céline Renooz considers Pauline Kergomard's refusal as an "excess of modesty" and interprets it as a support for her project. When the Inspector General discovered that her name appeared in the first issue of the magazine, she accused her correspondent of having betrayed her and repeated her refusal:

A magazine written exclusively by women or even dealing exclusively with the 'women's question' is detrimental to our cause [...]. The converted read little; the others read it to ridicule it [...]. I find it absolutely illogical to

4 Marguerite Durand, "Le féminisme à la Ligue de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} November 1904.

5 Marguerite Bodin does not publish articles, but writes regularly to the editors, who reproduce her letters.

6 On Céline Renooz and *La Revue scientifique des femmes*, see Juliette Rennes, 'Université et domination masculine, un combat fin de siècle', in Christophe Charles and Laurent Jeanpierre (dir.), *L'histoire de la vie intellectuelle en France*, Paris, Seuil, 2016, p. 407-413; Sylvie Chaperon, 'La Psychologie comparée de l'homme et de la femme de Céline Renooz (1897)', *Revue d'histoire des sciences humaines*, 2007/2, n°17, p. 91-94; Françoise Blum, "Women's magazines, feminist magazines", in Jacqueline Pluet-Despatin, Michel Leymarie, Jean-Yves Mollier (eds), *La Belle Époque des revues, 1880-1914*, Paris, éditions de l'IMEC, 2002, p. 211-222.

7 Letter from Pauline Kergomard to Céline Renooz, 12 May 1888, box n°10, letters to Céline Renooz, 1884-1905, Céline Renooz collection, Marie-Louise Bouglé feminist collection, BHVP.

8 Copy of letter from Céline Renooz to Pauline Kergomard, 2 June 1888, box n°10.

I would like to ask you to remove my name from the list of those who have been involved in the struggle against racism and xenophobia, and I would like to ask you to remove my name from the list of those who have been involved in the struggle against racism and xenophobia. I therefore urge you, Madam, to remove my name⁹.

Céline Renooz agrees, arguing however that "the" woman must act alone, since "No man is really sincere in the support he gives¹⁰". Here she is opposed to the vision of feminism held by Pauline Kergomard at the time, which consisted of ensuring the respectability of the movement. It was a question of avoiding giving the impression that women were dissenting and of integrating feminist demands into the 'humanist' and republican movement. Ten years later, however, Pauline Kergomard adopted the same strategy as Céline Renooz. She agreed to contribute to *La Fronde*, a "fronde" daily newspaper, as its title indicates, run exclusively by women, and which placed the "women's question" at the centre of its discourse.

From her very first article in the very first issue published in December 1897, Pauline Kergomard defended female primary school teachers: she showed that they were subject to constant social control which prevented them from living freely¹¹. A few days later, she received a letter from a teacher who described the hostility of the population towards her, the stupidity of her school inspector and the pressure exerted on her by local politicians. The Inspector General reproduced this confession *in extenso*: she wanted, by this means, to give a voice to those who were not listened to¹². Similarly, in February 1899, Pauline Kergomard thanked a reader for writing to her: "Her letter gives me hope that my wish will come true: to make the journal a centre where women teachers will find sympathy and where we can work together to improve our common lot¹³".

At the dawn of the XX^e century, Pauline Kergomard appeared as the tutelary figure of women teachers. Already known to some of the staff thanks to her newspaper *L'Ami de l'enfance* devoted to nursery schools until her death in 1896, her collaboration with *La Fronde* strongly contributed to establishing her intellectual stature. It must be said that between 9 December 1897 and 8 August 1900, she published no less than 126 articles¹⁴. She sometimes wrote almost the entire supplement to *La Fronde*, i.e. four of the six columns on page 5¹⁵. However, the Inspector General did not confine herself to the role of spokesperson: "I believe that the sympathy and esteem with which the teaching profession honours me are due to my sincerity [...] and my loyalty. Very proud of these feelings, [...] very anxious to remain worthy of them, I declare to my correspondents that I do not share their opinion¹⁶". Pauline Kergomard thus sometimes shows her opposition to her interlocutors.

9 Letter from Pauline Kergomard to Céline Renooz, 17 June 1888, box n°10.

10 Copy of letter from Céline Renooz to Pauline Kergomard, 20 June 1888, box n°10.

11 Pauline Kergomard, "À travers l'éducation, avant-propos", *La Fronde*, 9 December 1897.

12 Pauline Kergomard, "Lettre d'une institutrice", *La Fronde*, 16 December 1897.

13 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 11 February 1899.

14 On his collaboration, see his letters to M. Durand, BMD, autograph letters and manuscripts 2, 091 KER.

15 See for example page 5 of the issue of 4 February 1899.

16 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 4 February 1899.

The Inspector General was not the only one to address women teachers in *La Fronde*. Although she used a pseudonym, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello succeeded in using her pen name as a standard for the defence of women teachers. When contacted by Céline Renooz in 1887 to contribute to *La Revue scientifique des femmes*, she replied that she would have gladly accepted "if [her] official situation did not prohibit it"¹⁷. Fifteen years later, the choice of a pseudonym appeared to be the only way for her to express herself in the press with the freedom of tone that characterised her. She became known as Paule Branzac, so much so that *La Femme nouvelle* declared to its readers in 1905: "We have obtained the regular collaboration of Mme Paule Branzac, who is well known in the university press for her collaboration with the *Instituteur républicain* and in the Parisian press"¹⁸. There is nothing in Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's career file to suggest that she was unmasked by the administration. It was not until 1914 that Marguerite Durand cited her under her real name in the list of collaborators of *La Fronde*¹⁹.

In this daily newspaper, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello wrote a series of articles for women teachers in 1903 in which she urged them to demand equal treatment²⁰. Similarly, Odette Laguerre made contact with them by carrying out a survey in the teacher training colleges²¹ and Maria Vérone covered the congresses of the associations, urging women teachers to unite in order to take action²². *La Fronde* thus became a place where issues concerning women teachers, often ignored by the general public press, were debated. When *La Fronde* came to the end of its existence in March 1905, Odette Laguerre wanted to pursue its objectives by publishing a series of 25 booklets on feminism under the aegis of the Société d'éducation et d'action féministes (Society for Feminist Education and Action) which she had founded in Lyon with Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello. She declared: "We hope that the readers of *La Fronde* will support and spread this interesting publication as best they can, the younger sister of our beloved newspaper, inspired by the same ideas and asking only to complete its emancipatory action."²³ "The pamphlets aimed to form a "small popular encyclopaedia of feminism", which successfully began with the publication in 1905 of *Qu'est-ce que le féminisme*²⁴ by Odette Laguerre. The latter attracted the collaboration of specialists in education, including Albertine Eidenschenk, Madeleine Carlier, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Ida R. Sée and Marie Bonneviel, each of whom promised to write a booklet in their own field of specialisation. But despite the enthusiasm of the beginning, only two other brochures were published²⁵. No publication filled the void left in the feminist press by the disappearance of *La Fronde*.

17 Letter from Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello to Céline Renooz, 29 March 1887, box 1 (2), letters to Céline Renooz 1871-1887, Céline Renooz fonds, Marie-Louise Bouglé feminist fonds, BHVP.

18 The editorial staff, *La Femme nouvelle*, January 1905.

19 Marguerite Durand, "Les femmes et le journalisme", *Les Nouvelles*, 29 January 1914.

20 See Paule Branzac, 'Le traitement des institutrices', *La Fronde*, series of 18 January to 2 February 1903.

21 See Odette Laguerre, "Les écoles normales d'institutrices", *La Fronde*, series from 1^{er} January to 1^{er} May 1904.

22 See Maria Verona, "Les instituteurs et le mouvement social", 18 August 1901; "L'affranchissement de l'enseignement primaire", 22 August 1901; "Le pétitionnement des institutrices", 28 March 1902.

23 "La propagande féministe à Lyon", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} March 1905. Article probably written by Odette Laguerre.

24 Odette Laguerre, *Qu'est-ce que le féminisme*, Société d'éducation et d'action féministes, Lyon, 1905, 16 p.

25 This is the case of *La Recherche de la paternité*, written by Charles Gide in 1905, with notes by Odette Laguerre,

and of *La Protection de l'enfance*, written by Odette Laguerre and Ida R. Sée and published in 1906.

B) Feminist columns in educational journals: discussing women's issues in public education

Although no magazine of the Belle Époque offered as great a resonance as *La Fronde* to the demands of women teachers, other newspapers born far from the fight for women's rights gradually opened columns dedicated to women civil servants in public education. Thus Albertine Eidenschenk used the columns of *L'École nouvelle* to talk about the particular difficulties that women teachers encountered on a daily basis²⁶. From 1904 onwards, and for more than two years, she published a series of 26 articles grouped together under the title "Petits et grands secrets du bonheur" (Little and Great Secrets of Happiness), through which she initiated a dialogue with women teachers: "I would like to avoid doing a perpetual monologue. Also, I would be very grateful to the teachers [...], to help me [...] by sending me their thoughts, [...] their pedagogical or moral observations, by also indicating questions that they would like me to address²⁷." Albertine Eidenschenk was keen to reproduce in this journal the relationship of trust that she already had with her student teachers as headmistress of a normal school.

At the same time, in the *Revue Universitaire*, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben used her column on women's secondary education as a platform for the demands of female high school teachers²⁸. From the very first bulletin, she declared that she welcomed with gratitude "all short and precise communications [...] concerning the secondary education of young girls²⁹". She was convinced that no reform of female secondary education was viable without the collaboration of female teachers in the debates, from which they had hitherto been excluded since they were not represented on the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique. Indeed, the reform of the CSIP, which established the principle of representation of the different categories of teaching staff, was put in place in 1880, before the girls' lycées were created. It was therefore not intended that female secondary school staff, which had not existed until then, should send elected representatives. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben constantly called for this injustice to be rectified, which was not achieved until 1933³⁰.

In the meantime, she seeks to counter the invisibility of women in public education by inviting them to participate in her column. She wanted to mobilise them in the fight for their rights - representation on the CSIP, reduction in the number of teaching hours, equal pay - and denounced the hypocrisy of men towards them. Thus, in 1912, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben deplored the fact that none of the male candidates for the CSIP had expressed the wish to be represented

26 A headmistress [Albertine Eidenschenk], "La parole aux institutrices", *L'École nouvelle*, 12 April 1902.

27 A. Eidenschenk, "Petits et grands secrets du bonheur", *L'École nouvelle*, 1^{er} October 1904.

28 For the later period, see Estelle Perin, "Le Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles : la formation intellectuelle des femmes dans la France de l'entre-deux-guerres vue par Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben", master's thesis under the direction of Rebecca Rogers, Marc Bloch University, Strasbourg, 2006.

29 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, March 1909.

30 See Yves Verneuil, 'Corporation universitaire et société civile: les débats sur la composition du Conseil supérieur de l'instruction publique pendant la Troisième République', *Histoire de l'éducation*, n°140-141, 2014, p. 51-72.

of female secondary education in this body. However, women participated in the National Federation of Secondary Schools and gave evidence of their solidarity with male education³¹.

In Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben's eyes, all this justifies the need to maintain an exclusively female discussion forum. But in pushing her colleagues to assert their rights, she is in contrast to her profession. Françoise Mayeur notes that female secondary school staff "are not very active in defending their demands and rights"³² "Many female teachers have a sort of "repulsion for the 'mud' of political life"³³ "and particularly for feminism. Thanks to her column in the *Revue universitaire*, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben defended demands that neither the *Bulletin des sévriennes* nor Camille Sée's journal addressed in their columns. She was the wise troublemaker of the female secondary school.

C) "Boldness! Pauline Kergomard encourages women to participate in congresses.

While certain journals became spaces where feminist and corporatist demands emerged at the turn of the century, the congresses, which were becoming increasingly numerous, were also high places of debate. In 1896, after attending a congress in Geneva, Pauline Kergomard wrote that these assemblies were "schools of mutual education"³⁴ ". She saw them as a democracy in action, where free and contradictory debate took place. The Inspector General relentlessly advocated that women should take the opportunity to express themselves. As early as 1895, when she reported on the Bordeaux Congress for the protection of children, she deplored the absence of women teachers, "because the place of women, and especially of women teachers, was clearly indicated at this Congress"³⁵ ".

At the Primary Education Congress held five years later in Paris, a few women teachers came, but Pauline Kergomard deplored the fact that they rarely spoke. The congress was nevertheless an opportunity for women to learn how to speak in public: "How can an electoral college think of entrusting them with a mandate [...], if they have never given it the opportunity to distinguish them? [They] give too much credit to their colleagues of the stronger sex, and considerably increase the difficulties of the struggle for those who have made themselves the standard-bearers of equality."³⁶ " Pauline Kergomard treats women teachers not as subordinate pedagogues but as experts called upon to collaborate in the construction of the secular school and to express themselves on subjects condemned to remain incomplete without their participation.

If, for a long time, Pauline Kergomard was the exception that confirmed the rule of female silence in educational conferences, the turn of the century marked a break. Thus, at the

31 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, June 1912. At the same time, no longer able to bear the double standards of their male colleagues, eight women teachers' associations left the Fédération nationale des lycées. See Jo Burr Margadant, *Madame le Professeur*, *op. cit.*, p. 263, Yves Verneuil, *Les Agrégés*, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

32 Françoise Mayeur, *L'éducation des filles en France au XIX^e siècle*, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

33 *Ibid.*

34 Pauline Kergomard, "Notes sur le congrès de protection de l'enfance à Genève", *Revue pédagogique*, 1896.

35 Pauline Kergomard, "Notes sur le congrès de Bordeaux pour la protection de l'enfance", *Revue pédagogique*, October 1895.

Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement in Rennes in 1898, Pauline Kergomard was delighted to see more and more women coming: "Even in the past, mixed conferences [...] were viewed rather negatively, and women did not attend the closing meal; and that 'past' is so close to us that it takes a certain moral courage for a teacher to join a Congress, and a lot of audacity for her to speak at it.³⁷ " Pauline Kergomard was pleased that Lucie Saffroy, former headmistress of Fontenay, was the rapporteur for women's education, where her knowledge was unmatched by that of her male colleagues.

In 1899, Pauline Kergomard invited female secondary school teachers to join the Congress of Secondary Education. On this occasion, she recounted her experience as a speaker at the International Congress of Primary Education, ten years earlier, where she had been the only woman: "I climbed [...] painfully through my ordeal, and it was barely two *brigands* who tried to be crucified with me³⁸ ". She called on her high school colleagues to show the same boldness, certain that "it is especially in these mixed meetings that we can make our egalitarian ideas penetrate". After attending the congress, she was pleased with the number of women in the assembly and in decision-making positions³⁹. Among the three vice-presidents of the congress was Régine Pitsch, an English teacher⁴⁰. In addition, several preparatory reports were entrusted to women: Mathilde Salomon studied the relationship between female secondary schools and lay patronages; Miss Scott the possibility of international inter-school correspondence; Marie Dugard the role of teachers of each sex in the education of boys and girls⁴¹. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was also present: she demanded that the wishes expressed for boys' secondary schools be applied to girls' secondary schools, which were too often forgotten in the deliberations.

Although the Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement in 1898 and then the Congress of Secondary Education in 1899 were attended by women, the most significant event was the Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement held in Lyon in 1902. Many women took the floor: Maria Vérone played the role of troublemaker by presenting Adèle Blanche-Schweig's candidacy for the General Council of the League and by demanding equal treatment for male and female teachers⁴² . For her part, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello made a remarkable presentation on the popular universities⁴³. At the closing ceremony, Pauline Kergomard praised the women's efforts in front of the assembly:

A long time ago I was alone among you at your Congresses, [...] I came to give courage to women [...]. I succeeded, the proof is that they are here in great numbers. [Today [. . .], I therefore consider this part of my task as

37 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement. Le congrès de Rennes", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} October 1898.

38 Anonymous [Pauline Kergomard], "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} April 1899.

39 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement. Le congrès des professeurs de l'enseignement secondaire", *La Fronde*, 15 April 1899.

40 The career file of Régine Pitsch (F/17/22589/A) does not provide much of interest.

41 See *Congrès international de l'enseignement secondaire à Exposition universelle de 1900 : Rapports préparatoires*, Paris, Colin, 1900, 48 p. Miss Scott then became a teacher at the ENS de Sèvres.

42 "Incident involving Miss Verona", *ELEC Bulletin*, Oct-Nov-Dec 1902.

43 "Communication from Mme Desparmet-Ruello...", *Bulletin de la Ligue*, October-November-December 1902.

and I hope that [from now on] women [...] will speak in my place. [...] I ask your permission to raise my glass to the emancipation of women's consciousness without which there will be no future for the Republic⁴⁴.

Pauline Kergomard, a forerunner, noted the progress made by women in intellectual debate at the turn of the century. For her, the growing participation of women in congresses augured a greater contribution by women to the life of the nation.

D) Speak out! Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben's calls to action

The trend that Pauline Kergomard described at the dawn of the XX^e century was confirmed in the Belle Époque. In 1909, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben considered that it was thanks to women that the last Congress of Secondary Education was the one "which gave the largest share to questions of female education⁴⁵". A year later, she noted that most of the wishes expressed were now common to both men and women, which had not been the case at the turn of the century, and which testified to the possibility of collaboration between men and women. But the spokesperson for the female secondary school still deplores the reluctance of her colleagues to speak out. Thus, after attending a series of debates in 1909, she was surprised that only men were present, even though the audience was mixed: "There were a great many women listeners [...] but none of them ever raised their voices, and this passive attitude is very much in the ancient female tradition⁴⁶".

In 1913, she commented on an article in the *Journal of Education* which revealed that even when women were numerous and competent, they did not dare to speak out. Yet experience shows that women who speak always make a decisive contribution to discussions: "In the very few cases where women teachers have intervened in the discussion, it has invariably been [that] they have something of real importance to communicate⁴⁷". Thus, the reports presented by women are of a higher standard than those written by men. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben points to the mechanism that pushes people whose legitimacy is questioned to over-invest in the tasks given to them to demonstrate their competence. On the basis of these findings, she encourages female teachers to "become aware of their importance, in a civic as well as a professional sense".

That same year, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben covered the tenth International Women's Congress in Paris for *La Grande Revue*. This time, the debates, although mixed, were mainly led by women. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben was delighted with their wisdom: "[This Congress] won the esteem [...] of all those who were able to realise that these women, gathered together to talk about their

44 Speech by Pauline Kergomard, *Bulletin de la Ligue*, October-November-December 1902.

45 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, May 1909.

46 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, April 1910.

47 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, July 1913.

rights were concerned above all with their duties⁴⁸ ". She praises this feminism She praised the "sensible" way in which the reports were written, contrasting them with "the violent way of some feminism across the Channel". She praised the conscientiousness with which the reports were written, considering her to be It was "all feminine". However, she regretted that there were moments of agitation, which she attributed to female sentimentality. Similarly, she considers that the event suffered from other typically feminine flaws, such as when discussions were prolonged on points of detail. As a feminist intellectual, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben assesses the congress by reproducing the gender stereotypes that infused all consciousnesses in the Belle Époque.

If we compare Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben's text in 1913 with Pauline Kergomard's words after the 1889 Congress of Women's Works and Institutions, we cannot but be struck by their similarity. Thus, in a letter to Eugène Manuel, Pauline Kergomard states: "Women have been very wise. [...] I was delighted [that the congress] allowed us to show how much we know how to discipline ourselves⁴⁹ ." In 1913, as in 1889, it was constantly a question of activists "proving that feminism is respectable⁵⁰ "in the words of Anne Martin-Fugier. Feminists were walking on a tightrope: they had to speak out in spaces of debate that had previously been male, while at the same time showing themselves to be beyond reproach in order to avoid male reprobation.

If, in the eyes of feminist activists, it was obvious that women had something to contribute by contributing to the press of the Belle Époque and by expressing themselves in congresses, their presence on the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique, the highest deliberative body of the Ministry, was even more necessary. It was a question of both making a female voice heard in educational matters and offering female teachers representation in a historically male-dominated body.

II- "Never before had the doors of the holy place opened to a woman": the challenges of female representation at the CSIP

Between 1886 and 1914, a few women - seven in 28 years for an assembly of 50 members⁵¹ - succeeded in joining the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique, the Ministry's highest deliberative body, which was never intended to be mixed. When the Ministry reformed the CSIP in 1880, it ignored the possibility of a female candidate, without officially prohibiting it. Pauline Kergomard stepped into this breach by being elected to represent the primary school in 1886. The autobiographical texts in which she recalls her memories are a precious source for those interested in the experience of a pioneering intellectual in a male body.

48 Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, "Une Assemblée de Femmes en 1913, Le Congrès international de Paris (2-7 June)", *La Grande Revue*, 10 July 1913.

49 Letter from Pauline Kergomard to Eugène Manuel, 7 January [1890], Correspondence of Eugène Manuel, BIS.

50 Anne Martin-Fugier, *La Bourgeoise, op. cit.*, p. 276.

51 On the CSIP there are 37 elected members (21 for higher education, 10 for male secondary, 6 for primary) and 13 appointed members.

After her mandate, the 'doyenne' played a major role in supporting women candidates. *La Fronde*, and later *L'École nouvelle*, were important links in the mobilisation around these elections. For feminists, the aim was to use this election to demonstrate the relevance of women's participation in the Republic. The elected women were exemplary in their respect for democratic procedures: as representatives, they endeavoured to be worthy spokespersons for their electors and, more particularly, for their female voters.

The CSIP thus became an issue of female representation. The aim here is to study the way in which, at a time when women had neither the right to vote nor to stand for election at the national level, a number of female intellectuals appropriated these professional elections by establishing strategies for feminist electoral discipline. It will also be necessary to analyse their concrete contribution to the work of the CSIP, by studying in particular the careers of Pauline Kergomard and Albertine Eidenschenk, two charismatic and very active elected representatives during this period, as well as that of Mathilde Salomon, who was not elected but appointed to the CSIP as a representative of free education.

Women on the IPSC between 1880 and 1914

<u>Woman</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Became a member by...</u>	<u>In the capacity of...</u>	<u>Represents</u>
Pauline Kergomard	1886-1892	Election by the body of primary voters	Inspector General of Nursery Schools	Primary education
Mathilde Salomon	1892-1909	Designation by the Minister	Director of Collège Sévigné	Free education
Lucie Saffroy	1896-1900	Election by the body of primary voters	Headmistress of Fontenay then primary inspector	Primary education
Jeanne Dejean de la Bâtie	1900-1904	Designation by the Minister	Director of Fontenay	Primary education
Albertine Eidenschenk	1904- post-war	Election by the body of primary voters	Headmistress of a teacher training college	Primary education
Berthe Milliard	1909-post war	Designation by the Minister	Director of the Modern Institute	Free education
Jeanne Déghilage	1912-post war	Election by the body of primary voters	Assistant teacher, member of the Conseil départemental du Nord	Primary education

A) "Like a coup d'état": Pauline Kergomard, first woman elected to the CSIP (1886-1892)

Yves Verneuil, a specialist in the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique, has shown that the reform of this institution carried out by Jules Ferry in 1880 aimed to republicanise a body inherited from the Falloux law⁵². The aim was to replace the representatives of the army and the clergy with elected representatives of the various bodies of public education to discuss educational issues. The CSIP was also a disciplinary council where cases involving teachers were judged. Because of its dual educational and 'judicial' role, "the CSIP is a key component of the administration of public education⁵³". However, the 1880 reform recognises that the headmistress of the short-lived Pape-

- 52 Yves Verneuil, "Corporation universitaire et société civile: les débats sur la composition du Conseil supérieur de l'instruction publique pendant la Troisième République", art. cit.
- 53 *Ibid.*

Carpentier - the normal course for nursery schools - and the delegates responsible for inspecting the asylum rooms were given the right to be included in the electoral body for primary education, which took part in the elections. For the first time, women were given the right to vote in public education. This small revolution was not without its discontents. For example, the Inspector General Charles Jourdain stated that on many points relating to education,

"We would trust the judgement of a mother of a family more than that of this or that teacher [...]. Does this mean, however, that sensible minds can approve of the intervention of the female sex in the general government of public education⁵⁴ ? "

By recognising the right of suffrage for some women, the 1880 reform made people cringe. The question of women's eligibility to vote was not *even* raised: men retained the monopoly. However, in 1886, voters nominated Pauline Kergomard, who became the first woman to be elected to the CSIP. She recalled in 1898: "Only a few days before a by-election, several voters [...] put forward my candidacy, without informing me⁵⁵. " She was then faced with a dilemma. According to her, two women were fighting inside her:

"One of them - the one who likes to keep to herself [...] - preached abstention; the other, the one who is always ready to leave for the holy war - urged me to leave. Above all, she told me that, if the woman had a chance to enter the High Council, it would be cowardice to leave her at the door. The woman of initiative took the lead: Pauline Kergomard agreed to campaign. She benefited from the goodwill of the Ministry and the press and was finally elected.

In 1909, she said that her accession to this body "was like a coup d'état⁵⁶ "This expression expresses the revolution that the entry of a woman into this place represented. Although Pauline Kergomard received a sympathetic welcome from her elected colleagues, her first participation in a meeting was an ordeal: "The 'stage fright' I experienced in 1886, when, for the first time, the electors [...] sent me to the Conseil supérieur (the doors of the holy place had never been opened to a woman), this 'stage fright' is unforgettable, and I am still grateful to the one of my colleagues who [...] offered me his arm to enter the room.⁵⁷. "

Pauline Kergomard was re-elected on the basis of her expertise in the field and her convictions about secular schools. However, in 1890, a controversy arose between her and her constituents. She was accused - wrongly - of having written an article under a pseudonym in the *Figaro* newspaper denouncing the incompetence of male inspectors, in order to argue for the introduction of more female inspectors. Attacked by two voters who demanded an explanation, Pauline Kergomard denied being the author. She demonstrated her good faith by resigning from the CSIP so that her constituents could renew their confidence in her, or disown her by voting. By relying on the decision of her

54 Quoted in *Ibid.* This sentence was published in 1879. Charles Jourdain was the former chief of staff of Count de Falloux.

55 Pauline Kergomard, "La tribune: À travers l'éducation, la féminisation de l'enseignement primaire, II- Les conseils élus", *La Fronde*, 19 February 1898.

56 "Questions relating to the economic and legal status of women - In what jobs would it be advantageous to introduce

women?", *Free Conversations of the Union for Truth*, 14 February 1909.
57 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} April 1899.

In her capacity as a voter, she showed concern for democratic procedures. The newspaper *Le XIXème siècle* expressed regret at her resignation, "which seems all the more regrettable because Mme Kergomard is the first and so far the only representative of the fair sex to have forced her way into the Conseil supérieur⁵⁸". Pauline Kergomard was finally re-elected.

In the years that followed, she systematically stood for election to the CSIP. On 15 April 1892, she claimed the votes of her voters for the fourth time:

I do not [present myself] without scruples. The honour you have conferred on me is deserved by others, and in order not to monopolise it in some way, I have thought of withdrawing.

I would have done so with alacrity if there had been a female candidate to replace me [to] represent women's education and the interests of female staff on the Council. [It would not be possible to compose a Council ... from which women would be excluded. [It] would be an inexplicable antithesis in a country where the education of girls is organised with such rare happiness⁵⁹.

Pauline Kergomard presented herself as a specialist in women's education, of which she considered France to be a pioneer - she was particularly pleased with the existence of the Ecole Normale de Fontenay and the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Sèvres - but she also appeared to represent the interests of female staff, even though she was elected by a majority of men.

When she announced her candidacy in 1892, the Inspector General made several declarations of intent, based on her experience. To begin with, she called for a profound transformation of the way the CSIP functioned: the number of primary school representatives was insufficient in relation to the role that this level of education played in the life of the nation. In fact, as reorganised in 1880, the CSIP opened its doors to only six representatives of primary education designated by 635 voters. In comparison, the Institut de France sent five representatives elected by 156 voters, the Collège de France two persons designated by 30 voters, and so on.⁶⁰ The primary schools are in a tiny minority, even though this level of education mobilises the vast majority of teachers and pupils. The Inspector General therefore called for the doubling of the number of primary representatives and their inclusion in the Permanent Section, whose members were appointed by the executive and whose role was to study the proposals emanating from the assembly and approve or reject them. Despite this imperfect representation of primary education, which limited the chances of seeing reforms succeed, Pauline Kergomard said that during her term of office she was associated with all the wishes aimed at the progress of popular and secular education: "I am ready, moreover, to give you an account of my votes⁶¹".

58 "La démission de Mme Kergomard", *Le XIXème siècle*, 11 November 1890, F/17/23588/B.

59 Pauline Kergomard's declaration of candidacy dated 28 April 1892, F/17/13619-F/17/13620.

60 Minutes of the meeting of 22 April 1880, CSIP archives, F/17/13619-F/17/13620.

61 Pauline Kergomard's declaration of candidacy dated 28 April 1892, F/17/13619-F/17/13620.

With her characteristic frankness, the Inspector General returned in this statement to the one point that alienated her from many of her constituents, that of the female inspection of girls' primary schools, which a majority of inspectors saw as potential competition. Aware that this issue was a major disagreement with her constituents, Kergomard refused to ignore it, even if it meant alienating some of her voters, which it did. Subject to a run-off, she was not re-elected in 1892. At the next election a year later, 54 of her voters, including nine women, put forward her candidacy again, stating that "better than anyone else, Madame Kergomard is qualified to affirm the principle of female representation in the Conseil supérieur⁶² "but she was never re-elected. The mistrust shown to her by part of the electorate was based precisely on a divergence of interests between men and women: it was because Pauline Kergomard defended women's interests that her electors refused her their support.

When she looks back a few years later on her departure from the CSIP, the Inspector General has no regrets. She was proud to have "left the ambiguous circulars to the MPs⁶³ "and to have chosen frankness in her own statements: 'Irrevocably determined to give an example of electoral loyalty at all costs, I recalled [...] the question that divided us and I [...] declared that if I returned to the Council, it would be to defend [...] the principle of the inspection of girls' schools by women'. If, according to Pauline Kergomard, the members of Parliament were indulging in electoralism in their declarations, she herself stated that she did not want to give in to these temptations. Deviated by men, would the Republic find its salvation in incorruptible women like her? Certain of her convictions and ready to defend them, Pauline Kergomard declared: "From 1892 to 1896, with the perseverance of someone who asserts her right... to the jacket, and in the absence of any other female candidate, I stood in line every time the opportunity arose. The Inspector General perseveres despite the disavowal of her constituents and recounts her repeated failures in elections with irony and self-mockery.

B) A predecessor: Pauline Kergomard and her heirs at CSIP (1896-1900)

If not re-elected, Pauline Kergomard is looking forward to seeing other women in the This was a "holy place". After his defeat in 1892, the minister Léon Bourgeois appointed Mathilde Salomon as representative of free education⁶⁴. This appointment compensated for the departure of the only woman elected to this body up to that point and ensured that free education was represented by a staunchly secular woman. Similarly, while the secondary school for girls had no representative since it was created after the reform of the CSIP, it was Mathilde Salomon who unofficially took on this role, being the head of a school considered to be a laboratory for public schools.

62 "The candidacy of Mme Kergomard", elections of 31 October 1893, CSIP archives, F/17/13619-F/17/13620.

63 Pauline Kergomard, "La tribune: À travers l'éducation, la féminisation de l'enseignement primaire, II- Les conseils élus", *La Fronde*, 19 February 1898.

64 Yves Verneuil, "Mathilde Salomon au Conseil supérieur de l'instruction publique (1892-1909)...", art. cit.

In 1896, Lucie Saffroy, headmistress of Fontenay, was finally elected to the CSIP after having stood several times since 1892. She was supported by Pauline Kergomard, and *L'Ami de l'enfance* published a statement of support on her behalf⁶⁵. When Lucie Saffroy was elected to the first rank of the six primary representatives, Pauline Kergomard did not hide her joy at "seeing her go in first, with *one hundred more votes* than the delegate ranked second on the list of elected representatives⁶⁶". She concludes from this success that from now on women must run everywhere, in the CSIP as well as in the departmental councils. Didn't the Ligue de l'enseignement congress in Rennes in 1898 vote in favour of women's entry into local committees? Pauline Kergomard exulted: "Yes, you read that right: communal or cantonal DELEGATES. When the vote was taken [...], I could hardly believe my eyes, which had nevertheless seen so many arms in the air; and my ears, which had heard the voice of the president announce our victory⁶⁷". According to Pauline Kergomard, the principle of women's eligibility for these bodies is one of the greatest peaceful achievements of feminism in the Third Republic⁶⁸.

In 1900, at the end of her mandate, Lucie Saffroy did not renew her candidacy⁶⁹. She thanked her constituents in *L'École nouvelle* and hoped that the seat she left vacant would again be filled by a woman. When Pauline Kergomard learned of the news, she was sorry that she had been informed too late to be able to organise the succession properly. On 16 April 1900, in *La Fronde*, she encouraged her colleagues to stand for election ten days later: "However short the time between now and election day, I want to hope that this seat - which was mine - will not be lost to women⁷⁰". In particular, she urged female primary inspectors, headmistresses of teacher-training colleges and teachers on departmental councils to agree on a name as a matter of urgency to announce a female candidate. Pressed by the deadline, the inspector general proposed a model letter in which the candidate would say "what she is": "Devoted [...] to democratic institutions; Secular [...] irreducibly. Convinced that the moral prosperity of the country depends on the education of women [...] and that the aim of this education must be to enlighten reason, to free the conscience, to strengthen the will. Pauline Kergomard lists here the convictions that she shared with many women who, like her, were devoted to the secular school and to the cause of female education.

Called upon by the "doyenne" - as she calls herself - to agree on a name, the women who occupy the most prominent positions designate none other than Pauline Kergomard to represent them. When she received their letter, the Inspector General accepted this new challenge: "Persuaded that one is not diminished by a failure, while one is dishonoured

65 Letter published in *L'Ami de l'enfance*, 15 April 1896, CSIP archive, F/17/13619-F/17/1320.

66 Pauline Kergomard, "La tribune: À travers l'éducation, la féminisation de l'enseignement primaire, II- Les conseils élus", *La Fronde*, 19 February 1898.

67 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement. Le congrès de Rennes", *La Fronde*, 2 October 1898.

68 Pauline Kergomard, "La tribune: À travers l'éducation, la féminisation de l'enseignement primaire, II- Les conseils élus", *La Fronde*, 19 February 1898.

69 "Candidature de Mlle Saffroy au Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique", *L'École nouvelle*, 21 April 1900.

70 Pauline Kergomard, "Elections to the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique", *La Fronde*, 16 April 1900.

I accept [...] because as long as I have a breath of life left, it will not be said that women give up defending their right⁷¹. " She said that she was claiming a new seat not for herself, but in the name of women, and declared herself "devoted to the end of my strength and life to popular secular education, and especially to the secularisation of the female spirit".

The women who nominated her wrote a declaration of candidacy for her and sent it to all the educational newspapers, but this circular arrived too late to be inserted before the election⁷². Lucid, Pauline Kergomard declared that it was impossible to hope for success. However, she was delighted to have received a circular from Mme Garrigues, director of the École primaire supérieure de Saint-Étienne, who was also a candidate. Delighted, Pauline Kergomard reproduced her colleague's letter in *La Fronde*. True to her promise to support all female candidates, the inspector general declared herself happy to give her vote and invited her "friends" to do the same in the first round: "It will then be easy to agree between candidates, so that the less favoured ones will withdraw in favour of the one who will have the most votes. Mrs Garrigues withdrew in favour of Pauline Kergomard in the second round: this was the beginning of a long habit of feminist electoral discipline which was established in the Belle Époque during elections to the CSIP.

But, in accordance with Pauline Kergomard's fears, the ballot did not result in a female victory. On 18 May 1900, without yet knowing the exact number of votes she had obtained, Pauline Kergomard estimated them at 400⁷³. She declared that such a small failure, given the haste with which her candidacy had been made, could be considered a half-success for women's education. In a context where the nationalists had become the majority in the Paris City Council, the Inspector General nevertheless regretted not having won: she would have liked to have had a real *laywoman* on the CSIP in her person. She states:

The number of truly independent female minds is extremely rare. You have to travel the province to see this. Not only [...] are there few women who have been freed from the yoke of the Church, but those who wish to shake off the yoke feel such reprobation upon them that they withdraw into themselves.

The Inspector General would have liked to bring real comfort to the *lay* women teachers, to whom "this term is thrown at their heads like an insult". An optimist, Pauline Kergomard concluded the epic of the 1900 CSIP elections with this sentence: "I have a situation that allows me to serve my gods, even outside the Higher Council; I have the *Fronde* as my spokesperson. With such assets in my hand, I hope to win the game. With her aura and the platforms she had at her disposal, Pauline Kergomard played her role as spokesperson for women teachers and defended her convictions in all possible places: she asserted herself as an intellectual.

71 Pauline Kergomard, "Elections to the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique", *La Fronde*, 20 April 1900.

72 Pauline Kergomard, "Elections to the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique", *La Fronde*, 24 April 1900.

73 Pauline Kergomard, "Elections to the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique", *La Fronde*, 18 May 1900.

C) Albertine Eidenschenk: a laywoman, a feminist, a primary school teacher at the CSIP (1903-1914)

In the same way as in 1892, when Pauline Kergomard's departure from the CSIP was compensated for by the appointment of Mathilde Salomon, the non-replacement of Lucie Saffroy by election was compensated for in 1900 by the appointment of Jeanne Dejean de la Bâtie, headmistress of Fontenay. The latter was also the first woman to sit on the Permanent Section⁷⁴. But the presence of two women appointed by the executive could not meet the expectations of women teachers in public education. In the eyes of several intellectuals, including Albertine Eidenschenk and Pauline Kergomard, a woman had to be elected to this high council through the ballot box, the only truly legitimate way in a democracy.

It was thanks to *L'École nouvelle* that Albertine Eidenschenk began to fight in 1903⁷⁵. She took advantage of a by-election to announce her candidacy as director of the Saint-Brieuc teacher training college: the women members of the electorate had agreed on her name. Albertine Eidenschenk invoked her own career path to justify her candidacy: she began her career as a primary school teacher, did some substitute teaching in a higher primary school, entered Fontenay as a student, became a teacher at a teacher training college and then a teacher-repeater at the ENS before becoming the head of a teacher training college. The diversity of her experience in public education testifies to the relevance of her candidacy to represent women teachers. Albertine Eidenschenk also mentions her struggles in the service of the secular school: she defended the interests of women teachers in the educational press, in particular by organising petitions for equal pay. She also wrote articles in *L'École nouvelle* and in the *Revue de l'enseignement primaire et primaire supérieur* in favour of a reform of the teacher training colleges. Albertine Eidenschenk was also a member of the Conseil départemental des Côtes du Nord since her appointment in Brittany. Like Pauline Kergomard, she ended her declaration by presenting herself as a laywoman: "in my actions and in all my words, I have always been inspired and will always be inspired by the resolutely secular, rational and democratic spirit [inspired by] Jules Ferry, P. Bert, my teacher F. Pécaut".

However, despite the support she received, Albertine Eidenschenk was not elected in 1903. Initially decided not to stand again, she gave in to the calls and stood again the following year, in the general elections, in a circular published once again in *L'École nouvelle*⁷⁶. Albertine Eidenschenk wrote a detailed programme. She wanted to improve the enforcement of compulsory schooling, reduce the administrative burden on primary inspectors, advocate better salaries and promotion for teachers and ensure that teachers were trained exclusively in teacher training colleges. In addition, Albertine Eidenschenk pledges to 'pacify' the primary school curriculum. This statement is

74 For more information on her, see her career file, F/17/22316.

75 "Election to the CSIP, circular from Mrs Eidenschenk", *L'École nouvelle*, 6 June 1903.

76 "Circular from Mme Eidenschenk, director of the EN in Saint-Brieuc", *L'École nouvelle*, 21 May 1904.

no doubt written in reaction to the candidacy, in the same year, of Félix Comte, who ran on behalf of the Union des instituteurs laïques et patriotes (Union of secular and patriotic teachers) and whose aim was to rehabilitate war imagery in schools⁷⁷. Albertine Eidenschenk, on the other hand, supported the pacifist teachers.

In the first round of voting, three primary candidates were elected by an absolute majority. Albertine Eidenschenk came fifth. In accordance with her promise, being the best placed woman in the first round, she maintained her candidacy and was elected on 14 June 1904.⁷⁸ From then on, she was re-elected with flying colours until the Great War. *La Fronde*, which had not supported her candidacy in the spring of 1904, at a time when it had ceased to appear daily and become a monthly, produced a portrait of Albertine Eidenschenk in July 1904⁷⁹. Odette Laguerre was given the task. She portrays the headmistress of the Saint-Brieuc teacher training college as a sincere and resolute laywoman, retaining her devotion to popular education as a legacy from Pécaut. The journalist insists on the peasant origins of Albertine Eidenschenk, whom she describes as a brilliant intelligence, but also as a perfect wife and as a mother raising her children outside the Church. Odette Laguerre also recalls her numerous contributions to avant-garde journals such as *L'École nouvelle* - a corporatist journal -, *La Femme nouvelle* - a feminist journal - and *Le Bulletin de l'Union pour l'action morale* - a journal run by Republican intellectuals. La frondeuse enthusiastically concludes:

If we add that Mrs. Eidenschenk is personally entirely committed to integral feminism, we will certainly have shared with the readers of *La Fronde* the satisfaction we feel in seeing the merit of this eminent educator highly recognised and proclaimed, in whom our ideal of the emancipated woman is embodied, having enriched [and] affirmed her personality without losing any of the qualities native to her sex, and having been able to reconcile, which for so long seemed impossible, family duty and social duty.

While *La Fronde* made Albertine Eidenschenk a new female role model, she also benefited from the support of the Fontenay alumnae association, which included many women members of the CSIP electorate. As early as 1899, when she returned to France after her marriage, Albertine Eidenschenk joined the board of directors of this association⁸⁰. She sat on it continuously until 1914. Her personal charisma, her closeness to Félix Pécaut, her knowledge of the institution and the pupils - she had seen several classes of Fontenays girls pass through as mistress-repetitor - contributed to her constant re-election to the board of the association. Albertine Eidenschenk benefits in return from the substantial support of the association. Thus, at the association's general meeting in 1912, Marie Ginier, the president, recalled that "to show the solidarity that reigns in our association and to serve the cause

⁷⁷ Jean-Paul Martin, *La Ligue de l'enseignement et la République des origines à 1914*, *op. cit.*, p. 403.

⁷⁸ See the results of the vote in the CSIP archives, F/17/13619-F/17/1320.

⁷⁹ Odette Laguerre, "Portrait de femme : Mme Eidenschenk", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} July 1904.

80 See the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, December 1899.

The President and the Secretary took the initiative to send a circular recommending the candidature of Mrs. Eidenschenk to the Associates members of the electoral body.⁸¹ " The world of Fontenay, the matrix of women's primary education, rallied behind Albertine Eidenschenk.

D) Representing women in a male context: the experience of Albertine Eidenschenk

Albertine Eidenschenk is keen to fulfil her mandate as the quasi-official representative of the women's staff on the CSIP. She regularly asked for advice, both in the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes* and in *L'École nouvelle*. In 1908, she solicited the contribution of her colleagues for a project to reform the entrance exam to the teacher training colleges. She had the results of her survey published in the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*⁸². She rectified her project by taking into account the opinion of the ten teacher training colleges that had responded to her questionnaire. She then presented a proposal in her electoral programme at the time of the 1908 elections⁸³. Similarly, in January 1913, Albertine Eidenschenk called for an "urgent opinion" in *L'École nouvelle* on the subject of changing the dates of holidays in the teacher training colleges⁸⁴. In April, she submitted to the CSIP the wishes of the normal school staff, which were accepted⁸⁵.

Albertine Eidenschenk showed great consideration for the trust placed in her by her voters and a scrupulous respect for democratic procedures. Thus, when she discovered at the end of May 1908 that the elections which had just brought her victory in the first round had to be reorganised because of a problem in the procedure - the electorate of the Var had voted on 5 May instead of 12 May - she complied with the need to run again:

"Respect for legal forms being a guarantee of justice for all, we have only to bow to this decision⁸⁶.
" She urged the supporters of women's representation not to abstain: "We are fighting for a principle of justice that is dear to our hearts: let us not allow it to be violated out of weariness. In the new election, Albertine Eidenschenk exceeded the absolute majority by 70 votes and was re-elected in the first round.⁸⁷

From 1904 to 1912, only two women sat on the CSIP at the same time: Albertine Eidenschenk and Mathilde Salomon, then Albertine Eidenschenk and Berthe Milliard, the latter replacing Mathilde Salomon on her death in 1909. With the appointment of Berthe Milliard, director of the Institut moderne, the Ministry applied the same policy as that which led to the appointment of Mathilde Salomon: a former student of the Lycée Molière, the Collège Sévigné and the ENS de Sèvres, and a history teacher, Berthe Milliard was a representative of

81 "Minutes of the general meeting of 5 August 1912", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, October 1912.

82 "Le Concours d'admission à l'École Normale", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1908.

83 "Candidature de Mme Eidenschenk", *L'École nouvelle*, 2 May 1908.

84 A. Eidenschenk, "Avis urgent", *L'École nouvelle*, 18 January 1913.

85 A. Eidenschenk, "Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique", *L'École nouvelle*, 26 April 1913.

86 Letter from Albertine Eidenschenk-Patin to her colleagues dated 26 May 1908, F/17/13619-F/17/13620.

87 Results of the poll of 18 June 1908, F/17/13619-F/17/13620.

the free education association, largely formed in public schools, which defends the state secondary school for women, without being officially a representative of it.

It was not until the 1912 elections that a third woman joined Albertine Eidenschenk and Berthe Milliard on the CSIP, namely Jeanne Déghilage. A schoolteacher in Lille and member of the departmental council of the Nord, Jeanne Déghilage presented her candidacy for the first time in 1904. She did so alongside two teachers, the trio having been designated by the assembly of teachers' associations. Like Albertine Eidenschenk, Jeanne Déghilage set herself up as a representative of the interests of the teachers: "Should we [...] give the 50,000 women teachers in France and the colonies the opportunity to affirm, by electing a delegate, that they are not abandoning any of their feminist demands [...] and that they will fight until justice is done⁸⁸ ? " Eight years later, when Jeanne Déghilage ran again, she called for a reform of the High Council, including, among other things, the obligation of female representation among the elected representatives of primary education⁸⁹. She was finally elected in the first round in fifth place with 740 votes, just behind Albertine Eidenschenk and her 770 votes⁹⁰.

All the candidates for the CSIP insist on the need for a woman to be present in this body to ensure fair representation of the teaching profession, especially as it is undergoing a strong feminisation. As early as 1893, Pauline Kergomard declared: "it is a question of giving the female teaching profession the representative it is entitled to on the Conseil supérieur, so that the 40,000 female teachers in France are represented there⁹¹ ". In addition to the need to provide women with elected representatives so that the assembly could be representative, there was also the argument that women made a specific contribution to male deliberative bodies. Thus Henri Métivier, Inspector General and member of the CSIP, expressed his disappointment at the non-re-election of Pauline Kergomard in 1896: "In how many questions can the special experience of a woman shed useful light on points insufficiently seen by men⁹² ! "

However, it was not until 1912 and the election of Jeanne Déghilage that Albertine Eidenschenk attacked the misogyny of the institution. She noted that most members did not seem to want to recognise the mixed nature of the CSIP: "There are now three women on the Conseil supérieur: two representatives of primary education and one of free education. Perhaps speakers will notice this in the future⁹³... ". Albertine Eidenschenk was annoyed by the usual "gentlemen" who opens all speeches at the CSIP, ignoring the women present. For her part, she is very keen to include everyone in her speeches: she constantly refers to the "Ladies and Gentlemen"⁹⁴ and begins its letters to the electorate with the words "Ladies and Gentlemen".

88 "Declaration by Mme Déghilage, M. Lechantre and M. Murgier", *L'École nouvelle*, 21 May 1904.

89 "Candidatures - Mme Déghilage et M. Michel", *L'École nouvelle*, 11 May 1912.

90 See the results of the vote of 22 May 1912, F/17/13621

91 Letter from Pauline Kergomard to her constituents during the ballot, 14 November 1893, F/17/13619-13620.

92 *L'Ami de l'enfance*, 15 April 1896, F/17/13619-F/17/13620.

93 A. Eidenschenk, "Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique", *L'École nouvelle*, 26 October 1912.

94 See his letter of 26 May 1908, F/17/13619-F/17/13620.

Dear colleagues, Gentlemen⁹⁵ ". It is true that many other candidates adopt more or less the same formula; but a few persist in writing "To the voters⁹⁶ ".

The reluctance of CSIP members to accept co-education in their ranks was not simply a matter of address in nomination papers or speeches in session. Thus, in 1908, when the council was called upon to judge two disciplinary cases in camera because of so-called immoral acts perpetrated by a school teacher and a college tutor in the exercise of their profession, Mathilde Salomon and Albertine Eidenschenk were invited to leave the courtroom and retire to the next room: the aim was to spare their chaste female ears⁹⁷.

E) Women's work in the CSIP: a review

The very male composition of the council is an obstacle to women's initiatives. How do the women elected to the CSIP overcome their difficulties? On what subjects do they speak out? Despite her 'stage fright', Pauline Kergomard regularly spoke out. In 1887, she called for a reduction in the curriculum at the Sèvres school⁹⁸. In 1889, she promoted the educational role of headmasters and spoke out on the subject of nursery school equipment⁹⁹. In 1890, she presented a report on gymnastics programmes in primary education¹⁰⁰. In the same year, she tabled a motion to improve technical education in higher primary schools¹⁰¹. She exploited her gender capital by speaking out extensively on the subject of early childhood, which was also her particular area of expertise, but she did not stop there: her action went beyond the limits of the fields recognised as specifically female.

The same applies to Mathilde Salomon, even though she was much less active between 1892 and 1909. In a posthumous tribute to her former director, Marthe Lévêque justified Mathilde Salomon's absence from the CSIP by the fragility of her voice¹⁰². Added to this was her character, which was very different from that of Pauline Kergomard: when Mathilde Salomon took stock of her action on the threshold of death, she regretted not having *dared* enough¹⁰³. Yves Verneuil, who analysed her action at the CSIP, noted that she took part in 302 sessions and was absent only 16 times despite her fragile health and her duties as head of the Collège Sévigné¹⁰⁴. Despite her remarkable attendance, Mathilde Salomon spoke only four times, and only twice in a forceful manner: the first time to defend the place of modern languages in the school entrance examination

95 Letter of 21 May 1904, letter of 28 May 1908, F/17/13619-F/17/13620.

96 See for example the issue of *L'École nouvelle* of 21 May 1904.

97 "Le Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique", *La Croix*, 24 July 1908.

98 Proposal in a letter to the President of the CSIP, 29 July 1887, F/17/12968.

99 Minutes of the sitting of 8 November 1889, F/17/12969 and report tabled in 1889, F/17/12969.

100 Minutes of the sitting of 29 July 1890, F/17/12970.

101 Minutes of the sitting of 28 December 1890, F/17/12970.

102 Marthe Lévêque, *Mathilde Salomon, directrice de Collège Sévigné. Membre du Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique. Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, 1837-1909*, Saint-Germain-lès-Corbeil, Imprimerie F. Leroy, 1911.

103 In 1908, she wrote in her papers: "I should have tried to write when it was time. I should have had something to say. I have been too difficult and lacked what Dick May has too much of" (i.e. boldness).

104 Yves Verneuil, "Mathilde Salomon au Conseil supérieur de l'instruction publique (1892-1909)...", art. cit.

normale¹⁰⁵ . the second to refuse any equivalence between women's diplomas and the baccalaureate¹⁰⁶. The director of Sévigné was more active in drawing up written wishes. An analysis of her personal papers shows that she was often the initiator of proposals in which she appeared as a simple co-signer. Thus, in 1899, it was she who tabled a vow that the Declaration of Human Rights should be studied in public schools¹⁰⁷. In 1900, she drafted a proposal for an elementary course in medicine to be included in the curriculum of girls' secondary schools and teacher training colleges¹⁰⁸. In 1904, aware of the overwork to which the pupils of Sévigné were subjected when taking competitive examinations, she initiated a wish to extend the benefit of eligibility for examinations to two years¹⁰⁹. It is also likely that she took an active part in the wish to lighten the lycée curriculum and to concentrate classes in the morning, on the model of the Sévigné college¹¹⁰. In addition to this, there were wishes relating to the teaching of languages, which Mathilde Salomon has made her speciality, the place of geography in the curriculum and the simplification of spelling, all proposals¹¹¹. The drafts of these proposals can be seen in her personal papers. Lastly, Mathilde Salomon's influence can be seen in the wish for the creation of real children's classes in girls' lycées, such as those at Collège Sévigné¹¹². The headmistress of the Collège often used her own school as a model for reform proposals for public schools.

Compared to the relative discretion of Mathilde Salomon, Albertine Eidenschenk is distinguished by her hyperactivity. Most of the time, she joins with the other primary elected representatives to make demands. For example, she wanted to give more weight to the Teachers' Council in the management of the school in order to rebalance the balance of power between headmasters and deputy headmasters; to authorise student teachers to continue their training in the third year at the teacher training college even if they had not passed the higher certificate; to ensure that the number of hours given to students in the upper primary schools was reduced in order to avoid overworking the teachers¹¹³.

On 12 October 1906, the six primary representatives met outside of session to prepare a series of wishes presented collectively, which applied to all primary staff, both female and male¹¹⁴. For example, it was a question of relieving the teachers, and especially the women teachers, of sweeping and cleaning the classrooms after the school day¹¹⁵ authorising

105 Minutes of the sitting of 17 January 1896, F/17/12973.

106 Minutes of the sitting of 18 July 1908, F/17/13644.

107 Her personal papers show that she wrote this vow, but it has disappeared from the archives. See the minutes of the sitting of 22 July 1899: "Miss Salomon tables the attached proposal on the Bureau"... which is absent, F/17/12975.

108 Minutes of the sitting of 10 January 1900, F/17/12975.

109 December 1904 session, F/17/13642.

110 Minutes of the sitting of 11 January 1897, F/17/12973.

111 See respectively the minutes of the sitting of 19 July 1899, F/17/12975; the minutes of the sitting of 23 December 1907, F/17/13643; the motion tabled outside the session on 10 January 1905, F/17/13642.

112 Vow submitted in 1900, F/17/13641.

113 Vow of 28 December 1906, vow of 14 May 1906, F/17/13643; vow of 21 December 1908, F/17/13645.

114 See these wishes in the CSIP archives, F/17/13643.

115 The town hall often pays someone to do this in place of the teacher, but not in place of the teacher.

teachers to accept gifts from their pupils and to treat them with respect¹¹⁶ to remove from school regulations the obligation to accompany pupils to catechism; to give primary school teachers responsibility for their classrooms by removing them from the authority of the mayor; to give nursery school staff the same holidays and daily hours as primary school teachers. All these proposals are consistent with Albertine Eidenschenk's convictions of defending the secular nature of the school, the autonomy of the staff from political power and the material interests of the teachers.

Unlike Mathilde Salomon and Pauline Kergomard, Albertine Eidenschenk was therefore part of a kind of 'parliamentary group' at the CSIP: she was always in solidarity with the representatives of the primary school, with whom she acted collectively. But she also regularly spoke out on her own. As early as 1904, she wrote a report in her own name aimed at a thorough reform of the three-year training programme for primary school teachers in the teacher training colleges, which bore fruit¹¹⁷. She also made use of her empirical knowledge of public education by proposing in 1909 to better control the allowances allocated to Arabic-speaking public school staff in Algeria¹¹⁸. Her experience as headmistress of a teacher training college in Oran, as well as that of her husband, an Arabic-speaking education inspector and specialist in educational issues in Algeria¹¹⁹ She was able to speak with authority on the subject. Her proposal was accepted.

However, when she did make reform proposals on her own, it was most often to defend the interests of female staff. Thus, in 1906, she had the salaries of the mistresses of the Fontenay school upgraded¹²⁰. In 1908, she took up Pauline Kergomard's fight: she wrote and read a report on the appointment of female inspectors. Her aim was to feminise the body of inspectors¹²¹. The following year, she submitted a report on the supervision of boarding schools for female teachers, which were subject to a different regime to that of boys' teacher training colleges. Her aim was to lighten the obligations of female staff¹²².

Not only was Albertine Eidenschenk very active in the CSIP, but from 1912 onwards she wrote the column in *L'École nouvelle* devoted to the minutes of the meetings¹²³. She also used her membership of the CSIP to encourage her readers to persevere in their fight for the secular school. In December 1912, she reminded teachers that they had the right to suspend classes if the mayor insisted on attending them: "The mayor who is hostile to public schooling cannot demand that the class be continued in front of him, nor that the books and notebooks be presented to him¹²⁴". Two years later, she used her column to remind the

116 See also the session of 22 May 1907, F/17/13643.

117 Minutes of the sitting of 24 July 1905, report accepted by the Permanent Section, F/17/13642.

118 Minutes of the sitting of 21 July 1909, F/17/13645.

119 L. Eidenschenk gave a lecture on Algeria in 1903 while posted in Brittany, F/17/22193/A.

120 Minutes of the sitting of 19 July 1906, F/17/12969.

121 Minutes of the sitting of 18 July 1908, F/17/13644.

122 Minutes of the sitting of 21 July 1909, F/17/13645.

123 See in particular the articles of 9, 16 and 30 November 1912 in *L'École nouvelle* on the granting of exemptions to former primary school pupils so that they can access higher education.

124 A. Eidenschenk, "CSIP", *L'École nouvelle*, 28 December 1912.

readers of *L'École nouvelle* that the friends of the public school can prevent the opening of a public school rivaling theirs if it does not respect the rules in force¹²⁵.

In conclusion, Pauline Kergomard, Mathilde Salomon and Albertine Eidenschenk spoke on a wide range of issues. Like their male colleagues, the subjects they addressed were those on which they were most competent, because of expertise linked to their profession (as inspector general of nursery schools, as director of Collège Sévigné or as director of a teacher training college), to their personal history (passion for languages, detailed knowledge of Algeria) or because of the mandate they had received (discussion of subjects upstream *via* journals, defence of corporate interests). The strategies they adopt to bring proposals to the CSIP vary according to their character: they choose to expose themselves more or less in debates with men. Another overall conclusion that can be drawn from their contributions is that, with a few exceptions, they are always the ones to whom feminist wishes are owed¹²⁶. Here again, their gender capital legitimises them in these speeches: it is as if their presence as women implicitly implies that they have a monopoly on the defence of women's interests. Their entry into the CSIP thus leads to the introduction of issues hitherto ignored by men. They were listened to and never faced outright male opposition: their competence was not questioned.

The entry of a woman into the CSIP in 1886 was exceptional and unexpected at first, but it paved the way for the mobilisation of women's representation in the following decades. During the election campaigns, the press organs in which female intellectuals collaborated played an important role. These elections revealed the birth of female solidarity within a corporation that thought of itself as a community. Candidates engage in electoral strategies with the aim of ensuring at least a female presence in the 'holy place', and then, once elected, report back to their constituents to demonstrate their democratic exemplarity. For its part, the Ministry eventually recognised the relevance of women's presence in the CSIP by appointing three of them between 1892 and 1914. The women demonstrated particular expertise in the education of girls and acted as spokespersons for the interests of female staff, which had previously been little defended. The issue of defending the secular school was also central to the programme of these women, who presented themselves as "irreducible secularists". Strengthened by the aura they acquired as elected representatives, the women members of the CSIP also mobilised to demand equal pay for male and female teachers within the public education system, which was a major feminist and corporatist battle of the Belle Époque.

125 A. Eidenschenk, "CSIP", *L'École nouvelle*, 4 April 1914.

126 As when Paul Appel addressed the question of girls' access to the baccalaureate, minutes of the session of 19 July 1906, F/17/13643.

III- Women intellectuals as standard bearers in the campaign for equal treatment

On 2 March 1912, Alice Havette, a public schoolteacher in the city of Paris and a regular contributor to *L'École nouvelle*, wrote

The question of equal treatment has a wider scope than it seems; it is a step towards raising wages in the female administrative, commercial and industrial professions and towards making them equal to male wages. Our campaign is not selfish, limited to a small sphere; it is the dawn of a women's social movement, the fight against the *sweating-system*¹²⁷.

These lines show that the campaign for equal pay in public education - at the level of male and female teachers, but also in other categories - was, for Alice Havette as for many of her colleagues, part of a corporatist as well as feminist perspective. This struggle, which was a consensus among feminists from the beginning of the century, was led by a few intellectuals who set themselves up as spokespersons for women teachers. This campaign constituted a unifying commitment among women attached to the defence of the secular school and its staff.

In the course of this struggle, equality activists denounced the hypocrisy of an exclusively male political staff that scorned feminist demands. They also criticised the world of associations where men, in the name of the general interest, defended their own interests first. The aim here is to analyse the strategies used by these activists in their fight for equal pay and to study the way in which this struggle enables them to assert themselves as intellectuals, giving them a national audience. Each of them adopted their own argumentative strategies, but all of them were united around the slogan: 'equal pay for equal work'. From this point of view, the regime is caught in the act of contradicting its ideals. These activists therefore present themselves as more republican than the republicans themselves, who are accused of betraying their values by getting bogged down in a guilty procrastination.

Sometimes relaying the demands of women teachers, sometimes catalysing their mobilisation, these intellectuals negotiated directly with the men of power within the intellectual and political elite. Because of the obstacles they faced, most of them diversified the forms of their commitment, joining associations or *eventually joining* the suffragist ranks.

127 Alice Havette, "Equal treatment", *L'École nouvelle*, 2 March 1912.

A) Material situation of women teachers and the emergence of their demands in the feminist ranks (1899-1901)

As early as 1871, Clarisse Coignet declared in the name of the commission in charge of educational issues that "[there] is no reason to establish a difference in remuneration [between male and female teachers], when the guarantees of knowledge, the time and the work required are exactly the same for both sexes¹²⁸. " She also advocated an increase in salaries. However, it was not until the end of the century that this issue re-emerged, first of all in the words of Pauline Kergomard, who, in her column in *La Fronde*, denounced the low pay of female teachers, who were paid less than male teachers. In 1899, she wrote: "Some people think there is a lot to be said for this. I don't; no reason for this inequality holds water. It is both an injustice and an anomaly¹²⁹. " The situation is not new: it is true that, more than men, women teachers suffer from competition from nuns, whose weight in the supply of teaching constitutes a downward pressure on salaries, which Julie Daubié vigorously denounced as early as the middle of the XIX^e century¹³⁰.

With the Goblet law of 1886 and the subsequent law on the civil service in 1889, male and female public schoolteachers received the same salary at the beginning of their careers, but the gap widened thereafter, as shown in the following table from the *Nouveau dictionnaire de pédagogie*¹³¹.

Salaire annuel du personnel des écoles primaires élémentaires et des écoles maternelles (1889)

<u>Classe</u>	<u>Instituteurs</u>	<u>Institutrices</u>
1 ^{ère} classe	2 200 francs	2 000 francs
2 ^{ème} classe	2 000 francs	1 800 francs
3 ^{ème} classe	1 800 francs	1 600 francs
4 ^{ème} classe	1 500 francs	1 400 francs
5 ^{ème} classe	1 200 francs	1 200 francs
Stagiaires	1 100 francs	1 100 francs

With such salaries, primary teachers have only a slight financial advantage over manual workers¹³². Aware that these salaries were indecent, Pauline Kergomard campaigned both for their increase and for their equalisation. She declared in 1899:

"When we are well out of the mess we have just been in, we will *have to* find money to nobly pay the

the noblest of public services¹³³ ". Indeed, the loyalty of teachers in the Affair demonstrated the important role they play in democracy.

It was in this context that Antonin Lavergne published *Jean Coste* in 1901 in the *Cahiers de la quinzaine*. The author describes the miserable daily life of a schoolteacher. Taking advantage of the novel's success, Ferdinand Buisson proposed to collect evidence of the inadequacy of salaries for publication in the *Manuel général de l'instruction primaire*. *The Fronde* supported this initiative, but reoriented

128 Clarisse Coignet, *Report presented on behalf of the Ladies' Commission*, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

129 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 20 May 1899.

130 Anne T. Quartararo, *Women Teachers and Popular Education in Nineteenth-Century France*, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

131 *Nouveau dictionnaire de pédagogie* (1911), article "Treatments", anonymous, available on the IFÉ website.

132 While an agricultural employee earned 3 francs a day, the schoolmaster generally received around 3.33 francs,

Anne T. Quartararo, *Women Teachers and Popular Education in Nineteenth-Century France*, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

133 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 30 September 1899.

the debate on the special situation of female teachers: the discussions obscure the fact that female teachers are not only poorly paid, but also less well paid than their male counterparts. Maria Verona published a letter from a female head teacher, who stated:

La Fronde was certainly the only newspaper that pointed out the harsh egoism of men who systematically forgot about women teachers. All the women teachers who read your newspaper are very grateful to you. [...] The only reason [for the inequality of treatment] is that we are women, and that our masters and lords, the men, always apply the reason of the stronger. [...] Write to Mr Buisson? What is the point? [...] A press campaign alone, in an influential newspaper, can put an end to injustice [...]. I read the *Fronde* assiduously, and I believe that our cause, already supported with vigour and talent, would be sure of success, if you would raise your voice again and *often* in our favour. It is in politics as in pedagogy: one must repeat the same thing very often to make everyone accept it¹³⁴.

In line with its commitments, *La Fronde* relays grievances from below, tirelessly repeating the arguments for equal treatment.

B) Raising teachers' salaries first? The rebels against Émile Devinat's project (1901-1902)

In the immediate future, events gave reason to the scepticism of the reader of *La Fronde*. Émile Devinat, editor-in-chief of *L'École nouvelle* and primary representative on the CSIP, drafted a proposal for an increase in the salaries of primary school teachers that did not include women teachers. Maria Vérone was astonished and asked her colleague to include women teachers¹³⁵. Proof that *La Fronde* was a newspaper that counted, Émile Devinat replied. Far from rejecting her project, he declared that it was necessary to deal with the most pressing problems and to raise the salaries of those who needed it most: while a schoolteacher almost always had a husband who earned his own salary, the teacher could not count on any financial contribution from his wife, hence the urgent need to raise her salary. Maria Verona protests against this web of lies, which conceals the many unmarried women teachers¹³⁶. Émile Devinat did not change his mind and reproached her for her lack of courtesy¹³⁷. In January 1902, however, he gave a headmistress, Mme Boniface, the right to reply in *L'École nouvelle*. She called on the teachers to mobilise against this project:

134 Quoted in Maria Verona, "Enquête sur le budget des instituteurs", *La Fronde*, 18 July 1901.

135 Maria Verona, "Le traitement des instituteurs", *La Fronde*, 15 July 1901.

136 According to Peter Meyers' study in 1898, more than 40% of female public school teachers were single. Quoted by Anne

T. Quartararo, *Women Teachers and Popular Education in Nineteenth-Century France*, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

137 E. Devinat, "Réponse", *L'École nouvelle*, 25 January 1902.

We cannot be so selfless as to be deceitful. [...] As soon as they are appointed to a post, our [male] colleagues enjoy several advantages which we have to do without: town hall secretariats, communal supplements which are always half as high as ours, evening classes which parents pay more willingly for boys than for girls¹³⁸.

Not only were the staff salary scales unequal, but the fringe benefits favoured men. However, Ms Boniface is clear about the possible outcome of the struggle: "What interest would there be in keeping [the women teachers] happy since we don't vote?"

A few months later, Albertine Eidenschenk wrote in *L'École nouvelle* in response to Émile Devinat. She was not yet elected to the CSIP and expressed herself without signing her own name¹³⁹. She protested against the argument that men had more financial needs than women: "I am looking in vain for a man who can inform me about the nature of these particular needs, so legitimate that the law must take them into account¹⁴⁰". After listing the various possible sources of expenditure using the example of her own family budget, Albertine Eidenschenk notes that daily expenses are the same for women as for men: does not everyone have to eat, live, have light and heat? Life even tends to cost women more, especially when it comes to clothing: 'My husband's account [...] is considerably lower than mine, although I don't aim in the least at a reputation for elegance, and I wear my dresses out to the end. For Albertine Eidenschenk, the law does not have to take account of workers' expenses anyway. But like Mme Boniface, she was lucid: "It is easy to make a few miserable savings at the expense of women, who are not voters."

There was another reality that worked against women teachers: the law of supply and demand. At a time when there were fewer and fewer male candidates for the Ecole Normale, Émile Devinat considered it normal to raise their salaries, without this being necessary for women, who were already outnumbered. Albertine Eidenschenk found the argument particularly petty:

Because there are few careers open to women, and because to earn a living they are obliged to go into teaching en masse, the state of economic inferiority in which society places them will be used *against them*? They will be demanded as many titles and services as men, but they will be bought at the lowest possible price? The State will set an example to employers who exploit misery for their own profit¹⁴¹ ?

138 V. Boniface, "La cause des institutrices", *L'École nouvelle*, 25 January 1902.

139 We found this text because a year later Albertine Eidenschenk declared that she was the author. See "Circular from Mrs Eidenschenk", *L'École nouvelle*, 6 June 1903.

140 A headmistress [Albertine Eidenschenk], "La parole aux institutrices", *L'École nouvelle*, 12 April 1902.

141 A headmistress [Albertine Eidenschenk], "La parole aux institutrices", *L'École nouvelle*, 12 April 1902.

Albertine Eidenschenk regularly emphasises the role of the state in setting an example with regard to women's wages, the low level of which plays an important role in the social question. This debate was not confined to the press. In June 1901, the departmental council of Hérault issued a vow concerning equal pay¹⁴². A few months later, in August 1901, the Congrès des amicales meeting in Bordeaux voted in favour of equality¹⁴³. A year later, the Ligue de l'enseignement declared itself in favour at its national congress in Lyon. The controversy between Maria Vérone and Émile Devinat dating from the winter of 1901-1902 was replayed "live" in the summer of 1902. While Émile Devinat expressed a wish to raise teachers' salaries, Maria Vérone asked to speak and pleaded the cause of women teachers¹⁴⁴. Pauline Kergomard followed suit. As is often the case, her speech is based on a story. It was about moving people by describing concrete situations that she knew very well as an inspector:

"Think of] the teacher who is sent to a village to take the place of the nun, and who anxiously wonders at every moment whether her house is not going to be set on fire. Is she not entitled to the same remuneration as her male colleague, who is treated less badly because he is felt to be stronger and better protected¹⁴⁵ ? " Pauline Kergomard reminds us that the secularisation of education is as much to the credit of women teachers as of men.

After having congratulated the secular teachers at the opening of the discussions, the Ligue's congress found itself at fault: on pain of disavowing itself, it was obliged to support Pauline Kergomard's and Maria Vérone's wish to unify salaries, a wish supported in particular by Edouard Petit, Gustave Téry and Victor Augagneur. Ferdinand Buisson, who was then President of the Ligue, undertook to take this demand to the parliamentary group for education to encourage it to present a bill. Maria Vérone won the first round of her conflict with Émile Devinat.

C) "A wind of rebellion": intellectuals organise a petition (1902)

As the question of equal treatment arose in departmental councils, in the amicales and in the Ligue de l'enseignement, activists mobilised to organise a national petition. Maria Vérone, in *La Fronde*, centralised the opinions relating to its organisation. The movement started with the Seine-et-Oise association, where the representatives of the women teachers, led by Mme Boniface, were ready to separate from their male counterparts to demand equal treatment. The president, Henri Murgier, declared ironically that "a small wind of revolt blew in Seine-et-Oise¹⁴⁶ "when he realised that the female teachers in his department wanted to join "the undisciplined battalion of the amiable female rebels".

142 Anonymous, "L'égalité de traitement des institutrices et des instituteurs", *La Fronde*, 29 June 1901.

143 Maria Verona, "L'affranchissement de l'enseignement primaire", *La Fronde*, 22 August 1901.

144 See Odette Laguerre, "Congrès de la Ligue française de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 29 September 1902.

145 Quoted in Maria Verona, "Le péril primaire", *La Fronde*, 7 October 1902.

146 Quoted in Maria Verona, "En pleine lutte", *La Fronde*, 21 April 1902.

A few months later, the latter finally rallied to the demands of the teachers. According to Maria Vérone, the campaign in *La Fronde* played an important role in this change of heart. Sensing that the tide was turning, Henri Murgier launched a series of articles in the *Revue de l'enseignement primaire* in 1902 in favour of the "sacrificed". He even agreed to collaborate with Mme Boniface in organising the petition. The petition was addressed to Maria Vérone:

Would you, who know how to say things so well, urge women teachers to sign this petition? It is not only because they do not have the ballot paper that women get nothing [...], it is also because they keep silent [...]. Men revolt, shout, demand when they are exploited; women bow their heads and cry without saying anything. Come on! The time for resignation is over¹⁴⁷.

Maria Verona was quick to support the initiative and published various opinions on the strategy to adopt. Jeanne Déghilage, a member of the Nord departmental council, considered the petition to be premature and unorganised¹⁴⁸. She proposed the creation of a centralising committee in charge of receiving the petitions and encouraged Mme Boniface to go to the meeting of the amicales of France which was to be held a month later. According to her, it is only in such a framework that effective means of action can be mobilised. Jeanne Déghilage concluded:

"Do you think, Madame, that a petition encouraged and helped by all the departmental councils of France will not succeed more surely than that launched by an isolated schoolteacher, even if helped by the powerful female organ that is the *Fronde*?"

It was then Marguerite Bodin who called on Maria Verona¹⁴⁹. She applauded Mme Boniface's initiative and proposed to use the contacts she had through the Society for Peaceful Education to support the petition effectively. She also promised the support of the Amicale and of the departmental council of Yonne, where she works. As for the mechanism of the petition, she proposed that in each department, the primary school teachers should sign the petition separately: the former would send it to Mme Boniface, the latter to M. Murgier. The latter, representing the teachers respectively, would then take the petition to the deputies. Marguerite Bodin wanted the petition to appear as

It is "the work of all the workers in the teaching profession", without excluding men.

Jeanne Déghilage wrote again to *La Fronde*, this time to oppose Marguerite Bodin's proposal. She considered that women teachers should organise themselves: "They [would] give their fellow teachers the spectacle of beings who, although women, know what they want and where they are going¹⁵⁰". For her, the petition should therefore come from women teachers alone and then be carried by a representative committee appointed by the Congress of Friends.

147 Quoted in Maria Verona, "Persévérance féminine", *La Fronde*, 22 March 1902.

148 Quoted in Maria Verona, "Le pétitionnement des institutrices", *La Fronde*, 28 March 1902.

149 Quoted in Maria Verona, "En pleine lutte", *La Fronde*, 21 April 1902.

150 Quoted in Maria Verona, "Le pétitionnement des institutrices", *La Fronde*, 25 April 1902.

The petition begins to circulate without the modalities of its transmission to the deputies having been decided. In some departments, demands were added. For example, Albertine Eidenschenk, who was responsible for circulating the text in Savoie as she was head of the Chambéry teacher training college, changed one paragraph so that female teachers in teacher training colleges would also benefit from equality. In the name of *La Fronde*, Maria Vérone contacted the woman concerned, who declared

It is regrettable that the promoters of the movement did not think of putting an end, once and for all, to the distinctions between the various categories of female primary civil servants. When one demands justice, one must demand it for all, and not appear to accommodate the injustice that others continue to suffer. This elevates the debate by linking it to a principle¹⁵¹.

True to her argumentative strategy, Albertine Eidenschenk focused on the principles that should apply in the Republic. However, if the initiators of the petition initially focused their efforts on women teachers, it was because they were taking advantage of the parliamentary agenda, since in 1901 the deputies began debating an increase in teachers' salaries.

D) Looking to Parliament: Women Intellectuals Denounce the Male Political Game (1901-1903)

Indeed, from autumn 1901 onwards, the Chamber considered the situation of primary school teachers. *La Fronde* sent Renée Rambaud to question the rapporteur of the budget for public education, Maurice Faure, who confessed that his plan to increase salaries did not include women teachers. He explained that it was necessary to ask for little from parliament to obtain something. Renée Rambaud was not fooled: "The teachers must come before the women teachers - oh French gallantry! - the former cannot wait... they are voters; the latter are accustomed to exercising the gentle virtue of patience, they will wait..., they do not vote¹⁵². " While pointing out the electoral approach of the deputies, Renée Rambaud was satisfied that the low salary of women teachers was denounced during the session: "Everyone agrees; the cause of women teachers therefore seems to have already been won¹⁵³ ". But the discussions of the winter of 1901-1902 did not result in any improvement for the women teachers. The debates resumed in July 1902, still under the leadership of Maurice Faure. This time, he undertook to defend absolute equality of treatment¹⁵⁴.

But after a first disappointment in 1901, women teachers experienced a new disillusionment in 1902. A bill presented to the Chamber of Deputies proposed to increase teachers' salaries by withdrawing 100 francs from women teachers in the middle and at the end of their careers. Maria Vérone received

151 Quoted in Maria Verona, "Le personnel des écoles normales", *La Fronde*, 20 August 1902.

152 Renée Rambaud, "Les institutrices et le budget", *La Fronde*, 9 October 1901.

153 Renée Rambaud, "Le traitement des institutrices", *La Fronde*, 18 February 1902.

154 Renée Rambaud, "Pour les instituteurs et les institutrices", *La Fronde*, 12 July 1902.

the letter from a teacher: "Defend us quickly. [...] How can you take the money needed to increase the number of teachers out of the teachers' pockets, that would never have happened! I know that equality is promised to us in five years' time. [...] Will this gentleman be here in five years to keep his promise¹⁵⁵ ? " Like this teacher, the rebels unanimously condemned this injustice and were suspicious of the promises made by the MPs.

Although she was not yet a contributor to *La Fronde* at the beginning of the treatment controversy, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello entered the battle in 1903. She did so much more vehemently than Maria Vérone, Renée Rambaud and Pauline Kergomard, who had preceded her. Her strategy was to point out the hypocrisy of the men in power, who had always promised teachers a raise. However, "the years passed, and like Sister Anne, the teachers saw nothing coming. [...] They have been promised so much for twenty years! They have been fooled so much¹⁵⁶ ! " As usual, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello uses prosopopoeia to make her readers hear the true intention of politicians, hidden behind their official speeches:

There are too many teachers, and any increase in their salaries would put a strain on the budget. We promised them this increase last year, but couldn't we try to make them wait again? What will they do? Nothing; they do not have the right to strike, and then we will tell them very loudly that their protests would compromise the prestige of the Republic.

Although she was the director of a secondary school, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello supported the primary school. She trusted deputy Chaumet to defend the staff in Parliament, since he endorsed the project of the amicales initiated by Mme Boniface's petition. She urges him to tell his colleagues that "*without the teachers* (and even, although they do not suspect it, without the teachers) *many of them would not be in the place they occupy*, and that, among human vices, there is a particularly shameful one, which is ingratitude¹⁵⁷ ". She also addresses the teachers and calls them to action: "I fear that this conduct of well-behaved children will be very poorly rewarded by our legislators.

Following Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's article, Renée Rambaud will question the deputy Chaumet in parliament¹⁵⁸. The latter explained to her that the amicale project had no chance of success because of the cost involved. In the end, the teachers' salary was never mentioned in the session. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was indignant: "Ladies teachers, [I am] going to inform you of the comedy that was played out at the Palais-Bourbon [...]. You must know [...] how you are being fooled, and the sophisms with which [...] the deputies are paying themselves

155 Quoted in Maria Verona, "L'année pédagogique", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} January 1903.

156 Paule Branzac, "Le traitement des instituteurs et des institutrices", *La Fronde*, 18 January 1903.

157 Paule Branzac, "Le traitement des instituteurs et des institutrices", *La Fronde*, 25 January 1903.

158 Renée Rambaud, "Les institutrices devant le Parlement", *La Fronde*, 18 February 1903.

to justify their conduct.¹⁵⁹ " Although deeply attached to the Republic, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was so revolted by the exclusion of women from political life that several of her texts flirted with anti-parliamentarianism. The headmistress of the Lyons high school attacked the hypocrisy and incompetence of the deputies. Thus, unlike most of her colleagues in *La Fronde*, when she discusses equal pay, she does not confine herself to a discussion of principles: she demonstrates the inaccuracy of the deputy Chaumet when he states that there should be a budget of 100 million to satisfy the amicales' proposal for increased and standardised salaries. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello made her own calculations and declared that even an increase of 500 francs offered to all beginners in primary education - a much more ambitious proposal than the amicales' project - would only represent a cost of 60 million for the State out of a total budget of 4 billion, "unless the arithmetic was no longer the same for men as for women". Her diatribe has a socialist ring to it:

"They have no money to improve the lot of teachers of popular education; [...] to found workers' retreats; [...] to create lay orphanages which would save so many unfortunate children from Congregational exploitation." But, according to her, there is still money for the army generals and the archbishops. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello called for the 45 million euros set aside for religious services to be reallocated to public education: "It's too expensive for the *Oremus*". Four months later, she encouraged teachers to shout to the deputies:

Do you need a fuss? Well, let's go. Let's go. We're going on strike, so ask the priests, the monks and the nuns to bring up the children and win them over to the Republican cause. Here are people who have turned their backs on you for thirty years, who fight you to the death, [...] and you don't dare to tell them: "Get paid by the Pope or by the Princes whose praises you sing"; you don't dare to take 50 million from these parasites to give it to those who have been serving the Republic with courage and self-sacrifice for the last thirty years¹⁶⁰ !

In this diatribe, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello combines the defence of the secularity of the school with the defence of its staff. She is the only rebel to conclude her texts with such incitements to revolt: no call for teachers to strike appears under other pens in *La Fronde*.

E) Cross-category solidarity for equal treatment? The action of Albertine Eidenschenk and Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben (1906-1910).

In 1904 and 1905, *La Fronde* only appeared monthly before ceasing publication. In these conditions, it could no longer play a role in the campaign for equality of the sexes.

¹⁵⁹ Paule Branzac, "To the teachers", *La Fronde*, 25 February 1903.

¹⁶⁰ Paule Branzac, "Que peuvent espérer les Instituteurs et les Institutrices?", *La Fronde*, 4 June 1903.

It is not the same as the role it had previously played. Her disappearance was partly compensated for by the importance that educational journals gradually gave to the issue, as well as by the growth of feminist groups within the associations. In addition, Albertine Eidenschenk was elected to the CSIP in 1904. In 1902, female principals and teachers of teacher training colleges formed their own women's association, but four years later Albertine Eidenschenk told them that they were on the wrong track and that they should take over the associations:

The inequality of salaries, my lady teachers [of the normal school] are wrong to believe that their isolated action will succeed in destroying it. There are too many prejudices [...] against us to hope that the action of a small group of women will defeat them: [we] will only obtain satisfaction [...] if *all the chapters* resolutely undertake a common action [...]. But in the chapters, women do not take the first place; they are too willing to take a back seat, and that is why we will wait a long time before the legal injustices of which we are victims disappear¹⁶¹.

In February 1907, Albertine Eidenschenk was granted a hearing at her request by the Extraparliamentary Commission for the Coordination of Salaries, which had been set up the previous year. She appeared as the representative of all female civil servants in primary education: the fact that she was elected to the CSIP gave her a direct dialogue with the political authorities. Before the commission, Albertine Eidenschenk first wondered why women teachers were paid less than men: "The only real reason is that women are not voters [...] therefore, there is no need to fear the political repercussions of their discontent¹⁶². " To close the wage gap, Albertine Eidenschenk called for a "system of small packages" to spread the budgetary efforts needed to unify wages over three years. Her statement caused a stir, including in the general press¹⁶³.

While Albertine Eidenschenk led the mobilisation of primary school staff, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben had difficulty doing the same for secondary school staff. However, as early as the 1900 Congress of Women's Works and Institutions, one congresswoman demanded that female high school teachers be treated in the same way as their male counterparts¹⁶⁴. But female secondary school teachers struggled to mobilise in the years that followed. It must be said that compared to their primary school colleagues, female secondary school teachers appeared to be privileged, earning three times what female school teachers did at the beginning of their careers.

161 A. Eidenschenk, "Réponse à Mesdames les professeurs internes à l'École normale de Grenoble", *L'École nouvelle*, 21 July 1906.

162 A. Eidenschenk, "Equalisation of female treatments to male treatments", *L'École nouvelle*, 6 April 1907.
This is a copy of Albertine Eidenschenk's statement to the commission.

163 See for example *Le Rappel* of 15 June 1908 ("Les répétitrices") which speaks of her "sensational deposition".

164 Speech by Mrs Bézobrazow, session of 22 June 1900, *Second International Congress of Women's Works and Institutions*, *op. cit.*

Before Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben took up the subject in her monthly column in the *Revue universitaire*, the question was almost never addressed. Only two articles appeared on the subject in Camille Sée's journal. One, published at the time of the Extraparliamentary Commission, stated, with regard to the standardisation of salaries, that female high school teachers "do not demand this equality, or rather this identification; and they are right to do so; [...] all they ask is to keep their place, their rank, to remain themselves¹⁶⁵". The other, probably written by Marguerite Aron, is all about confusion: "To want, in a word, assimilation between male and female staff, is *not to* want their equality¹⁶⁶". None of the texts in *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles* clearly calls for equal pay for men and women.

Despite their reservations, female high school teachers benefited from the government's promises made in 1906. Thus, in 1910, female agrégées were granted the same right to an agrégation allowance as male teachers. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben wrote ironically: "Should we admire the generosity of the Commission more, or the discretion of the staff¹⁶⁷?" She notes that the administration is more ambitious than the staff itself. For example, the President of the Republic Fallières campaigned to reform the status of female teachers:

The condition of women teachers has been regulated by commissions of enlightened and, it seems to me, impartial men. Now it seemed natural to them, firstly, to demand more hours of service from weak women than is required of men; secondly, to give them, for harder work, a lower salary. [...] It is well known that women work at any price and live on little¹⁶⁸.

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben fully endorsed Mr Fallières' interpretation. For her part, she was disappointed by her colleagues' lack of fighting spirit and called for the status of female teachers to be fully assimilated with that of male staff¹⁶⁹.

F) Investing in associations: intellectual women and the University Feminist Federation (1907-1914)

Just as the Extraparliamentary Commission for the Coordination of Treatment was being formed, Marie Guérin founded the University Feminist Federation in 1907. Since 1903, this teacher from Meurthe-et-Moselle had been calling on her colleagues to meet in small feminist groups. According to the analysis of the historian Max Ferré, her calls led to the mobilisation of several women teachers, who, at the Congress of the federation of associations in Clermont-Ferrand in 1907,

165 X., "La question du relèvement des traitements du personnel secondaire féminin", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, December 1906 and January 1907.

166 M. A., "L'égalité des traitements dans l'enseignement secondaire", *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, May 1907.

167 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJF", *Revue universitaire*, December 1909.

168 M. Fallières quoted by Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJF", *Revue universitaire*, October 1910.
169 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJF", *Revue universitaire*, October 1911.

decided to hold a special meeting on the fringes of the joint assemblies. Marguerite Bodin took the lead in defending equal treatment¹⁷⁰. It was following this congress that the Fédération féministe universitaire (FFU) was officially founded. Marie Guérin associated the journal *L'Action féministe* with it a year later. Feminist groups then multiplied locally, sometimes encountering resistance within the associations: "the 'Moustaches' opposed their constitution as much as possible and mocked the women activists¹⁷¹". In spite of everything, according to Christine Bard, in 1909 the FFU was made up of 30 groups which "constituted a force with which the nascent teacher unionism had to reckon¹⁷²". The amicales born around 1900 remained generally distrustful, but the Fédération des syndicats d'instituteurs supported the feminists and defended the principle of equal pay¹⁷³. According to Anne-Sarah Bouglé-Moalic, the FFU had 5,000 members on the eve of the Great War, a real success considering the isolation in which women teachers lived and their subordinate position vis-à-vis the administration¹⁷⁴.

In addition to Marie Guérin and Marguerite Bodin, the FFU welcomed into its ranks a host of young socialist, feminist and pacifist activists such as Marthe Bigot, Hélène Brion, Marcelle Brunet, Noélie Drous, Marie Guillot, Jeanne Méo, Venise Pellat-Finet and Marthe Pichorel¹⁷⁵. She can also count on the support of Albertine Eidenschenk. It was she who led a delegation from the association at a meeting with the Minister of Public Education in March 1909 to obtain equal pay. Albertine Eidenschenk refused to repeat the plea she had made two years earlier to the Commission for the Coordination of Salaries¹⁷⁶. She simply stated that it was time for the representatives of the Republic to apply the motto of the regime by imposing equal pay, at least in the civil service. Once again, Albertine Eidenschenk was listened to sympathetically, but Gaston Doumergue replied that the state of the budget did not allow for the government to move as quickly as it would like. However, he promised that the FFU's wish would be implemented in 1910. Suspicious of these promises, Albertine Eidenschenk urged the readership of *L'École nouvelle* to sign the new petition that was being circulated in order to put pressure on Parliament.

The battle is being waged at national level, but also at local level. Women teachers were in fact electors and eligible for the departmental councils. They took advantage of the elections held in December 1907 and January 1908 to carry out extensive propaganda in favour of equal pay. FFU members sought to win their cause at all costs, even if it meant disrupting the elections, for example by withdrawing support from or running against secular school candidates who did not support equal pay. In 1910, Marie Guérin wrote in *L'École nouvelle* to dissuade FFU members from reproducing this

170 Max Ferré, *Histoire du mouvement syndicaliste révolutionnaire chez les instituteurs*, *op. cit.*

171 *Ibid.*

172 Christine Bard, *Les filles de Marianne*, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

173 *Ibid.*

174 Anne-Sarah Bouglé-Moalic, *Le vote des Françaises: cent ans de débats*, *op. cit.*

175 Christine Bard, *Les filles de Marianne*, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

176 Mme Eidenschenk, "Federation of University Feminist Groups", *L'École nouvelle*, 22 May 1909.

Experience has taught us that obstruction benefits mainly the undignified upstarts from the ranks of our opponents.¹⁷⁷ " In the context of the Second Textbook War (1909-1911), Marie Guérin considered that a feminist demonstration during the departmental council elections would be dangerous. Instead, she asked the feminists to agree with the Amicales on candidates who would commit to supporting their demands. This episode reveals the uncomfortable situation of feminists: as the first supporters of the secular school, they are keen to defend the institution in a hostile context. This obliges them to rally behind Republican candidates, even when the latter do not relay their demand for equal treatment. In short, when the public school is in danger, its fate comes before that of the teachers.

In the context of a surge of feminist groups in the primary staff's own discussion spaces¹⁷⁸ The Chamber of Deputies seemed to give strong signals to women teachers. On 25 January 1910, Ferdinand Buisson presented a resolution to guarantee equal pay in the next budget. Five months later, the young Republican deputy Louis Marin tabled a bill to ratify Buisson's resolution. Despite the opposition of Gaston Doumergue - who had received Albertine Eidenschenk a year earlier - the House supported the bill. At the request of 200 deputies, the government promised equality for 1911.

Pauline Rebour is delighted with this in *L'École nouvelle*¹⁷⁹. A long-time activist in the feminist ranks, she founded the Société féministe du Havre with her husband at the turn of 1907 and 1908, and affiliated it to the FFU [*biographical note 9, p. 627*]. From 1910 onwards, she wrote the "Propos féministes" in *L'École nouvelle*. After Albertine Eidenschenk, she became a reference point for primary school teachers in this journal, who sent her letters to make their wishes known¹⁸⁰. As an amicalist, Pauline Rebour could defend causes common to all primary school staff, but her collaboration with *L'École nouvelle* was in the name of feminism: "Here I speak as a member of the Primary Feminist Federation¹⁸¹ which, wisely, only wanted the question of equal treatment on its current programme. [...] Questions that directly concern women and only women are on its programme.

In August 1910, Pauline Rebour encouraged the readers of *L'École nouvelle* to make representations to parliamentarians. Like most of her colleagues - and unlike Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello with her calls for rebellion - Pauline Rebour asked the teachers

177 Marie Guérin, "Tactique électorale", *L'École nouvelle*, 17 December 1910.

178 Marie Guérin, "Vers les succès", *L'École nouvelle*, 21 May 1910.

179 Pauline Rebour, "Propos féministes - Le principe de l'égalité de traitement est admis à la Chambre des députés", *L'École nouvelle*, 26 February 1910.

180 Pauline Rebour, "Propos féministes", *L'École nouvelle*, 20 May 1911.

181 The Primary Feminist Federation is a sub-group of the FFU. It was founded in 1909 by Marie Guérin. Its sole aim is equal treatment. The FFU deals with all issues relating to women in the academic world. See Miss Marie Guérin, "Fédération féministe primaire de France et des colonies", *L'École nouvelle*, 6 November 1909.

to ensure that they appear respectable in the eyes of the elected representatives: "Let's show that we are wise and that we accept the reform by annuities, but that [...] we will not get tired¹⁸²".

In the meantime, the bill tabled in 1910 by Louis Marin was studied by the House Education Committee, which called on the collaboration of several staff representatives¹⁸³. M. Roussel, president of the Fédération des amicales d'instituteurs et d'institutrices, Jeanne Déghilage, who was its vice-president, and also feminists from the FFU, such as Marthe Pichorel, representing primary school staff, and Pauline Rebour, representing higher primary school teachers, were called upon.¹⁸⁴ The commission submitted its report on Louis Marin's bill in 1912: the Chamber was once again asked to consider the salaries of women teachers. The years leading up to the Great War became a time of tension between equality activists and representatives of the teachers.

G) Alice Havette and Pauline Rebour facing the teachers' representatives: the impossible common front (1910-1914)

Although the women managed to unite and obtain some stage victories, they faced increasing attacks from the teachers' representatives. Alice Havette analyses, for example, the statement of a unionised teacher, whose name she does not mention, that if women teachers obtain the same salaries as men teachers, the latter will definitively desert the teaching profession¹⁸⁵. The speech of this unionist was far from isolated. During 1911-12, a controversy arose between Alice Havette, writing in *L'École nouvelle*, and an editor of *L'École émancipée*, an organ of the teachers' union¹⁸⁶. The latter considered that the schoolteacher did not need to benefit from a high salary: "Her salary only comes [...] as a supplement, the husband having to provide for his wife himself¹⁸⁷" "The arguments have not changed since 1901. Alice Havette demonstrates that the schoolteacher rarely marries a rich man and that her salary is therefore never a superfluous supplement. She also adds that although Article 214 of the Civil Code obliges the husband to provide financially for the family's needs,

"What was true in 1808 is no longer true in 1911. His rival from *L'École émancipée* did not give in¹⁸⁸.

In June 1912, it was Pauline Rebour who took over to denounce an article published this time in the pages of *L'École nouvelle* by a primary school inspector under the title "L'injuste égalité¹⁸⁹". The writer struggles with this oxymoron to demonstrate that the inequality of salaries is fair, as primary school teachers fulfil more missions than female teachers and carry out "an action

182 Pauline Rebour, "Propos féministes", *L'École nouvelle*, 20 August 1910.

183 See Pauline Rebour, "L'égalité de traitement", *L'École nouvelle*, 20 April 1912.

184 See Alice Havette, "Égalité de traitement", *L'École nouvelle*, 2 March 1912.

185 Alice Havette, "Equal treatment", *L'École nouvelle*, 30 September 1911.

186 Thierry Flamant, *L'École émancipée, une contre-culture de la Belle Époque*, Treignac, éd. les Monédières, 1982.

187 Quoted in Alice Havette, "Equal treatment", *L'École nouvelle*, 21 October 1911.

188 Alice Havette, "Equal treatment", *L'École nouvelle*, 10 February 1912.

189 A. Lyonnet, "L'injuste égalité", *L'École nouvelle*, 8 June 1912.

The teacher's 'total action' is more decisive. Pauline Rebour laments that this 'total action' of which the teacher is capable is explained by the fact that he is a full citizen and can therefore play a political role at the commune level, which confirms 'that [the] political non-value [of women] [is] the cause of [their] economic inferiority¹⁹⁰'. Pauline Rebour, an executive of the French Union for Women's Suffrage, remained convinced that as long as women did not have active citizenship, they would not be considered. Her objections to the primary inspector's arguments were not enough. An editor writing under the pseudonym Jacques Bonhomme even defended his colleague in *L'École nouvelle*. Pauline Rebour wondered: "Is it because we are being promised success from all sides that people are trying to discredit our cause? And should we, so close to our goal, meet adversaries where we hoped to find defenders and friends?"

Pauline Rebour, however, overcame the pugnacity of Jacques Bonhomme. When in 1913, for the umpteenth time since the 1906 Parliamentary Commission, the Chamber postponed the achievement of equal pay, Jacques Bonhomme was forced to face the facts:

"Would Mrs Rebour be right? Would we think above all of pleasing those who are voters¹⁹¹ ? " Jacques Bonhomme finally recognised the relevance of the arguments put forward first by Albertine Eidenschenk and then by Alice Havette and Pauline Rebour. Distrustful of a potential female rebellion, he nevertheless advised the women teachers to make their demands and those of the teachers "into a block so compact that nothing could break it up".

Pauline Rebour was not fooled by this discourse. She recalls that the teachers, for their part, have never sought to defend the interests of women teachers: "our colleagues have long been in the habit of [...] only presenting grievances *of general interest* - read: of mainly male interest¹⁹² ! " In her opinion, if things are changing, it is less thanks to the spirit of fairness of the teachers than because women have mobilised and got themselves elected to the *Fédération des amicales*. Pauline Rebour therefore warned women teachers against the temptation to combine their demands with those of their male counterparts, and against any initiative that could burden the budget of public education, and thus hinder the unification of salaries: "If, therefore, my dear colleagues, someone, in a friendly meeting, [...] proposes to ask for a general increase in salaries, do not be deceived¹⁹³ ". Pauline Rebour insisted on the possible contradictions between the demands of primary school teachers and those of women teachers.

Convinced that the fight for equality could only be won if women became voters, Pauline Rebour transformed her "Propos féministes" into a suffragist platform. Like Maria Vérone, Albertine Eidenschenk and Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, she explained the failures of women teachers by the fact that they did not have full citizenship. In 1913, equal pay was still being postponed in the Chamber, despite 315 pledges from MPs,

190 Pauline Rebour, "La très juste égalité", *L'École nouvelle*, 29 June 1912.

191 Quoted by Pauline Rebour, "Propos féministes", *L'École nouvelle*, 2 August 1912.

192 Pauline Rebour, "Propos féministes", *L'École nouvelle*, 2 August 1913.

193 Pauline Rebour, "Propos féministes", *L'École nouvelle*, 23 March 1912.

Pauline Rebour writes: "What happened? It is, alas! A secret for no one. [...] The MPs are the representatives of the voters. They are responsible to them."¹⁹⁴ "

Female primary and secondary school teachers finally obtained unified salaries in 1919 and 1927 respectively.¹⁹⁵ This was not without opposition from the representatives of the male staff. This hostility, visible from the Belle Époque onwards, can be interpreted as a male defensive reaction to the feminisation of a profession, which symbolically devalued itself, especially when women were paid the same as men¹⁹⁶.

The long campaign for equal pay was an opportunity for women intellectuals to defend women's interests in direct confrontation with men: even if some intellectuals supported them, it was men who attacked their campaign in the press, who sat in Parliament and who headed the associations. Faced with the hostility that their campaign provoked, several women therefore called on their colleagues to unite beyond categorical interests, in the name of a female condition marked by the common experience of injustice. It was in this context that the FFU was founded in 1913, with representatives of women teachers, but also of female staff in higher primary schools, teacher training colleges and lycées¹⁹⁷.

In the course of this struggle, several intellectuals asserted themselves as standard-bearers for the interests of female staff. This was the case for Pauline Kergomard, Albertine Eidenschenk, Maria Vérone and Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben. This campaign also saw the emergence of other very active figures, but of lesser importance. This was the case of Marie Guérin, Alice Havette and Pauline Rebour. The debates on the question of treatment revealed to these activists the extent to which women's interests diverged from men's, even within the same corporation, which in theory shared common values. This was confirmed in other battles waged on behalf of women civil servants in public education.

IV- A critical look at the administration of public education: the defence of women civil servants by intellectuals

Other battles than the campaign for equal pay were fought in the Belle Époque for the right of female civil servants to be treated on an equal footing with their male counterparts. Women teachers' spokespersons used their expertise in public education to promote reforms. Halfway between the desire to improve the training of primary school staff and the desire to ease the daily lives of female pupils, several female intellectuals took up the cause of reform.

194 Pauline Rebour, "Propos féministes. Après la défaite", *L'École nouvelle*, 29 March 1913.

195 The agrégées win equal treatment through a boycott of the baccalauréat.

196 Marlaine Cacouault-Bitaud discusses this issue in "Is the feminisation of a profession a sign of a decline in prestige?", *Travail, genre et société*, 2001/1, n°5, p. 91-115.

197 Pauline Rebour, "Congrès universitaire de Bordeaux", *L'École nouvelle*, 6 September 1913.

They first of all spoke out in favour of a reform of the girls' teacher training colleges. They then attacked the status of teachers and headmistresses of teacher training colleges, who were considered to be civil servants who were "to be worked at mercy"¹⁹⁸. The weight of celibacy in their ranks as well as in those of the female secondary staff allowed the administration to treat these women as civil servants entirely at the disposal of public education, whose entire life had to be subordinated to a professional task presented as a quasi-religious vocation.

The intellectuals who defend them highlight the mechanisms that affect women civil servants in their daily lives - such as overwork - but also in their career prospects. For example, female candidates for the inspectorate face formidable opposition from the inspectorate: female ambition is decried when it translates into competition with men¹⁹⁹. But, as Juliette Rennes reminds us, "the professions with diplomas may well constitute unformulated mechanisms for structuring male identity, but they are also deemed to be governed by a principle of non-discrimination in terms of access, admission and promotion"²⁰⁰. On the basis of this principle, the female staff representatives argue that women have a legitimate claim to these positions in a system that prides itself on excluding all forms of arbitrariness and on being based on the rule of law.

The aim is therefore to show how a few female intellectuals, who acquire a privileged status in the eyes of the female staff for whom they become spokespersons, exploit their empirical knowledge of public education to promote reforms aimed at women in order to remedy the structural discrimination against them in the institution.

A) Pupils trapped in monastic habits: reforming the normal school system

Selected by competitive examination to enter the Ecole Normale, future teachers signed a ten-year contract of commitment to the State when they were accepted: this was the beginning of their career as civil servants.²⁰¹ In the teacher training colleges, their upkeep was paid for by the state. However, for a long time, these schools resembled secular convents where young girls, more than their male counterparts, were subject to a very strict disciplinary regime. While the boys were free to come and go, the girls were constantly under surveillance. Aware that these institutions, which were meant to train free beings, were too restrictive to achieve their objective, several intellectuals called for a reform of the normal schools.

198 A. Eidenschenk, "La surveillance dans les Écoles normales", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1907.

199 Linda L. Clark has already worked on this issue. The aim here is to complement her work by adopting an entry point through the debate of ideas and through the figures of female intellectuals. See "A Battle of the Sexes in a Professional Setting: The Introduction of *Inspectrices primaires*, 1889-1914", *French Historical Studies*, Spring 1989, n°16, p. 96-125.

200 Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature*, op. cit. p. 34.

201 See Gilles Laprèvote, *Les écoles normales primaires en France : 1879-1979 : splendeurs et misères de la formation des maîtres*, Lyon, Presses universitaires de Lyon, 2019 [1984], dematerialised resource.

From the end of the 1880s, Pauline Kergomard took up the criticism of the boarding school, which was widespread in the 19th century²⁰². She considered that normaliennes should be in contact with life, and not evolve in a cloistered environment: "Our boarding system is in flagrant contradiction with the liberalism [...] of our teaching; it will abort our efforts if we are not careful. [...] Liberal in our aspirations and our studies, we have not been able to rid ourselves of monastic habits²⁰³. " Thus, according to her, even if the Republican government took the lead in the feminist movement by creating a normal school for girls in each department and thus recognising the intellectual equality of both sexes in relation to the school²⁰⁴ However, it became entangled in imitating the Catholic model that preceded it, subjecting women to "the clerical spirit, [which] follows and pursues them²⁰⁵ "and which convinced them that "the virtues of the educator are inseparable from cloistering". Far from being the breeding ground for independent women that Pauline Kergomard wanted them to be, girls' normal schools were secular convents.

Similarly, Albertine Eidenschenk advocated greater freedom for student teachers, refusing to turn teacher training colleges into "convents closed to the world²⁰⁶ ". She campaigned for "the normal school of today [to be] no longer that of 1850". She acted accordingly as headmistress by softening discipline in the various schools she ran and by making trust the basis of her relationship with her pupils²⁰⁷. The same applied to Marie Baertschi, whose closeness to her pupils displeased the administration²⁰⁸.

B) Overwork at the teacher training college: "an inhumane regime

But the criticism of the girls' teacher training colleges was not limited to their illiberal disciplinary regime. Marie Baertschi noted that young female teachers left the normal schools totally unprepared professionally, which condemned them to failure. In a report she read to the Congress of Women's Works and Institutions on 22 June 1900, she declared: "when [a beginner] finds herself in front of a class where there is something else to do than to give lessons, she is lost²⁰⁹ ". In her view, the Ecole Normale concentrated too much on theoretical learning but did not allow them to acquire the skills that constituted the technique of the trade. The girls' zeal was not enough to place them in a position to succeed: "There is not even devotion that I do not trust [...]. I have seen so many of these beautiful

202 See Philippe Savoie, *La construction de l'enseignement secondaire (1802-1914). Aux origines d'un service public*, Lyon, ENS Éditions, 2013, 501 p.

203 Pauline Kergomard, "Études sur les questions forment le programme du congrès international de 1889 - Les femmes dans l'enseignement primaire", *Revue pédagogique*, May 1889 (Primary Education Congress)

204 Pauline Kergomard, "Through education, today", *La Fronde*, 11 December 1897.

205 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 1^{er} July 1899.

206 A. E., "Les écoles normales et le projet de M. Massé", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1906.

207 See in particular his file, 2 T 265, Archives départementales du Nord.

208 See his career file, F/17/23692.

209 Report by Marie Baertschi, session of 22 June, *Second International Congress of Women's Works and Institutions*, *op. cit.*, pp. 235-238.

ardour [...]. I do not blame these young people [...] whom the 'sacred fire' is abandoning [...]. I blame only those who threw them unprepared into the terrible difficulties to which they succumbed.

Marie Baertschi spoke as a teacher at a normal school. She was also secretary of the newly founded Free Society for the Psychological Study of the Child and was convinced that it was through contact with children that the future teacher would learn the techniques of the profession. It is true that an annex school is already associated with each normal school, but Marie Baertschi believes that this system does not provide the services that could be expected of it. The girls are only responsible for organising a few courses, without continuity. The time they spend at the annex school competes with the time they spend preparing for the higher certificate. Thus, as long as the pupils had "this scarecrow called the higher certificate in front of them, [they] would consider all the time [spent] at the annex school as time lost".

Marie Baertschi therefore advocates that only the first two years of teacher training colleges should be devoted to the preparation of the higher diploma and that the last year should be reserved for professional preparation. Sceptical of the competitive examination system and the associated overwork, Marie Baertschi would even welcome the abolition of the *brevet supérieur* in exchange for an evaluation by the Teachers' Council. Pauline Kergomard, president of the session, also wanted to abolish the *brevet supérieur* for normaliens and replace it with an internal school leaving certificate. The assembly approved and applauded Marie Baertschi's report.

A month later, in July 1900, Albertine Eidenschenk took up these ideas in *L'École nouvelle* and criticised "the present examination [which] obliges us, in spite of our efforts, to make [teacher training colleges] *patent boxes*²¹⁰. " In 1902, while a commission appointed by the Minister was working on a revision of the curriculum of the teacher training colleges, Albertine Eidenschenk wrote three articles which, on many points, agreed with the conclusions of Marie Baertschi. She mentions the overwork of the student teachers, "due, on the one hand, to the programmes and, on the other, to the demands of the examination commissions for the *Brevet supérieur*²¹¹ "and concludes: "the regime to which young girls between the ages of sixteen and twenty are subjected is an inhuman regime". Albertine Eidenschenk then explains their timetable. In addition to the 22 hours of weekly classes, there were 41 hours of compulsory work (English conversation, sewing, gymnastics, etc.): according to her, the law imposed the organisation of overwork. She notes that vocational training is the main victim of this overload²¹². She therefore called for a lightening of the curriculum and advocated the abolition of the *brevet supérieur*. This measure was part of her programme when she stood for the CSIP in 1904²¹³. Aware of the shortcomings of girls' teacher training colleges, she extended her project to male institutions, which were not spared from overwork either.

210 A headmistress of a teacher training college [Albertine Eidenschenk], "La question des écoles normales", *L'École nouvelle*, 7 July 1900.

211 A director [Albertine Eidenschenk], "La révision des programmes d'enseignement dans les écoles normales d'institutrices", *L'École nouvelle*, 30 March 1901.

212 A director [Albertine Eidenschenk], "La révision des programmes d'enseignement dans les écoles normales d'institutrices", *L'École nouvelle*, 6 April 1901.

213 "Circular from Mrs Eidschenk", *L'École nouvelle*, 21 May 1904.

When in 1905, the commission for the revision of the curricula presented its conclusions, it was around a text close to Marie Baertschi's project that the consensus was established: the brevet supérieur was not transformed into a school-leaving certificate, but it was lightened and placed at the end of the second year in order to reserve the third year for real professional preparation, with the pupils having to spend at least two months in the annex school. The programme for this third year was the subject of a report written by Albertine Eidenschenk, who welcomed the new organisation²¹⁴.

C) Defending the rights of women teachers in teacher training colleges: Albertine Eidenschenk's support for a "body of civil servants who are subject to forced labour".

After highlighting the regime suffered by the pupil-mistresses, Albertine Eidenschenk defended the staff of the girls' teacher training colleges. Recriminations on this subject appeared in *La Fronde* as early as 1902: a headmistress sent a letter in which she attacked the free surveillance service to which the female staff were obliged, whereas this same service was voluntary and paid for among the men²¹⁵. Thus, not only were female staff paid less than male staff, but female headmistresses and teachers supervised studies, recreation and spent the night in the dormitory with their pupils without any compensation.

While in the 1880s such free supervision posed few problems in girls' normal schools, with most female teachers being single and boarding like the pupils, their marital status changed at the turn of the XX^e century. The author of the letter to *La Fronde* comments wryly, 'Many of our colleagues are married. This was bound to happen: they had forgotten to require us to take monastic vows.'²¹⁶. " In these circumstances, the administration accepted that some female teachers lived with their families outside the normal school. The latter were nevertheless forced to work the night shift punctually, without which they had to pay for female supervisors to replace them. The anonymous author of the letter published by *La Fronde* wanted to see this system stopped. A few days later, three teachers from the Ecole Normale wrote to *La Fronde* to support her demands and congratulate her on her letter²¹⁷.

A year later, when Albertine Eidenschenk stood for election to the CSIP for the first time, she pledged to resolve the issue of the internal service in teacher training colleges²¹⁸. In 1906, she published a long text in *L'École nouvelle* in which she outlined her proposals²¹⁹. Faithful to her teacher Pécaut, she was initially hostile to the use of supervisors from outside the teaching body for night duty: those who instruct should also be those who educate. Logically, therefore, supervisory duties should be imposed on female teachers,

214 Report by Albertine Eidenschenk presented to the CSIP in the session of 24 July 1905, F/17/13642.

215 M. D., headmistress of a teacher training college, "Letter to the headmistress", *La Fronde*, 9 June 1902.

216 M. D., headmistress of a teacher training college, "Letter to the headmistress", *La Fronde*, 9 June 1902.

217 "Les professeurs d'École normale", *La Fronde*, 14 June 1902.

218 "Election to the CSIP, circular from Mrs Eidenschenk", *L'École nouvelle*, 6 June 1903.

219 A. Eidschenk, "La surveillance intérieure des écoles normales d'institutrices", *L'École nouvelle*, 2 June 1906.

However, Albertine Eidenschenk considered that such a measure would be too costly: "It would take a quarter of a century to get it". However, Albertine Eidenschenk considered that such a measure would be too costly: "it would take a quarter of a century to get it". Convinced that the budgetary obstacle was insurmountable, she proposed a transitional solution: in the event that there were not enough female boarding school teachers to provide night supervision, outside supervisors could exceptionally take on these tasks in exchange for room and board.

The controversy was not long in coming. A month after the publication of this text, professors in Grenoble expressed their disappointment with these proposals: "Instead of the liberalism and novelty that we had hoped to find, we only found a return to the old errors²²⁰". They consider that the interests of the State are safeguarded to the detriment of those of women teachers and stress the iniquity of the fate reserved for women: "Our schools are the only institutions for women's education where the teacher is asked to supplement his day's fatigue by sacrificing his night's rest. While waiting to be paid for their supervision, these women teachers called for the generalisation of outside supervisors.

Albertine Eidenschenk is pleased that her proposals have elicited a response: "I don't mind the contradiction, because I have no claim to the absolute²²¹". However, she does not accept being accused of complicity with a state that exploits women: 'It is not my modest project that commits this crime, it is our entire legislation'. She herself suffers the iniquities of the law, but does so not 'with the passive resignation of many women [but by] doing my best to facilitate their removal'. Finally, she states that in order to collectively improve the lot of the staff of the girls' teacher training colleges, it is not a matter of being bitter against each other, but of showing solidarity and constructiveness.

Albertine Eidenschenk received only three reactions to her proposals²²². She took these few responses into account in the report she presented on 28 December 1906 to the cabinet of Minister Aristide Briand. Two months later, on 14 February 1907, she presented the subject in her statement to the Extraparliamentary Commission for the Coordination of Treatment. In April 1907, she reported on her actions in the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*²²³. As a result of the comments made to her, Albertine Eidenschenk decided in her 1906-1907 report to demand that the supervisory service be compensated in the same way for women as for men.

In order to facilitate a direct dialogue with the main parties concerned, Albertine Eidenschenk asked the Fontenaysian Association to put the question of the supervision of teacher training colleges on its agenda at the general assembly of 5 August 1907²²⁴. In her presentation, she recalled the steps she had taken over the past two years and highlighted the points that were most important to her.

220 Les professeurs internes de l'école normale de Grenoble, "La surveillance intérieure dans les écoles normales d'institutrices", *L'École nouvelle*, 21 July 1906.

221 A. Eidenschenk, "Réponse à Mesdames les professeurs internes à l'école normale de Grenoble", *L'École nouvelle*, 21 July 1906.

222 "Minutes of the meeting of 5 August 1907", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, October 1907.

223 A. Eidenschenk, "La surveillance dans les Écoles normales", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1907.

224 "Minutes of the meeting of 5 August 1907", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, October 1907.

There was a consensus among the staff. After discussion, two questions of principle were voted on: the first was to demand that supervisors in the girls' normal schools be paid the same as in the boys' normal schools; the second was to wrest from the budget committee the necessary credit to pay external supervisors if the internal teachers did not wish to take on this task. Albertine Eidenschenk and Eugénie Kieffer were appointed to try to approach the budget committee.

In addition, before submitting a final report to the CSIP, Albertine Eidenschenk sent a questionnaire to the staff of the teacher training colleges in October 1907²²⁵. She received 48 minutes of the deliberations of the council of teachers, 54 letters from headmistresses giving their personal opinion and 32 letters from headmistresses, inspectors and rectors relaying the views of the teaching staff. The consensus was that female teachers should be relieved of night duty.

In 1908, Albertine Eidenschenk stated that the issue of the supervision of teacher training colleges would have been resolved long ago "if the staff had shown some unity of purpose when consulted on the measures to be taken²²⁶". But the slow process of collective construction of the project was not in vain. Indeed, on 21 July 1909, Albertine Eidenschenk presented the CSIP with a draft decree that was quite different from its initial text. The rank and file had obviously pushed their spokesperson to be more daring with the authorities. And contrary to what Albertine Eidenschenk thought, the CSIP adopted a draft decree in 1909 which established the equality of the staff of the girls' and boys' teacher training colleges in the face of supervision costs and requested that the 45,000 francs needed to finance night supervision be included in the 1909 budget²²⁷.

D) The "incredible waste of strength in the enormous female university machine": Marie Dugard and Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben on the overwork of female teachers

Female teachers in girls' teacher training colleges were not the only ones to suffer from more difficult working conditions than their male counterparts. In 1895, Marie Dugard wrote an article in the *Revue Universitaire* on the overwork of female high school teachers, a phenomenon which the administration found to be more prevalent among female teachers than male teachers²²⁸. Three reasons are regularly invoked to explain this phenomenon: on the one hand, women suffer from their physical and intellectual infirmity, lacking the vigour of men; on the other hand, they engage in useless work instead of concentrating on their work; finally, they show an immoderate zeal which is detrimental to their effectiveness. Marie Dugard refutes all these arguments. She even accuses inspectors of fostering teachers' excessive dedication, especially when they assess the quality of their work by the length of the

225 See the minutes of the session of 21 July 1909 at the CSIP, F/17/13645.

226 "Candidature de Mme Eidenschenk", *L'École nouvelle*, 2 May 1908.

227 Minutes of the meeting of 21 July 1909 at the CSIP, F/17/13645.

228 Marie Dugard, "Du surmenage des femmes professeurs dans l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles", *Revue universitaire*, February 1895.

annotations in the corrected copies. Marie Dugard implores the administration to introduce into the girls' schools the same broad-mindedness that prevails in the boys' schools on this subject.

But even if the work of correction were lightened, this would not solve the problem of overwork, due to the very functioning of the female secondary school. Thus, while women agrégées in literature were required to teach 16 hours a week and women agrégées in science 15 hours, women agrégés in mathematics, philosophy, history, physics and chemistry were required to teach only 12 to 14 hours a week since a decree of August 1892, which reduced the service of men without affecting that of women²²⁹. Not only did women, for a lower salary, have to teach more hours, but they had to teach several subjects simultaneously, unlike their male counterparts. Men's agrégations are more specialised than women's and allow the holder to teach only his or her subject. Conversely, women agrégées in literature must teach grammar, literature, diction, geography, history, psychology and morality. Similarly, agrégées de sciences should demonstrate "encyclopaedic faculties" by teaching all scientific disciplines. Marie Dugard called for the number of weekly hours of service for female staff to be reduced to 14 and for them to be allowed to specialise in teaching. Such a reform could not be achieved without an increase in staff, which would undoubtedly be expensive, but Marie Dugard pointed out that the state already paid women significantly less than men: at the end of her career, a female teacher cost almost half as much as a male teacher.²³⁰ Marie Dugard never calls for equal pay. She merely calls for adjustments to alleviate the constraints on women teachers. She herself was a victim of overwork: when the inspector came to check on her work in March 1894, she was absent due to illness, "after having struggled with all her courage against the excess of fatigue which resulted for her from her mission in Chicago²³¹ "for the 1893 World's Fair. The following year, the inspector, clearly blind to the structural discrimination against women teachers, declared: "I fear that what she has just written [in the *Revue universitaire*], on the "overworked female teacher" is painfully true of her²³² ".

Fifteen years after Marie Dugard's plea for reform, the government has not implemented any of her recommendations²³³. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben takes up her colleague's call with greater insistence²³⁴. A large part of her argument is simply a reformulation of the observation made by Marie Dugard: women are subjected to a number of hours of work that are too long for them.

229 Between 1883 and 1892, before the reform, women and men were all subject to 16 hours of classes. On this issue, see Yves Verneuil, *Les Agrégés, op. cit.* p. 144.

230 According to Marie Dugard, the salary of a professor varies from 5,500 to 8,000 francs; that of a female professor from 3,500 to 4,700 francs. See Yves Verneuil, *Les Agrégés, op. cit.* p. 146 and the salary table on p. 326.

231 Inspection report, 16 March 1894, Marie Dugard's personal file, F/17/23835.

232 Report of the general inspection for the year 1894-1895.

233 With the exception of a reduction of one hour for female teachers of physical sciences from 1905. See Yves Verneuil, *Les Agrégés, op. cit.* p. 324. But the reduction in the number of hours from which men benefited in 1911 did not apply to women.

234 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "Le surmenage du personnel féminin", *Revue universitaire*, May 1910.

of teaching too high. Moreover, due to lack of resources, classes of more than 40 pupils, which should, according to the regulations, be doubled, are never doubled in girls' schools, unlike in boys' schools. This imposes extra work on the staff, especially in terms of marking. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben estimates the average number of copies per teacher per week at 100. This is why female teachers are overwhelmed, and what she calls "an incredible waste of power in the enormous female university machine". Another reason is the way in which female teachers have been prepared for their jobs:

[The teacher] lives in fear of not giving enough. [She has been told about her duties, no one has told her about her rights. She does not tell herself that for a modest salary, the state asks her to do her work and give up part of her time; [...] that she has the right and the duty to defend her interests, her health, her rest²³⁵.

In a speech with a feminist tone, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben also points out the inequity of the administration towards women. For example, when a female professor requests leave for health reasons between Easter and the summer, she is regularly granted full pay for one month, half pay the following month, and finally no pay during the holidays. The substitute teacher who has been appointed is only paid during school time, so the administration saves a teacher's salary for the two months of holidays, paying neither the teacher nor the substitute. This never happens to male staff, who receive full pay for a year if they are on medical leave²³⁶. The administration takes advantage of the lack of clarity surrounding the status of female teachers to make arbitrary decisions. It has to be said, in the ironic words of Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, that "these ladies really abuse their leave²³⁷".

The latter concludes by recommending the same solutions as Marie Dugard. In 15 years, the situation could have changed: since 1894, the date of the reform of the women's agrégation, future female teachers had the choice between four specialities. But Henriette Degouy-Wurmser, a history teacher, remarked in 1909 that nothing had changed: "Although the agrégation has been split up for 13 years, we still do not have any history teachers, nor any separate literature teachers²³⁸". The latest arrival, the agrégée d'histoire, therefore taught grammar and morals...

Aware of the particular constraints faced by female teachers, Marie Dugard, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben and Henriette Degouy-Wurmser de-essentialised the issue of overwork: contrary to what the doxa says, this problem has nothing to do with female nature, it is the result of structural discrimination.

235 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "Le surmenage du personnel féminin", *Revue universitaire*, May 1910.

236 Nicole Mosconi, *Femmes et savoir*, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

237 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "Le surmenage du personnel féminin", *Revue universitaire*, May 1910.

238 H. Degouy-Wurmser, "À propos de l'enseignement de l'histoire dans les lycées de jeunes filles", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, July 1909. H. Wurmser was mentioned in part 2 under her maiden name.

E) Pauline Kergomard and the 1889 law for female primary inspection: facing hostility to new career opportunities for women

While the Belle Époque saw the emergence of demands relating to the working conditions and remuneration of women teachers, it was also a period when women's access to prestigious professions was being debated, particularly within the ranks of public education.²³⁹ The opening of inspection posts to women crystallised the debates. The first and greatest apostle of female inspection was Pauline Kergomard. Although she was appointed inspector general by Jules Ferry, this did not mean that the arrival of the Republicans in power opened up new perspectives for women in the field of inspection. It is true that Jules Ferry authorised the departments to appoint female inspectors for nursery schools, but only a quarter of the districts applied this recommendation, and the number of female inspectors decreased from year to year²⁴⁰. As early as 1882, Pauline Kergomard criticised the national budget committee for refusing to finance nursery school inspectors, leaving them to be paid for by the department. She also called for an increase in the number of female inspectors general, of whom there were only six nationwide, which meant that they had to visit 650 schools each year, an impossible task.²⁴¹

But in 1889, Agénor Bardoux, former Minister of Public Instruction, obtained the vote of a law in favour of the appointment of female inspectors for girls' primary schools, in addition to the maternal inspectors. A few months later, the International Congress of Primary Education put the subject on its agenda. Pauline Kergomard gave a presentation in which she made a plea for female inspectors²⁴². She insisted on the specific qualities of the female sex that would be useful in this profession: women would be educators by nature and would know, "without alarming the modesty of teachers and children, how to deal with the most intimate issues of education". But the Inspector General was an exception to the Congress. Thus, of the fifty or so briefs sent on this subject to the International Congress of Primary Education, only 18 were in favour of the feminisation of the inspectorate, 12 of which were written by women²⁴³. Unsurprisingly, the Congress disapproved of the new law of 1889 and condemned the principle of female inspection.

In 1890, Pauline Kergomard reviewed the reception of the new law in the *Manuel général de l'instruction primaire*²⁴⁴. She was aware of the "instinctive mistrust, so to speak, of some civil servants" as well as the suspicion of public opinion "which is always disconcerted by anything new". In this context, future female inspectors will have to be more than ever at the

239 For a global analysis, not focused on public education, see Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature, op. cit.*

240 Linda L. Clark, "Feminist Maternalists and the French State: Two Inspectresses General in the Pre-World War I Third Republic", art. cit.

241 See the extract from *L'École maternelle, journal de la première éducation*, 1^{er} November 1882, in Pauline Kergomard's career file, F/17/23588/B.

242 Pauline Kergomard, "Études sur les questions forment le programme du congrès international de 1889 - Les femmes dans l'enseignement primaire", *Revue pédagogique*, May 1889.

243 Linda L. Clark, "Feminist Maternalists and the French State...", art. cit.

244 The article is reproduced in the *Revue pédagogique*: Pauline Kergomard, "L'inspection des écoles de filles par les femmes", December 1890.

They should be up to the task. Pauline Kergomard encouraged them to show initiative "in everything that is of their special genius - I mean education proper, [for] women are needed, in a word, *to found the education of women*". Kergomard also encouraged her future colleagues to discuss with women teachers the subjects that inspectors, as men, did not dare to address: the careful care of female hygiene and the critical period of puberty. Pauline Kergomard insisted in particular "on the more urgent need for female inspection in the big cities, where the young girl is exposed to more dangers than in the countryside...". The Inspector General's discourse is nourished by that of the feminist committed to girl mothers, the hygienist specialising in early childhood care and the President of the French Union for the Rescue of Children. For Pauline Kergomard, even more than an inspector, an inspector must be a force for transforming morals.

But the appointment of female inspectors was far from convincing public opinion, the administration and, above all, the primary inspectors, who saw the new law as the institution of a competition of which they were the first victims. In this context, in October 1890, under the pseudonym Miton-Mitaine, Anna Lampérière wrote a series of articles in *Le Figaro* to convince a rather conservative readership of the interest of the new law²⁴⁵. She considered that the recently voted provision "exceeded by a mile the intellect of the teaching profession as a whole"²⁴⁶ "These lieutenants of the administration are the most execrable type on earth: the parvenu cuistre; they are as rude to their constituents as they are flat to their bosses; pedantry and ignorance rival each other in them. Anna Lampérière also states that men are totally incompetent when it comes to nursery schools. *In contrast*, she praised Pauline Kergomard: "Respectable and respected as much as possible, she used the frankness of her grey hair; and she used it so well that she muzzled the recalcitrants we mentioned earlier". This defence of the female inspectorate, accompanied by a diatribe against inspectors, is noteworthy in a woman who is rather sceptical about feminism. It is on the example of Pauline Kergomard that Anna Lampérière would like to model the female inspectors who are to take up their duties. But, without wishing to do so, she harmed the inspector general, who was forced to write a denial in *Le Figaro*:

I do not believe that there are civil servants more concerned with their duty [...] than primary inspectors. A very large number of them would accept female inspection today, if they were not held back by the old prejudice of the physical weakness of women, and by that other prejudice, no less rooted, of the incompatibility of certain intellectual habits with feminine charm. They are gradually coming back from this chivalrous error. A negligible minority resists alone, out of selfishness. So it is not *against* the inspectors that I seek to found the female inspectorate; it is

245 Pauline Kergomard's career file (F/17/23588/B) helps to unravel this story.

246 Miton-Mitaine, "Inspections de l'enseignement féminin", *Le Figaro*, 3 October 1890.

for the teachers and *for* the children. I hope to succeed without damaging the moral situation of civil servants whom I esteem, and several of whom are my friends²⁴⁷.

However, the damage was done, and the educational journal *L'Éducation nationale*, through the pen of a primary inspector, accused Pauline Kergomard of being the author of the Miton-Mitaine article. Aware that her constituents on the CSIP were primary inspectors, Pauline Kergomard decided to resign in order to obtain a vote of confidence from them. She was re-elected in 1890, proof that her voters believed in her good faith. However, they withdrew their confidence in her two years later: the fact that she continued to defend women's inspection was displeasing.

F) Women's inspection in the light of feminism: the turn of the XX^e century

At the turn of the century, the subject re-emerged in the debates. Pauline Kergomard took advantage of her position as editor of *La Fronde* to reaffirm the need for female inspection. To the argument that women's physiological dispositions prevented them from doing a job that required frequent travel, Pauline Kergomard replied that the question of their fragility never arose when it came to working in the washhouse or the factory.²⁴⁸ As Juliette Rennes points out, it is always to dissuade women from intellectual professions that the argument of their physical weakness is invoked²⁴⁹. As for the idea that "women allow themselves to be dominated by their nerves"²⁵⁰ "Pauline Kergomard replied that such phrases should be sent to the manufacturers of funny phrases "for wrappers and sugar cones".

According to the Inspector General, the issue of women's suitability for the job hides the real issues at stake. Freed from her obligations to her constituents at the CSIP, Kergomard said that the real reason for opposition to women's inspection was more pernicious: as long as the appointment of a woman inspector was made in place of an inspector, women would not win the argument. The Inspector General took the issue to the Congress of Women's Works and Institutions in 1900²⁵¹. She showed that, in addition to the opposition of the primary inspectors, the women teachers were selfishly involved in the failure of **t h e** women's inspectorate, because

"The General Assembly approved Pauline Kergomard's report, which was supported by Pierre Foncin, Inspector General, who was ready to support the female inspection of nursery and primary schools, but also to support the female inspectorate of primary schools. The General Assembly approved Pauline Kergomard's report, which was also supported by Pierre Foncin, Inspector General, who was ready to support female inspection of nursery and primary schools, but also of female high schools.

247 Pauline Kergomard, "Boîte aux lettres" column, *Le Figaro*, 24 October 1890.

248 Pauline Kergomard, "À travers l'éducation, la féminisation de l'enseignement primaire. III- L'inspection féminine", *La Fronde*, 20 February 1898.

249 Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature*, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

250 Pauline Kergomard, "À travers l'éducation, la féminisation de l'enseignement primaire. III- L'inspection féminine", *La Fronde*, 20 February 1898.

251 Session of 22 June 1900, *Second International Congress of Women's Works and Institutions*, *op. cit.* pp. 237-239.

If, until 1900, the defence of female inspection was largely carried by Pauline Kergomard, several voices joined hers in the decade preceding the Great War. In 1906, the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes* published two texts on this subject under the title "Féminisme, route barrée"²⁵² ". The first, signed M. M., was probably written by the president of the association, Marie Mahaut; the second was signed by Eugénie Kieffer, who held one of the few positions as inspector of girls' primary schools in Paris. These two texts were addressed to Fontenay girls because, after their three years of study at the ENS, they took the competitive examinations required to qualify for the post of inspector: Fontenay should, logically, be the same pool of female inspectors as Saint-Cloud.

Marie Mahaut sums up the situation: "even in primary education, women must resign themselves to leaving the enjoyment and benefit of higher jobs to men". Faced with the obstacles to which women are subjected, she called for the application of the principle of non-discrimination that governs access to professions in a Republic. Until now, women have only been able to be appointed to the rare posts specifically dedicated to them, after passing an all-female competition:

A simple way of fairly assessing the qualifications of male and female candidates would be to have them compete together. Since the only means of fairly comparing their respective aptitudes for the functions of inspection has not yet been used, it cannot be argued that men are better qualified than women to fill these functions.

When Linda L. Clark analysed the career paths of the first female primary inspectors during the Belle Époque, she confirmed Marie Mahaut's intuition that the non-mixed nature of competitive examinations preserved male privileges. Indeed, a comparison between the eight female primary inspectors of Seine-et-Oise and the 78 inspectors of the same department appointed between 1889 and 1914 reveals that the female inspectors had a career path and a higher level of education than 96% of the men²⁵³. This is why Marie Mahaut argued for a mixed competitive examination. Her opponents, on the other hand, defended the closure of competitive examinations to women, which, according to them, did not create a break in equality between aspirants, but merely recognised the law of nature, which made women biologically unsuitable for certain tasks. This is what Juliette Rennes has called "the discourse of natural difference, [which] allows one to defend one's privileges with the appearance of stating a law of the world"²⁵⁴ ". To these arguments, Marie Mahaut responds ironically that the woman whose ambition has been disappointed "need only think, to soften her pain, that the administration, full of solicitude for

252 M. M., E. Kieffer, "Féminisme, route barrée", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, January 1906.

253 Linda L. Clark, *The Rise of professional Women*, *op. cit.* p. 61.

254 Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature*, *op. cit.* p. 34.

She wanted to save him from colds and gastralgia²⁵⁵ ". And to conclude: "First of all, everyone has the right to be the arbiter of their own happiness.

G) Women inspectors as agents of disorder and disruption? The radicalisation of the debate (1908-1914)

In 1908, in her annual report to the Minister of Public Education, Pauline Kergomard once again deplored the slow implementation of the 1889 law. Not only did the départements hardly appoint any kindergarten inspectors, but when they did fund a few posts, they refused to allow them to inspect the kindergarten classes in primary schools. Unlike kindergartens, which are autonomous institutions run by women, nursery classes cater for children under the age of six within the walls of a primary school, which is usually run by a man. In these circumstances, it seems impossible for a female inspector to monitor the work of the kindergarten teachers and give advice to their superior, the school headmaster. Pauline Kergomard was sarcastic: "It is understandable that it is very delicate and even humiliating for a school headmaster to receive advice from a woman²⁵⁶ ". By controlling the children's classes, the inspector would not only be entering male territory, but she would be exercising authority over a man, which is inconceivable.

When Pauline Kergomard submitted her report to the Ministry, Maurice Faure, rapporteur for the budget for public education, supported her approach by officially requesting that the law of 1889 be applied, as he believed that women were more competent than men in the education of young children²⁵⁷. This was all it took to revive the debate. In April 1909, André Balz, a regular contributor to the *Manuel général de l'instruction primaire* and the *Revue universitaire*, supported the feminist demands²⁵⁸. The honorary inspector Charles Drouard, in reaction to this article, wrote a text entitled 'Against female inspection' in the *Manuel général de l'Instruction primaire*²⁵⁹. He considered that if a female inspector were to control nursery schools in the area where the inspector visited primary schools, "conflicts would arise from which the prestige of the function would suffer greatly". Once again, it is a question of avoiding any competition between a man and a woman, as the intrusion of a woman into a man's territory constitutes an attack on the sacredness of the position. Moreover, Charles Drouard reverses the maternalist argument often brandished in the name of gender capital to justify women's aptitude for inspection: "an inspector, generally a father, educator of his own daughters, is [at least as] capable of directing female education as a female inspector,

255 M. M., E. Kieffer, "Féminisme, route barrée", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, January 1906.

256 Pauline Kergomard, "L'école maternelle", *Revue pédagogique*, January 1908.

257 See Pauline Rebour, "Propos féministes", *L'École nouvelle*, 17 December 1910.

258 See Yves Verneuil, "Vocational Training, Antifeminism and Masculinism in Secondary Education," *Research and Training* [Online], 69 | 2012, online March 01, 2014, accessed April 23, 2019, <https://journals.openedition.org/rechercheformation/1667>. He quotes Balz, who wrote in 1914: "By a singular reversal of things, it is men today who are asking to be protected."

259 Ch. Drouard, honorary primary inspector, "Contre l'inspection féminine", *Manuel général de l'Instruction primaire*, 8 May 1909.

generally unmarried". Finally, the author accuses women of selfishness: "The women's inspectorate was created only to provide a few advantageous positions for senior female teaching staff". The women acted out of self-interest by demanding positions, without admitting that their presence caused "trouble and disorder". Charles Drouard therefore urges them to sacrifice their ambition for the sake of society's tranquillity. His text combines misogyny and misonicism: any novelty is seen as the introduction of an imbalance, which in turn leads to a race to the abyss, and this because of female hubris.

At the same time, several feminists launched a campaign in favour of female inspection. Pauline Rebour gave her support to Pauline Kergomard in the "Propos féministes"²⁶⁰ of *L'École nouvelle*. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben did the same in the *Revue universitaire*, and complained that there was no female inspector for girls' lycées²⁶¹.

After Maurice Faure called for the application of the 1889 law in 1908, an official circular committed the prefects to appointing female inspectors in 1910. From this date onwards, it was Marie Ginier, a primary inspector and friend of Pauline Kergomard²⁶² and Albertine Eidenschenk, who took up the torch of female inspection²⁶³. In 1911 she wrote in the *Revue pédagogique* :

This can be explained by the strength of a tradition, as old as the world, which reserves the functions of authority for men. They themselves believe that they are theirs by birth and they work hard to keep them. [Another cause is the general situation of women, which condemns them to wait patiently and for a long time for the action of public authorities, instead of provoking and hastening its effects²⁶⁴.

E. Dodeman, primary inspector, vehemently replies to Marie Ginier²⁶⁵. Like Charles Drouard, he pointed to female egoism and accused women of wanting to take the lion's share of the work by refusing to inspect in hard-to-reach areas on the grounds of their physical frailty or the prejudices that reigned there. According to him, an example such as that of Marie Ginier, a primary school inspector in Paris - and paid the same as men, "the height of impertinence"²⁶⁶ He believes that an example such as Marie Ginier, a primary school inspector in Paris - and paid the same as men, "the height of impertinence" - proves that women are aiming for the top jobs. According to E. Dodeman, the candidate inspector, "with a graceful gesture, [...] pulls the good, warm blanket over her and literally leaves us with our feet

260 Pauline Rebour, "Propos féministes", *L'École nouvelle*, 17 December 1910.

261 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, May 1909.

262 See Pauline Kergomard's letter to her son Jean in which she talks about her friend Mme Ginier, 2 February 1918, in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.*, p. 256.

263 We will speak of Mlle Ginier under the name of Marie Ginier. Her first name is Françoise, and it is by this name that Jérôme Krop refers to her, but she signs her articles M. Ginier. (Jérôme Krop, *Les fondateurs de l'école républicaine : la première génération des instituteurs sous la III^e République*, Villeneuve d'Ascq, Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2017, 333 p.)

264 M. Ginier, "L'inspection féminine des Écoles maternelles et des Écoles filles", *Revue pédagogique*, March 1911.

265 E. Dodeman "L'inspection féminine dans les Écoles de Filles", *Revue pédagogique*, July 1911.

266 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 12 August 1899.

in the mud and snow! It is not equality that she is asking for, it is an exorbitant privilege²⁶⁷. " This discourse, hostile to mixed functions, is presented by Yves Verneuil as typical of a masculinism that cries out for the "confusion of roles, [...] the beginnings of their inversion²⁶⁸ "and is wary of new "feminine privileges".

In the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, Marie Ginier, angered by the way her words had been misused, asked her colleagues to take a stand²⁶⁹. She reminded them of the need for female inspectors, because they would be instruments in the service of feminism:

[With regard to women teachers and pupils,] the aim is to bring them *all* to a *majority* that will not be lost through marriage, to train them all to be active members of the family and of *the city*. [...] Men do not want women to have such firmness of thought and character, and therefore cannot energetically apply themselves to making them acquire it.

This passage makes the female inspectorate a factor of social transformation with a feminist objective. But some women teachers, far from recognising this aspiration, expressed their opposition to this principle. Thus, struck by the passionate indictment of some women against female inspection, Albertine Eidenschenk exclaimed in 1912:

Aren't these piquant compliments addressed by women to their sex! And how understandable it is that some men should seize upon them, amplify them, and throw them at our heads [...] whenever in the name of our dignity we protest against our civil guardianship and our civic debasement! [...] How can [these women] not understand that they bring rods to whip them, to those who do not want to hear about the equalization of the sexes before the law²⁷⁰ ?

Albertine Eidenschenk calls for female solidarity, which is necessary to present a united front against the conservatives in the distribution of social and professional roles.

H) Albertine Eidenschenk's attempt to create a female inspectorate of teacher training colleges

Until this text from 1912, Albertine Eidenschenk kept a low profile in the debate: 'I followed the controversy with interest: at times I had a strong desire to throw myself into it.

267 E. Dodeman, primary inspector in Périgueux, "L'inspection féminine dans les Écoles de Filles", *Revue pédagogique*, July 1911.

268 Yves Verneuil, "Vocational training, antifeminism and masculinism in secondary education", art. cit.

269 M. Ginier, "Note sur la question de l'Inspection féminine dans les écoles de filles", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, April 1912.

270 A. Eidenschenk, "Les femmes et l'inspection", *L'École nouvelle*, 5 October 1912.

She has a lot of work *to do behind the scenes, both at the CSIP and in the Académie du Nord*. Nevertheless, she does a lot of work behind the scenes, within the walls of the CSIP and in the northern academy.

In 1908, for example, she presented a report to the CSIP on a draft decree on the appointment of female inspectors²⁷¹. Since 1887, the law had required candidates to have a certificate of aptitude for inspecting nursery schools. However, as the appointment of female inspectors remained exceptional, this diploma fell into disuse, greatly restricting the number of female candidates for these positions. In order to revitalise the female inspectorate, Albertine Eidenschenk called for the diploma obtained by headmistresses of teacher training colleges to be considered as equivalent to the certificate of aptitude for inspecting nursery schools, which would make it possible to turn this body of civil servants into a pool of female nursery and primary school inspectors²⁷². The Permanent Section approved Albertine Eidenschenk's report: Headmistresses of teacher training colleges with ten years' seniority could now be appointed as primary and nursery school inspectors.

The headmistress of the Douai teacher training college was not satisfied with this victory. In 1909, she began to apply for the position of inspector general of girls' teacher training colleges in the Nord department, a position that did not exist until then, as the headmistresses of teacher training colleges were visited by the inspectors general of primary education. In July 1909, Albertine Eidenschenk presented her project verbally to Amédée Gasquet, Director of Primary Education. She then wrote to him: "I foresee many difficulties and obstacles; but I believe that I will succeed, because what I want to do must be done²⁷³." In December 1909, the rector of the North offered her a trial tour. Albertine Eidenschenk was reluctant to accept this idea, preferring to have an official mandate to advise the directors. Sure that her project was bound to succeed, she had a clear idea of how she would carry out her mission:

Assuming that I had received the appointment of inspector general that would be necessary, I would visit every Normal School. I would thoroughly inspect the moral and pedagogical teaching and the professional exercises. Then [...] I would try to find out if there is in each school what I call [...] a "spirit of education", that is to say a guiding idea [...] which inspires lessons, internal rules, reprimands as well as praises [...], which is the basis, in short, of an education²⁷⁴.

As a guardian of Pécaut's legacy, Albertine Eidenschenk would also check whether the Pécauldian practice of the 'morning lecture' was still in use. She was also very keen that teacher training colleges should be in touch with society. For her, the headmistresses

271 See the minutes of the session of 18 July 1908 at the CSIP, F/17/13644.

272 Headmistresses of teacher training colleges are already automatically provided with the certificate of suitability for inspection *primary school*. The aim is to recognise them by equivalence the certificate of aptitude for the inspection of *nursery schools*.

273 Letter from Albertine Eidenschenk to the Director of Primary Education dated 27 November 1909, forwarded by the Rector on a confidential basis, Albertine Eidenschenk's file in the Archives départementales du Nord, 2 T 265.

274 Letter from Albertine Eidenschenk to the rector, 6 December 1909, 2 T 265.

should ensure that students are aware of the situation in the country in terms of alcoholism, infant mortality and tuberculosis. She also believes that these institutions should play a leading role in the after-school work for girls to make the student teachers understand their social role. In addition, Albertine Eidenschenk promises to hold regular lectures on the situation in the country. She was convinced that such a mission would result in "something very valuable for the country [...] which would show that there are functions to be created, [...] functions of inspectors and, to put it better, of missionaries of education²⁷⁵". In transmitting Albertine Eidenschenk's project to the Minister, the Rector declared that no one was more qualified than she to make this mission "a true republican and secular apostolate²⁷⁶". But neither Albertine Eidenschenk's competence nor her dedication were enough to carry out this project.

No post of inspector general of girls' teacher training colleges is created²⁷⁷. As for female primary inspectors, on the eve of the war, there were only five out of 450 inspectors²⁷⁸. The inspectors general of nursery schools were also an exception. In conclusion, the campaign for female inspectors was an undeniable failure. The first female inspector general of primary schools was not appointed until 1945. While female teachers were promised equal pay in the Belle Époque, the advocates of female inspection were unable to achieve anything. In fact, if some women have been able to exercise a historically male function and bear the title since the 1880s - agrégée, lycée director, etc. - it is because they have not been able to do so. - This is because they are not entering male territory. When the first female teachers and principals of girls' teacher training colleges and lycées were appointed, they did not take the place of men, since the institutions in which they worked had no male history. However, by claiming the right to be inspectors, women are claiming rights to functions that were previously male. To quote Juliette Rennes, it can be said that for inspectors, "the exclusion of women has been one of the historical conditions of their identity, if not of their prestige²⁷⁹". This element is undoubtedly decisive in explaining the failure of the campaign for female inspection during the Belle Époque.

Conclusion of Chapter 8

The feminist impetus that marked the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries was reflected in public education by the emergence of corporatist and feminist mobilisations within the framework of a sometimes cross-category female solidarity. The struggles of some - for example, the struggle of women teachers for equal pay - triggered the mobilisation of others - for example, among the

275 Letter from Albertine Eidenschenk to the rector, 6 December 1909, 2 T 265.

276 Letter from the rector to the minister, 29 December 1909, 2 T 265.

277 The archives consulted do not provide an explanation for this failure.

278 Linda L. Clark, "Feminist maternalists and the French state...", art. cit.

279 Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature*, op. cit. p. 34.

The consensus is based on principles such as equal pay for equal work or the idea that positions of responsibility should be open to all. Consensus was reached on principles such as the maxim "equal pay for equal work" or the idea that positions of responsibility should be accessible to all. Several 'grande dames' of public education distinguished themselves by their consistent defence of women teachers in all the battles that arose during the Belle Époque, from the question of salaries to that of overwork, non-specialisation and the 'glass ceiling' that women faced in their careers. Women activists defended these demands in the name of justice and the democratic principle.

Those who became involved in these issues showed an acute perception of the structural injustices suffered by women in public education. They set themselves up as standard-bearers for women's interests and distinguished themselves by their activism, both in the press, at conferences, in an official body such as the CSIP and in their relations with the world of politics and friendships, where they confronted men, who often defended divergent interests. In this way, they arrogate to themselves a posture of intellectuals by conquering their place in the public debate thanks to various strategies aimed at countering their invisibilisation. They sometimes choose the approach of entryism in mixed places, but also note the effectiveness of exclusively female initiatives. As Jacques Julliard notes in his foreword to the issue of *Nineteen Hundred* on women intellectuals, "feminism is a struggle [...]. It is necessary to throw oneself into the lion's den, to go and challenge men in the very places where macho domination is exercised: public life, and especially professional life²⁸⁰. "

The study of these struggles, which are both corporatist and feminist, makes it possible to adopt a dynamic approach to the construction of these women as intellectuals, by analysing in particular the way in which they obtain recognition by their peers. By setting themselves up as relays of the teaching base, by getting elected in professional elections, by opening forums in journals, by setting up polls and surveys among their colleagues, these spokespersons gain visibility within the institution and become legitimate interlocutors in the eyes of the authorities. To paraphrase a definition given by Jean-François Sirinelli²⁸¹ These activists became intellectuals by mobilising their recently acquired notoriety as well as their capacity for expertise in an institution they knew very well to legitimise their intervention in the debates, in the name of a global struggle in the service of female staff in public education.

280 Jacques Julliard, "Avant-propos", in Françoise Blum, Muriel Carduner-Loosfelt (eds.) *Mil neuf cent, revue d'histoire intellectuelle*, n°16, 1998, p. 3-4.

281 Jean-François Sirinelli, "Le hasard ou la nécessité? Une histoire en chantier : l'histoire des intellectuels", art. cit.

Epilogue: Four fates in the test of war

Pauline Kergomard: a septuagenarian in the Great War

In a letter sent to her son Jean on 18 August 1914, Pauline Kergomard wrote: "Life has made me a woman of initiative, and I owe it to her to use it to the end. It is in initiative that I live like a fish in water¹. " Despite her advanced age, the inspector general was active throughout the Belle Époque. She had already been promoted to Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur in 1896 and was made an officer in 1911. This decoration was the result of her long-standing involvement in public education.

In 1905, at the age of 67, this "irreducible feminist"² "She was astonished by the energy she displayed at the congress of the Ligue de l'Enseignement in Biarritz:

Buisson said in the closing speech that I had spoken the 'decisive words' (about women's work), and that if he retired me, he could not say it was for 'infirmity contracted in the service'.

On the one hand, it's a shame to be poor, but if I didn't stick to my work, I'd be in a hopelessly old age right away³.

Pauline Kergomard was very active in feminist circles and also continued her work in the field of early childhood. In 1912, she finally won a battle that she had been waging since the closure of the Pape-Carpantier school, which had been used as a practical course for asylum wards until 1889.⁴ She succeeded in recreating a specific training course for nursery school staff at the Ecole Normale de la Seine run by Denise Billotey, where Marie Baertschi worked, both members of the Société Libre pour l'Étude Psychologique de l'Enfant. Pupil-mistresses destined for nursery schools studied hygiene and child psychology and carried out practical exercises there⁵.

On the eve of the war, Pauline Kergomard was a key figure in public education. However, when René Viviani briefly became Minister of Education in 1914, he was still unaware of

1 Quoted in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.*

2 Fernand Gazin, "Le Congrès de la Ligue de l'enseignement à Biarritz", *Revue pédagogique*, December 1905.

3 Letter to Jean and Jeanne K., between January and March 1906, quoted in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.*, p. 126.

4 The decree of 1882 gave it the task of training "directors and teachers for the normal nursery school courses" which were to be founded in the country. See Pauline Kergomard's article, "Cours pratique des salles d'asile", in the *Dictionnaire de Pédagogie*, second edition of 1911, where she writes: "Perhaps the most fervent supporters of this suppression regret it today, and dream of seeing the Pape-Carpantier School reconstituted and oriented towards a direction better adapted to the needs of child pedagogy.

5 See "Conseil national des femmes - assemblée trimestrielle", *La Française*, 4 February 1912.

who she is. Amédée Gasquet, Director of Primary Education, encourages Pauline Kergomard to present herself to the Minister, which surprises her. She asked for an explanation:

[Gasquet] then told me that the Minister, very angry, very rude [...] had made an outburst against the non-values and the cripples of the Inspectorate General; "that all that had to be thrown out". That he had been told about a "76 year old lady who had taken root". Madame Kergomard, of whom you speak, is not an inspector general", G[asquet] replied. She is the 'inspector general of nursery schools'.⁶

Pauline Kergomard is the embodiment of the French educational institution for early childhood. But although she held a position in the upper echelons of the administration, Pauline Kergomard never strayed far from the realities of the field. When war broke out, she began - in her words - a

"new profession of course director for the use of "minors aged 13 to 18"⁷ " in the XIV^e arrondissement. She explains its purpose in *La Française*:

When I returned [to Paris] in August to bring some comfort to my staff [...], I was soon enlightened about the dangers that young boys over school age, whose workshops were closed, were running, and the dangers that they were causing to young girls in the same situation. Soon my mind was made up: I would gather these vagabonds [...] and the rescue of one of them would be at the same time the rescue of ten girls. [...] A small flat was free in the house I live in, so I wrote to my landlord ... that I would requisition it *free of charge pro deo*; he agreed; I gathered together a group of teachers consisting of my son and some of his available friends. [...] It was a question of inspiring these young people - as in our late "popular universities" which will be reborn the day the *eight-hour day* flourishes - with a taste for good reading, clear and precise ideas on the causes of the war, ... to make them understand what true patriotism is, and above all how much each man and each woman must respect themselves, in order to contribute to the true glory of their country. [...] Each day's "Communiqués" were read out to them in front of the map [...]; these talks were illustrated and explained by photographs brought by two "Boursiers de voyage autour du monde" from their travels, which allowed them to savour the flavour of these photographs⁸.

6 Letter of 14 February 1914, quoted in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.*

7 Letter to Jean and Jeanne K., 19 September 1914, quoted in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.*, p. 209.

8 Pauline Kergomard, "Un essai d'Éducation morale", *La Française*, 4 December 1915.

Pauline Kergomard took part in the lessons as "educator of the mind and conscience, [...] [her] only speciality". In a letter to Louise Renard, she describes the dozen or so adolescents she teaches as follows: "three architects' clerks, three typos, an employee of a cloth designer, etc. Workshops closed, fathers mobilised, mothers widowed or divorced⁹". But the adventure did not last: the flat was rented in January 1915. The little troupe therefore had to evacuate the premises, with some of the children returning to school and the others finding a place to live¹⁰ "The others found a place to live with the help of the inspector general.

In parallel to this initiative, Pauline Kergomard participated in the creation of the Orphelinat des Armées, a huge association launched by Dick May to help the orphans of the war. The Inspector General was not initially invited to sit on the Board of Directors: she was relegated to the Ladies' Committee, like all women... except for Dick May¹¹. Pauline Kergomard considers this division of the sexes to be archaic: "[Buisson and I] had to talk about the great machine for the protection of war orphans, of which he had accepted the presidency, and of which I was a member (Ladies' Committee; incidentally, if there is one thing I hate, it is that. I dropped the one for the Ligue de l'Enseignement a long time ago.)¹²". "It was because of this divergence over the role of women in the association that Pauline Kergomard withdrew and redirected her action towards the Pupilles de l'École Publique, which finally took the place of Dick May's initiative, the victim of an anti-Semitic campaign which undermined his project.

Pauline Kergomard was also active on other fronts. With the war reactivating the campaign for girls' access to the baccalaureate¹³ The war reactivated the campaign for girls' access to the baccalaureate, and the Inspector General, true to what she had been demanding for years as president of the CNFF's education section¹⁴s education section, called for the assimilation of female secondary education to male secondary education, so that girls could access "the same diplomas and the same functions as high school students¹⁵". She recalls the competence and authority of women in the boys' classes where they replace teachers who have gone to the front: the war proves that women are intellectually as capable as men.

But the war years also fuelled Pauline Kergomard's daily anguish. Suspended to the news from the front, she adheres body and soul to the war culture:

I had arrived at my age without having known hatred. [...] The war of 1870 itself had not made me hate the Germans. I judged them with the indulgence that one

9 Letter to Louise Renard, 21 September 1914, Ms2607, fonds Georges Renard, BHVP.

10 Pauline Kergomard, "Un essai d'Éducation morale", *La Française*, 4 December 1915.

11 For more details, see Mélanie Fabre, *Dick May, une femme à l'avant-garde...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-318.

12 Letter to Jean Kergomard, 31 December 1914, quoted in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.*, pp. 212-213.

13 See "Conseil national des femmes françaises", *La Française*, 18 March 1916; Madeleine Daniélou, "La réforme de l'enseignement secondaire féminin", *L'Écho de Paris*, 8 February 1917; see also Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben's action within the extra-parliamentary commission for the reform of women's secondary education set up in January 1917 by Aristide Briand and René Viviani.

14 See "Propos d'une professeur [*sic*] / La préparation des lycéennes au baccalauréat", *La Française*, 8 March 1913.

15 "To the National Council of Women", *La Française*, 30 October 1915.

I was able to despise their bad shepherds, but in the same way that I despised ours [...]. Today, alas! I hate them [...], and this new state of mind is [...] extremely painful. I understand that it is necessary, for the sake of civilisation and the moral progress of humanity, that these mad barbarians be once and for all brushed aside, flattened and humiliated, and that treaties [...] protect Europe from their fits of furious madness¹⁶.

In this context, Pauline Kergomard rejoiced in the heroism of one of her grandsons, who volunteered at the age of 17 and was awarded the Croix de Guerre for having reattached telephone wires broken by machine gun fire at Verdun: "We are grateful to this city kid for having made us parents 'who give their flesh and blood'.¹⁷". "

When, in February 1917, the Inspector General learned that the Russians were withdrawing from the Triple Entente, she let her anger explode¹⁸. At the same time, she condemned the pacifist movement led by teachers such as Hélène Brion, Gabrielle Bouët, Marie Mayoux and Julia Bertrand, victims of state repression: "Do you read what people say about defeatist teachers? I'm sorry! Not if one of them is made to suffer the fate of Mata-Hary, but because there will be a redoubling of injustice against the laywoman on the clerical side.¹⁹". " The Inspector General feared that the public school would be accused of betraying the first of the national virtues: patriotism.

During part of the war, Pauline Kergomard continued to travel the country on inspection tours until 1917, when she finally retired. As she suspected, her strength deserted her fairly quickly. In 1919, at the age of 82, she wrote to her friend Louise Renard that she felt weary, "always ready to sleep²⁰". Her health deteriorated rapidly in the early 1920s. First she lost her memory, then, in January 1923, the use of speech. In July, she no longer recognised her family. On 13 February 1925, she died in total unconsciousness. An exceptionally dynamic woman during the first 80 years of her life - *La Française* described her in 1910 as a person "with white curls [but] still young²¹". Pauline Kergomard died in physical and intellectual decline.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello: an active retirement

It was at the end of her career that Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello joined Pauline Kergomard in the sparse ranks of women decorated with the Legion of Honour, something she had aspired to since

16 Letter to Jean Kergomard, 18 August 1914, quoted in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.* p. 196.

17 Letter written from Montauban (on an inspection tour) to Louise Renard, 19 February 1916, Georges Renard fonds.

18 Letter to Jean Kergomard, 25 February 1917, quoted in Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard, op. cit.*

19 Letter of 23 November 1917 to Jean Kergomard, quoted in *Ibid*, p. 253.

20 Letter to Louise Renard, 7 May 1919, Georges Renard fonds.

21 "Les universitaires décorées", *La Française*, 19 December 1910.

for a long time. In 1902, Odette Laguerre already wrote that the headmistress of the Lycée de Lyon would be a knight of the Legion of Honour if the formula "equal merit, equal reward"²². In the section entitled "Wishes of the civil servant" on the form she fills out each year, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello wrote in 1904: "Don't ask for a decoration which, since it is not the reward spontaneously awarded by my bosses, would no longer give me any pleasure"²³. " It was finally in 1908, thanks to the support of Francis de Pressensé and the patronage of Édouard Herriot, that Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello obtained this decoration. The event coincided with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Lycée de Lyon, during which she declared:

No one will be surprised that the vibrations of this hour [...] bring back, for me, distant and dear memories: the creation of the Lycée of Montpellier (10 October 1881), and [...] of Lyon (1 December 1882). [...] Twenty-eight years ago at the Faculty of Bordeaux, I was the only woman preparing a scientific degree and I don't know that there were any in the other Faculties of France! At present, at the Faculty of Lyon, and to speak only of our former students, there are four who are preparing a degree in science²⁴ !

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello liked to present herself as a pioneer and to recall her role in the creation of female secondary education. However, she did not receive much support from her superiors, who considered her insufficiently dedicated to her task. She was retired in June 1908, although she asked to remain in office until 1910. However, she continued to be active during her retirement, notably within the Mission laïque, but also in the Comité pour le développement des musées²⁵.

Death struck the Desparmet family even before the outbreak of the Great War. In 1911, Jean, the youngest of the family, was killed during an aviation competition. He had been a licensed pilot for a few months and agreed to drive a recently damaged aircraft whose engine, readjusted at the last moment, broke down while it was 200 metres above the ground. The death notice was signed by the Desparmet family as well as by Marguerite Poy, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's colleague from the Bordeaux College of Higher Education and Professional Studies, who had become a close friend of the family and who was buried in the family vault²⁶.

From that date onwards, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello is no longer traceable. It is impossible, for the moment, to know how she lived through the First World War. However, some writings remain from the post-war years. In 1922, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello appears as the vice-president of L'Avenir familial, an insurance company that seeks to stimulate marriages and births

22 Odette Laguerre, "Portraits de femmes. Mme Desparmet-Ruello, doyenne des directrices de lycée", *La Fronde*, 26 December 1902.

23 Document dated 16 March 1904, F/17/22067.

24 "Speech by Mme Desparmet-Ruello, *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, April 1908.

25 Alongside Marguerite Poy and her husband, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello signed a petition in 1910 to open a new museum in Lyon. See "Petition", *Lyon universitaire*, 25 March 1910.

26 Claire Paul, *Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Le combat d'une femme pour les femmes, op. cit.*, p. 219-227.

in a context of demographic loss. To this end, it encourages its members to make regular small payments for their children so that they receive a bonus when they marry and when their own children are born²⁷. Concerned about the country's situation, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello also made a donation of 30 francs as part of a contribution to pay off the public debt and raise the franc in 1926²⁸.

After the war, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello remained a faithful supporter of the radical-socialists. In 1924, she congratulated Herriot - her "dear old friend" - on his majority in Lyon: "After your noble and ardent campaign throughout France, it is a great success that the Bloc des gauches has obtained. [...] Let us work for the cause of justice and peace²⁹ ! ". Ten years later, she sent her wishes to the man with whom she had collaborated for a long time within the Lay Mission: "When did we see men like you travelling the world to teach people to know each other better, to understand each other better, to prefer peaceful agreements [...] to these increasingly deadly wars which do not even benefit the victors³⁰ ? "

The last available letters from Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello are written in the trembling hand of an 89-year-old woman. In 1936, a year before her death, she once again congratulated Herriot, saying that he had been "a great mayor, a good mayor, who knew how to [...] develop the real social works that the city deserves³¹ ". She wrote from Marseille, where she lived alone with her daughter after the death of her husband eight years earlier, and her son-in-law in 1934. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello was then in an uncomfortable financial situation. In 1935, she tried to sell a painting to the Lyon museum, but failed.³² A year later, she was just as worried:

I sincerely hope that my pension, which allows me to live for a few more days with my daughter, who is currently destitute (following the sudden death of her husband), and my granddaughter, will not be reduced. It is to you that I entrust my supplication to the Minister of Finance; knowing well that if you do not obtain anything, no one else will and that if you do, you will always have my old friendship and the gratitude of my old age³³.

Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello died a few months later, on 6 February 1937. In an article paying tribute to her, *La France* reproduced the eulogy of Rector Lirondelle, who spoke of her as a teacher, feminist, suffragist and founder of the Université populaire lyonnaise: "When we rejoice today at the marvellous flowering of post- and extra-curricular activities, the prodigious multiplication of social activities [...], we sometimes forget

27 René Gernot, "L'Avenir Familial", *L'Écho saumurois*, 5 August 1922.

28 See *Bulletin municipal officiel de la ville de Paris*, 14 July 1926.

29 Letter to Herriot, 13 May 1924, Archives municipales de Lyon. Thanks to Anne Forest, responsible for the classification of the Herriot archives at the AM of Lyon, for her precious help.

30 Letter to Herriot, 15 January 1934.

31 Letter to Herriot, 6 February 1936.

32 Letter to Herriot, 8 March 1935.

33 Letter to Herriot, 21 February 1936.

the time when it took [...] true heroism to fight a hard and unceasing battle for this cause that was finally won.³⁴ "

Albertine Eidenschenk: running a teacher training college in the occupied zone

For Albertine Eidenschenk, the pre-war period was a feminist high point. In December 1913, she took part in a subscription to enable the republication of John Stuart Mill's *De l'Assujettissement des Femmes*, launched by *La Française*³⁵. A few months later, she sent a letter to all the female principals and teachers of French teacher training colleges, urging them to support the action of the French Union for Women's Suffrage (UFSF):

Dear Colleague, [...]

Do you have the right to be indifferent to the fate of millions of women who, less privileged than you, are victims of a social organisation in which they have no rights [...]? Do you not know that the moral and economic inferiority of women, enshrined in very harsh laws, has formidable consequences for public morality, and consequently for the moral and physical health of the country? What French woman, at a time when France needs all her energies to stop on the road to ruin, will have the heart to lock herself up in her selfish happiness? [...] Come then to the Union, [...] with your high culture, your warmth of heart and your love of the country; become an active member of your local group; work to organise it if it does not yet exist; win over to our action the teachers, your pupils³⁶.

Albertine Eidenschenk signs this appeal as a teacher training college principal and member of the CSIP, with the approval of the UFSF President, Marguerite de Witt Schlumberger, and its General Secretary, Cécile Brunschvicg.

When the war broke out in August 1914, Albertine Eidenschenk's feminist activism gave way to the need to maintain the Douai teacher training college, located in the German-occupied zone. Albertine Eidenschenk remained alone at her post: her son, who had volunteered, was at the front, and her husband asked to be reintegrated into the army in 1915, at the age of 65, as an officer-interpreter. In addition, from 1914 onwards, the teacher training college was transformed into a field hospital and received wounded Germans³⁷. Albertine Eidenschenk was therefore obliged to bring the student teachers together in the day school house in order to maintain the preparation for the higher certificate. A patriot in the occupied zone, she offered refuge to French soldiers and then helped them to escape through the school grounds.

34 "Celles qui s'en vont", *La France, Journal d'information et d'action féminines*, 27 February 1937.

35 "A new edition of the *Assujettissement des Femmes*", *La Française*, 13 December 1913.

36 "Le mouvement féministe", *La Française*, 21 March 1914.

when German officers search his house. An article from *La Française* published in 1938, recounts his wartime years in an occupied country:

You remain at your post, in the midst of the enemies who occupy the building. [...] In April 1915, you are expelled from the premises. In addition to your usual classes, you take on the task of several missing teachers... Under the roaring cannon, [...] you prepare your lessons. In March 1917, the Germans demanded that the schools be closed. Nevertheless, you continued to run your little teacher training college clandestinely, with the pupils who had not been able to join their families. One day, an officer from the Kommandantur, informed by an anonymous letter, arrived to see that the orders had been broken; the pupils had to flee through the window. But you declare without hesitation, on a question from the officer, that it was you who was giving a geography lesson³⁸.

It would seem that Albertine Eidenschenk, by putting into practice the "principles she had taught, [was] able to command the respect of the invader himself³⁹". Thus, when in 1919 she discovered that the headmistress of the Douai college had declared in a newspaper that she had been in charge of the teacher training college during the war, Albertine Eidenschenk wrote to the minister to set the record straight:

I was the one who kept it alive, having organised, under my sole responsibility, the financial management, the admission competition and the teaching. [I took a considerable part in the teaching, since, apart from the courses in psychology and morals, for which the director is legally responsible, I gave [...] the complete teaching of history and geography. I have done an enormous amount of work, because for more than 25 years I have not been involved in these subjects of the curriculum.

On 8 February 1917, all classes were closed by order of the German authorities. After a few attempts to disregard this ban on teaching (at my own risk, as an anonymous letter denounced me to the Kommandantur), our classes [...] were occupied by troops. And as at that time the families who lived far from Douai recalled their daughters for fear of being evacuated without them, there were only about ten pupils left [...] out of the 49 that the Teacher Training College had in March 1917. This one, in reality, no longer existed⁴⁰.

The dishonesty of the headmistress of the Douai college - which took in the ten remaining pupils for a year - did not prevent Albertine Eidenschenk from receiving tributes during and after the war.

38 "Une femme de bien: Mme Eidenschenk-Patin", *La Française*, 5 March 1938. The article reproduces the speech

given by Mme Bourez, one of her former pupils, at the party organised by the International League of Mothers and Educators for Peace in December 1937.

39 "À l'occasion du cinquantenaire des Écoles normales d'instituteurs", *Comoedia*, 11 June 1930.

40 Letter to the Minister of 25 March 1919, F/17/23836/B.

after the war. Thus, during the CSIP meeting of 30 June 1915, Albert Sarraut, Minister of Public Education, sent a greeting to Mrs Eidenschenk and Mrs Déghilage, who had remained in occupied country⁴¹. At the end of the war, Albertine Eidenschenk left Douai: she settled in Dax as a primary school inspector before becoming director of the Ecole Normale de Toulouse where she was delighted to find a fourth year that would allow her daughter to prepare for the Fontenay competitive examination⁴². The CSIP paid tribute to her again at the meeting of 20 June 1918⁴³. She replied as follows: "Mr. Minister, I read with emotion the greeting you kindly sent me [...]. I hope that at the next session we will be able to sit in the joy of victory, with the consoling thought that those we mourn did not die in vain⁴⁴. "

When she wrote this letter, Albertine Eidenschenk had just finished a three-month leave of absence for health reasons⁴⁵. She had not been spared by the war. In addition to overwork, she had to deal with the death of her son (who died in the Argonne on 22 June 1916) and that of her husband in February 1919. In 1915, Albert Eidenschenk paid one of his last tributes to his mother in a letter sent from the front:

It was during the war that I discovered Mama. In the family, the child who is used to signs of affection [...] does not pay much attention to them. The letter that Mum had slipped into my suitcase when I left Douai, and that I have always carried with me since, deeply moved me. I had [...] discovered in myself such a sense of duty that I made the sacrifice of my life with an ease that I would have refused to believe in peacetime. This feeling had been instilled in me little by little and without my knowledge by Mama, who knew what she was doing. And what surprised me most in her letter was that the confidence she showed me proved that she was sure of having achieved her goal⁴⁶.

In a letter to his fiancée, he also wrote: 'Remember that although a good soldier, I was a pacifist and wished that this terrible war would be the last. Join your efforts with all those who seek to realise this dream and rid humanity of this scourge. It was thus in the name of her son that Albertine Eidenschenk, who was already committed to opposing all warmongering during the Belle Époque, devoted the second part of her life to pacifist militancy.

Conversion to Catholicism and pacifist tendencies: Marie Fuster's Great War

In 1910, after the death of Mathilde Salomon, Marie Baertschi, now Marie Fuster, left her position at the Collège Sévigné and devoted herself exclusively to the Ecole normale de

41 CSIP minutes, F/17/12646.

42 Letter to the administration of 5 October 1918, F/17/23836/B.

43 See the speech given by Minister Lafferre on 20 June 1918 at the opening session of the CSIP, F/17/13646.

44 Letter from Albertine Eidenschenk Minister, Dax, 24 June 1918, F/17/23836/B.

- 45 See his letter to the Minister of 20 February 1918, for leave from 18 February, F/17/23836/B.
- 46 Letter quoted in 'Une femme de bien: Mme Eidenschenk-Patin', *La Française*, 5 March 1938.

the Seine. She inspired great respect in the teaching community: without running for the office of the Fontenaysian association, she regularly received votes in the elections⁴⁷. From a professional point of view, she was very successful: her headmistress Denise Billotey judged her to be "very intelligent, very well gifted [and] inspired by the most recent progress in pedagogy⁴⁸". For his part, the Inspector General supported her in her desire to be appointed to the head of a higher primary school in Paris, to a post of primary inspector or inspector general of nursery schools⁴⁹.

However, the First World War put an end to all these career prospects. On 21 June 1916, the anarchist daily *Le Bonnet Rouge* reproduced an article from the *Bulletin du syndicat des instituteurs (Teachers' Union Bulletin)* devoted to the woman who, until then "very secular", had recently converted to Catholicism and was now accused of proselytising at the *école normale*⁵⁰. The newspaper asked Marie Fuster to leave the public education system and urged republicans to refrain from sending their daughter to this school. Marie Fuster defended herself against these attacks in a letter to her headmistress:

In 1906, when I was still, it seems, "too secular", I wrote an article in "Pages Libres" entitled: "the right to religion", in which I concluded that the only loyal attitude⁵¹ I concluded that the only loyal attitude [...] is to say, "I don't know", and to be ready to follow the truth from whatever side it comes. In adhering to Catholicism, I only conformed to [that]. [...] I did not engage in propaganda, still less in religious pressure at school. And this was not only out of respect for what is called school neutrality, but out of religious conviction: I believe that one must, that one can only give oneself to God freely. It is likely that my religious faith has penetrated and enlivened my teaching. You yourself, Madam, told me one day that I could not fail to be myself. [...] I do not believe that I have done anything that is contrary to the secular spirit - as I was taught to conceive it in the past, as I defined it myself in 1899 in a conference published in Pages libres [...] - that is to say, a spirit of liberty, of respect for the truth [...] and of obedience to what has once been recognised as a duty⁵².

But Marie Fuster's justifications are not enough. An investigation is entrusted to a primary school inspector, Mr Lacabe-Plasteig, who questions the parents, the headmistress and Marie Fuster herself. He is also given extracts from the teacher's correspondence with her pupils. Denise Billotey, headmistress and friend of Marie Fuster, withdrew at the last minute some of the documents she wanted to put in the file, not wanting to condemn "a teacher who is

47 See the "Minutes of the annual meeting of 3 August 1908", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, October 1908.

48 Appraisal dated 1^{er} March 1910, F/17/23692.

49 Appraisals and proposals by F. Martel, Inspector General, December 1915.

50 M. B., "À l'École Normale d'Institutrices de la Seine", *Le Bonnet Rouge*, 21 July 1916.

51 Marie Fuster is mistaken, as this article dates from 10 August 1901.

52 Letter to Denise Billotey, 27 August 1916, F/17/23692.

associated with my work for twelve years and on whom I have always provided excellent reports⁵³". The inspector in charge of the investigation submitted a detailed report to the administration on 28 September 1916. The causes of Marie Fuster's adherence to Catholicism in January 1915 are not explained. No doubt the context of the war as well as the fragile psychological health of the teacher - in July 1913 she presented symptoms of a nervous breakdown⁵⁴ - played a role in her conversion at the age of 47. In any case, according to the investigator, the teacher's religious life "The practice of his religion, even if it is pushed to the point of blissful devotion, is a passionate Catholicism that cannot be considered perfectly healthy⁵⁵". It seems that Marie Fuster entered the religion

"With the fervour of a soul that never gives up:

In the transformation that took place in her, truth and faith became confused and identified. [...] She believed that she remained secular, whereas in her mind rational morality gave way to religious morality and borrowed its foundations. The neutrality of the school [...], she imagined that she respected it [...]. In her mind, she undertook neither religious propaganda nor Catholic proselytism, because she did not expressly deal with denominational questions in class, because she never exerted pressure, and her pupils always came to her freely, because finally her influence [...] was exercised most often outside the school.

However, the pupil-mistresses who come to confide in Marie Fuster outside the school setting do so without the consent of their parents, who complain about it. Marie Fuster did not encourage any of them to join Catholicism, convinced "that a soul can only come to God when God calls it, and that all indoctrination, all pressure, all that is attempted from outside, artificially, is doomed to failure". Nevertheless, she lent her books, maintained correspondence, discussed with her pupils, and even entrusted them to her own director of conscience, Abbé Chaptal, a great name in philanthropic action and a Catholic who had long rallied to the Republic⁵⁶.

A year after Marie Fuster's conversion, it would seem that a dozen pupils or former pupils of the normal school had already made their first communion, so "powerful is the imprint that the spirit of Mrs Fuster leaves on the pupils' minds⁵⁷". Noting that the teacher had not contravened the requirement of neutrality in the exercise of her duties, the inspector declared: "Once off the pulpit, once out of the classroom, the teacher remains the teacher in relation to [her pupils]. It would be a neutrality of parade, which would consist in attributing to himself, to

53 Undated letter [1916] from Denise Billotey.

54 Medical certificate of 6 July 1913 stating that Marie Fuster is suffering from symptoms of nervous breakdown requiring immediate rest.

55 Report by the Inspector of Education to the Director of Primary Education of the Seine and the Vice-Rector of the Paris Academy, 28 September 1916.

56 His sister is Léonie Chaptal, a great philanthropist and an actress in the institutionalisation of the nursing profession.

57 Report by the education inspector, 28 September 1916, F/17/23692.

The teacher who teaches on behalf of the State shall refrain from any religious propaganda among his own pupils, even outside his duties. The teacher who teaches in the name of the State must refrain from any religious propaganda with his own pupils, even outside his duties. After her interview with the inspector, Marie Fuster acknowledged that she had made mistakes and agreed to take a leave of absence from the normal school. However, the troubles did not disappear immediately from the Ecole Normale de la Seine, as the minutes of a meeting of the Teachers' Council on 4 December 1916 show. The minutes refer to nine student teachers who stated that they were going to a training course in a nursery school in order to circumvent the school's exit rules and go either to mass without their parents' permission or to their former teacher's house⁵⁸.

Marie Fuster was not disciplined, but remained on leave for several years. In 1922, she asked to be reinstated in the ranks of public education⁵⁹. She recalls that in 1917, Paul Lapie, Director of Primary Education, had thought of giving her the post of Inspector General of Nursery Schools, which remained a dead letter. Marie Fuster would like to be promoted in the early 1920s when an inspector retires.

Having never received the results of the investigation carried out on her in 1916, Marie Fuster was convinced that she had been cleared: 'Mr Lacabe himself concluded that I was not guilty of any disloyal conduct, that my influence had been exerted by 'radiation' and [...] he said to me verbatim: 'believe that I have as much esteem for you as I did in the past, if not more'.⁶⁰ " It is true that, while considering that Marie Fuster had failed in her duty of reserve, the inspector in charge of the investigation repeatedly shows respect for her charisma and competence.

However, after reading her report in 1917, Daniel-Vincent, Minister of Public Education, declared that "no job of any kind should be opened to Mrs Fuster without the most extreme precautions⁶¹". He vetoed the appointment of Marie Fuster to positions of responsibility. But the charges the Minister brought against Marie Fuster were not limited to the accusation of proselytising: he also cited the "affair of the Marseillaise de la paix", which had tarnished the reputation of this civil servant since 1916.

In March 1916, Denise Billotey received a complaint from a parent against Marie Fuster, who was accused of praising Germany during her lessons to first-year students. Warned by their elders that the teacher was devoting a very interesting lesson to Lamartine's "La Marseillaise de la Paix", the latter organised themselves to take down the lesson, which then became, against the students' intention, a prosecution element in the "Fuster file". The school principal, obliged to refer the matter to the director of primary education, expressed her surprise at the accusation made against the teacher, whose patriotism was unquestionable and who had been involved in the school's war work since the beginning of the conflict⁶².

58 Extract from the minutes of the Teachers' Council of 4 December 1916.

59 Letter to the Director of Primary Education, 8 December 1922.

60 Letter to the administration dated 6 December 1922.

61 Letter from the Minister of Public Instruction to Paul Lapie, Director of Primary Education, 3 October 1917.

62 Letter from Denise Billotey to the Director of Primary Education of the Seine, 23 March 1916.

The shorthand version of Marie Fuster's lecture is in her career file. After referring to two equally warmongering poems - Becker's 'German Rhine' to which Musset responds with his own 'German Rhine' - Marie Fuster praises Lamartine's lofty view in his 'Marseillaise de la paix', in which he responds to hatred and threats of war with a call for fraternity and love between peoples. She quotes a stanza in which the poet expresses his admiration for German culture and history. Marie Fuster then launches into a speech in open opposition to the culture of war: 'We must never let hatred or any other feeling make us fall into unintelligence. [It is a fact that Germany has produced great minds [...]; it is a fact that it has been the land of philosophy and music⁶³. " Marie Fuster refuses the demonisation of the "Boche":

Are we entitled to say that a hundred million Germans are a hundred million scoundrels? [Germany has been guilty of allowing itself to be led by a military ruling class: a people that abandons itself into the hands of a ruling class is responsible (this may well come back to bite us one day). [...] If Germany has let itself be led, this does not mean that the people are bad. The main culprit is Prussia, a military nation that lives for war.

For Marie Fuster, the Germans were, in fact, nothing more than the first victims of their own leaders. Perhaps the teacher's talk of fraternity in the midst of the war was influenced by her recent conversion to ecumenical Catholicism. Perhaps this way of looking at the war is also the consequence of a very close cultural relationship with Germany. Marie Fuster speaks German and even says she has 'lived a lot' in that country. For her, the men on the other side of the front are the same as the French soldiers:

"The mourning, the wounded, the misery are with them as with us. When questioned by a student about German atrocities, Marie Fuster condemned these crimes of "lèse humanité", but refused to respond with hatred. She believes in redemption: the Germans must be seen as "human nature, as beings capable of education and truth".

Marie Fuster encourages her students to maintain their critical intelligence in the face of a culture of war that adds hate to hate. She does so in the perspective of the peace to come:

You don't think we're going to put 100 million men to the sword. Under what conditions will you let them live? [...] Will we put them in a straitjacket? This would justify their hatred of us and would be the cause of a new war in which they would have the law for themselves. So you will let them live. [...] Or the Germans are fundamentally bad and then ... they must be killed like

63 Transcription of Marie Fuster's lesson on "The Marseillaise of Peace".

evil beasts. Or one admits that one will have to live with them [and] one will therefore have to recognise that there is something human about them.

Marie Fuster was already looking ahead to the post-war period: she was convinced that disarmament had to be imposed and economic development encouraged to ensure a lasting peace, otherwise, in her opinion, "we will be at war again in 25 years". She concluded her lesson by declaring herself above the fray: "I am well aware that I am accused of making German propaganda (indignant protests from the students), that is forbidden to me [...] but I am above all that pettiness⁶⁴... " Indeed, if the Great War brought about a wave of "conversions with strong patriotic connotations [...] where adherence to Catholicism cannot be separated from a national, even nationalistic exaltation⁶⁵ "Marie Fuster's trajectory is much more original: in the midst of the bloodshed, her Catholicism is a humanism.

When the teacher is called to account after this lesson, she states that the notes taken during her lesson are truncated⁶⁶. She said that she had explained her horror of the war and had expressed her hope in the French victory. Her only intention was to make it clear that, despite its barbarity, Germany could not be excluded from international life after the war, otherwise it would continue to pose a threat to civilisation. Marie Fuster's superiors are not convinced by her defence. The inspector conducting the investigation considered that she "had been imprudent, that she had not measured her words sufficiently and that she should be reminded of the tact and reserve required by her duties⁶⁷ ". Louis Liard, vice-rector of the Paris Academy, found it inadmissible that a teacher at a teacher training college "should thus profess France's renunciation⁶⁸ ".

A son's wish: Albertine Eidenschenk's pacifist commitment after the Great War

In October 1917, when Mme Dejean de la Bâtie, the headmistress of Fontenay, retired, Anne-Marie Grauvogel, a former Fontenay resident, headmistress of the Ecole Normale de Grenoble and a graduate in philosophy, was appointed to succeed her. Yvonne Oulhiou, author of a book in homage to Fontenay, writes that Mrs Grauvogel was appointed "to the astonishment of the pupils, former pupils and teachers. It would have been normal to wait for the end of hostilities, which would have allowed the headmistresses of the invaded regions to enter the competition. Among them, the most prominent, a member of the Board of Governors, of exceptional merit, appreciated by all, was Mrs Eidenschenk⁶⁹. "

64 Transcription of Marie Fuster's lesson on "The Marseillaise of Peace".

65 Étienne Fouilloux, "Préface", in Frédéric Gugelot, *La conversion des intellectuels au catholicisme en France, 1885-1935*, Paris, CNRS éditions, 2007.

66 Letter from Marie Fuster to the administration, 28 March 1916, F/17/23692.

67 Letter from the Director of Primary Education of the Seine or Vice-Rector of the Academy.

68 The Vice-Rector of the Paris Academy to the Minister of Public Education, 3 April 1916.

69 Yvonne Oulhiou, *L'École normale supérieure de Fontenay-aux-Roses à travers le temps*, op. cit. , p. 189.

Albertine Eidenschenk was indeed the best placed to take up the supreme post at the end of the war: a former Fontenay resident, heir to Pécaut, member of the CSIP, involved in corporatist, feminist and pacifist struggles since the Belle Époque, she was a major figure in secular schools and popular education. Although she did not become head of Fontenay, Albertine Eidenschenk was rewarded for her 30 years of service in public education and her sacrifices during the war by being made a Knight of the Legion of Honour in September 1920, a few months after resuming her duties at the Douai teacher training college, which reopened in January. A year later, the inspector noted: "There is in Madame Eide [*sic*] a bitter crease due no doubt to the suffering endured as a result of the invasion and the war⁷⁰". In 1923, she was judged as a "woman of great heart, very cruelly struck by fate, [who] has withdrawn with courage and abnegation into her role as educator, in which she has always excelled⁷¹".

However, the post-war period was not an opportunity for Albertine Eidenschenk to withdraw into her normal school. In 1906, she founded the Œuvre douaisienne des colonies de vacances (Douais summer camps) and continued to oversee it after the war. She also became the vice-president of the Douais group for the League of Nations. She also supported the Peace through Law Association, the Salvation Army, the anti-alcohol leagues and the anti-tuberculosis campaign.⁷² But above all, two years after her retirement in 1926, she founded the International League of Mothers and Educators for Peace. Odette Laguerre dedicated an article to this association in *La Française* :

A new league has just been formed with the aim of arousing in women, mothers and educators, the desire to work for peace by cultivating in children the sentiments that unite men. [Material disarmament would mean little without the disarmament of minds. But perhaps not enough has been done to convince women of the necessity of this educational effort and of the importance of their active collaboration. Mrs. Eidenschenk, [...] a career educator and mother [...] struck by the war [...], wanted to fill this gap in pacifist propaganda. She thought that mothers should not accept to remain the silent and resigned victims of the terrible scourge that tore their sons away [...]. It is therefore to the mothers that she addresses herself, above all, to lead them to [...] transform their regrets [...] into a courageous and persevering struggle [...]. Independent of any party, [...] the International League of Mothers and Educators for Peace solicits the support of all those who desire a future of peace [...] and understand the need to prepare it through education⁷³.

70 Note by the inspector on an individual notice, Lille, 30 April 1921, 2 T 265, Archives départementales du Nord.

71 Inspector's note on an individual notice, 10 April 1923.

72 Christiane Persyn, *A great educator, Madame Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942*, p. 13.

73 Odette Laguerre, "La Ligue Internationale des Mères et des Éducatrices pour la Paix", *La Française*, 10 November 1928.

The League's programme is to educate children away from xenophobic reflexes, to support the resolution of international conflicts through law and to promote a patriotism that would not find its essence in hatred of others⁷⁴. These objectives are very similar to those already put forward by the Society for Peaceful Education founded by Marguerite Bodin and Madeleine Carlier, an association already supported by Albertine Eidenschenk and Odette Laguerre before the war.

When Albertine Eidenschenk founded the International League of Mothers and Educators for Peace, she was supported by Jules Romains, Ferdinand Buisson, René Cassin and Marcel Sibert⁷⁵. She travelled to many European countries such as Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, England and the Netherlands, with the aim of forming national sections. In Berlin, it was received by the mayor and spoke at the Palais des Sports in front of 3,000 people.⁷⁶ She emphasised the common interests of all mothers in the world, whatever their nationality, and encouraged them to unite against the war. She also spoke regularly in France, sometimes on the spur of the moment, and with great success⁷⁷.

Jeanne Mauchausat, his daughter, is the representative of ELEC for the North. According to her, "immediately, [the League had] a great success and this because we worked outside any political party and any denominational influence, so much so that we had at the same time the blessing of the Papal Nuncio and the fraternal greeting of a representative of the USSR⁷⁸". In 1934, Albertine Eidenschenk made an appeal to all the spiritual leaders of the world:

In the anguish that grips us, we make our fervent appeal to the religious leaders of all confessions, to the pope, to the bishops, to the pastors, to the rabbis, to the spiritual leaders of human groups of all races and philosophies, to all those who, having a faith or an ideal, serve the spirit. Without ignoring what they have already done to move public opinion from the edge of the abyss, we cry out to them:

The world is in danger! [...] It is in these spiritual forces that we wish to place our trust: ... we beseech them to give ... the example of sacred union ... and to lead, without truce, the public struggle to obtain from the responsible governments that all weapons fall from all hands⁷⁹.

The association, which had 90,000 members in the 1930s, also published a monthly magazine which Albertine Eidenschenk and Odette Laguerre edited. Ten years after founding the League and 17 years after being awarded the Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, Albertine

74 Programme reproduced in *Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, op. cit.*, p. 105.

75 *Ibid.*, p. 20.

76 *Ibid.*, p. 39.

77 See the description of the demonstration of 7 September 1930 in *Le Poilu républicain, official organ of the national federation of republican fighters*, November 1930, no. 14. See also "Le Congrès de la Fédération de l'Aisne de la Ligue des Droits de l'Homme", *Le Populaire, organ of the Socialist Party*, 7 December 1932.

78 *Mrs A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, op. cit.* p. 39.

79 A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 'Appeal of mothers and women to the spiritual leaders of the world', *La Française*, 10 March 1934.

Eidenschenk was appointed an officer in 1937. In the letter acknowledging her appointment, she expressed her pleasure at being granted this honour because of her role in ELEC, in which she had put all her remaining physical and moral strength⁸⁰. She said she had founded the association to fulfil the last wish of her son, "a pacifist and a good soldier, if not without fear, at least without reproach". She signs as secretary general of the French section and international president of the League. In the margin of the paper she used is a list of the various national sections of the association, including England, Belgium, Canada, Egypt, Holland, Czechoslovakia, Java, Sweden and Switzerland. Next to the German section is a handwritten note in brackets: "dissolved".

A few years later, Albertine Eidenschenk watched helplessly as the Second World War broke out. In July 1940, when France had just signed the armistice with Hitler, she wrote to her 19-year-old grandson:

The legacy left to us by the old, you say, is not very nice. And how right you are! [You say that we must rebuild. [...] The first condition for building something solid and lasting is [...] to see clearly the situation and the remedies it entails. Now, the rage, the hatred, the spite with which you feel invaded, however legitimate they may be, [...] are not constructive elements, on the contrary! [...] Any reconstruction will be perishable to the extent that hatred and injustice are introduced into it⁸¹.

Her speech is not far from that of Marie Fuster. A year later, Albertine Eidenschenk wrote to Christiane Persyn, one of her former pupils in Douai, about her sorrow for France

betrayed, invaded, in front of a government, which with the vigorous verve of "Châtiments", [she] qualifies as a "bastard of the old regime and of 2 December" [...]: "It is not a privilege, [...] to live to be old, in an age like ours. Life is too cruel. My time is up. But if there is to be a new dawn, I would like to see it, to die in peace".⁸².

But the heart attack that struck Albertine Eidenschenk in April 1942, when she was 77 years old, made her last hope a pious wish.

80 Letter of 2 February 1938 to the Grand Chancellor of the National Order, file on the Legion of Honour of Albertine Eidenschenk, Cote: 19800035/462/61857.

81 Letter to Jean Mauchaussat of 17 July 1940, quoted by Jeanne Mauchaussat-Eidenschenk, in *Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, op. cit.*

82 Letter to Christiane Persyn, 1941, quoted in Christiane Persyn, *Une grande éducatrice, Madame Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, op. cit.*

"A school of my own": Marie Fuster's conversion to free education and social service

Deprived of resources from the autumn of 1916, Marie Fuster obtained a job the following year with the American Red Cross (ARC) as deputy head of the refugee office. In a lecture she gave in Mâcon in 1918, she described the role of her department in the war, through the action of the social workers who had come to France to bring their professionalism and expertise under the impetus of the CRA⁸³. The social action carried out by the CRA during the war consisted of building healthy housing, teaching hygiene, and combating infant mortality and tuberculosis. It continued after the war. Marie Fuster campaigned, for example, for the dissemination of childcare rules and took over the school sector by seeking to improve the meals given free of charge to children in the canteens of the most disaster-stricken areas: "Thus nourished, these children will be in a better position to resist the many causes of infection and contagion that they may encounter in their environment. She makes prevention the main means of fighting infectious diseases: "The spread of tuberculosis is also due in large part to ignorance and carelessness. [We must] teach the people those many simple measures of hygiene which preserve them from so many evils".

Marie Fuster's interest in the working classes is not new. In 1903, she participated with her husband in the foundation of the Alliance d'hygiène sociale⁸⁴. In 1912, she reported on the school hygiene section of the International Exhibition in Dresden⁸⁵. The death of her son Jean from typhoid fever in the summer of 1919 was undoubtedly a determining factor in her commitment to fight infectious diseases caused by poor hygiene.

Since she was unable to find a position in public education, Marie Fuster devoted herself, from the 1920s onwards, to the institutionalisation of social work. She joined her husband in his field, as he held the chair of Social Welfare at the Collège de France. Like his wife, Édouard Fuster was convinced that the doors to social work should be opened to women. In *La Française*, he believes that, unlike the Anglo-Saxon countries, France is not

...] of the two sexes in the management of common affairs. [...] Men, who have hitherto been the sole managers of public affairs, must begin to recognise the value of women and to entrust them with a share of responsibility. [...] If we are really to practice democracy, ... it is time

83 *Annales de l'Académie de Mâcon*, Troisième série - tome XXI, Procès-verbaux des séances, 1918, p. 209-229.

84 "Composition du conseil d'administration de l'Alliance d'hygiène sociale", *La Revue philanthropique*, May-October 1910. For a time, Édouard Fuster was the secretary general.

85 Marie Fuster, "L'hygiène scolaire à l'Exposition internationale d'hygiène de Dresde", *Revue d'hygiène et de police sanitaire*, 1912.

to admit that women, [...] because of their own qualities, must take their place in this social service [...]. From now on, we will no longer tolerate them, but call them⁸⁶.

Édouard Fuster is thinking in particular of the emerging post-war profession of social worker. The Fusters campaigned for the establishment of a training course for these future professionals, who had to be capable of conducting investigations in working-class areas in order to organise appropriate and effective assistance. Marie Fuster's experience at the CRA's Refugee Office was a springboard for her transition to social work. She played a major role in the foundation of the sixth French school of social work in 1926. The School of Family Social Action was part of the Moulin-Vert, a group of philanthropic initiatives founded at the beginning of the century by Abbé Viollet, whose dreyfusan past brought him closer to Marie Fuster. The latter became its director of studies until the mid-1930s. Her pupils studied the preparation of a family budget, the rules of social welfare and assistance, and labour and housing legislation. Marie Fuster was particularly concerned with the relationship between the family and educational institutions⁸⁷ She also taught general culture, where she was as iconoclastic as ever, since she made students study both Sangnier's Sillon - condemned by the Pope in 1910 because of its social modernism - and the texts of Karl Marx⁸⁸.

In 1928, an International Social Service Conference was held in Paris. The Fuster couple took an active part in it. The following year, Marie Fuster was appointed as the representative of the six French schools of social work. Together with her husband, she campaigned for the State to recognise a social worker's diploma that was different from the nursing diploma. In 1931, Serge Gas, Director of Hygiene and Assistance at the Ministry of Health, "impressed by the reports made on the situation in each country, which Mrs Fuster translated, activated the study of the State diploma project⁸⁹". The diploma was finally set up in 1932, with the State officially validating the existence of a new profession in the field of social work.

One of the last texts in Marie Fuster's handwriting dates from 1936. At the age of 68, she was still presented as the director of the Family Social School at the Third International Social Work Conference in London. She described the effects of unemployment in France and argued for radical social reform to help the unemployed⁹⁰.

In parallel with her work at the *École sociale familiale* - which, although born in the Catholic fold, applied religious neutrality - Marie Fuster became involved in the *Association du mariage chrétien* founded by Chaptal and Viollet in 1918. At the 1923 congress, she spoke of the role of the

86 Édouard Fuster, "L'éducation des femmes et leur rôle dans les services publics", *La Française*, 22 October 1921.

87 Brigitte Bouquet, "École d'action sociale familiale", *Vie sociale*, n°1-2, 1995, p. 31.

88 Testimony of a former student quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 34.

89 Simone Boyer, Christine Rater-Garcette, "Le Comité d'entente des écoles de service social", *Vie sociale*, n°1-2, 1995, p. 120.

90 *Proceedings of the Third International Social Service Conference*, London, 12-18 July 1936, Le Play House Press, 35 Gordon Square, London, WCI, 1938, p. 584 and p. 599.

mother in the education of children⁹¹ four years later, she spoke on the subject of the instruction of engaged couples, where she spoke just after her former colleague from Collège Sévigné, Madeleine Daniélou⁹². She spoke at numerous conferences during the 1920s⁹³. She repeated the convictions she had always held about the education of young girls:

I spent my entire career in the teacher training colleges, where, as you know, future teachers are prepared. [As with my former pupils, I say to you:] Develop your intelligence, increase your culture, work every day to acquire more common sense, more judgement, more solidity of mind⁹⁴.

Marie Fuster refuses to present motherhood as a sacrifice: "How often does this spirit of sacrifice result in the annihilation of the one who sacrifices herself? [...] She no longer thinks, she no longer reads, she no longer thinks. Don't ask her what she thinks about a subject [...]: she no longer has any other opinion than that of her husband [...]. Her personality has sunk. Armed with these convictions, Marie Fuster believes more than ever in the virtues of female education.

In 1899, when she was in conflict with her administration, Marie Baertschi regretfully rejected the idea of running a secondary school: "I have long cherished the dream of having my own school, where I would try to educate in the sense in which I understand the word. I would have done some good there, I believe; I couldn't, and now I never will⁹⁵". It was finally in the 1920s, and in free education, that she realised her dream by finally running her own school independently. She kept the fate of the working classes in mind and thus remained faithful to She was a "spirit of Fontenay". A highly talented speaker, she took over the Catholic congresses after having taken the podium at the popular universities a few decades earlier. Despite her resounding conversion, Marie Fuster defended the same values in 1930 as in 1900: the cult of intelligence, faith in social progress, the ideal of tolerance and respect for individual dignity. Moreover, in her old age she retained the freedom of tone that characterised her youth.

Widowed seven years earlier, she died in 1942. Unlike Pauline Kergomard, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello and Albertine Eidenschenk, Marie Fuster was never awarded the Legion of Honour. Her fundamental non-conformism and her conversion to Catholicism prevented her from receiving any official recognition from the Ministry of Public Instruction, which in any case never seemed to be the objective of this very independent civil servant who had once professed her abhorrence for the administration⁹⁶.

91 "Congrès de l'association du mariage chrétien", *La Croix*, 27 February 1923.

92 "Cinquième congrès national du mariage chrétien", *La Croix*, 29 April 1927.

93 See his speech 'Another great victim of divorce: love', at the VI^e national congress of the CMA in 1928 (*La Croix*, 17 May 1928) and 'The companionate marriage', *La Croix*, 2 May 1930.

94 "The Role of the Woman in the Home", *The Parish and the Family. Compte rendu des travaux du V^e Congrès de l'AMC*, (30 April - 2 May 1927), Paris, Secrétariat de l'Association du mariage chrétien, 1927, 228 p., pp. 161-164.

95 Letter from Marie Baertschi to Ferdinand Buisson, undated, probably autumn 1899, Fonds Ferdinand Buisson, Bibliothèque de la Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français, 022Y/2-3.

96 Letter to Ferdinand Buisson, 2 November 1899.

General conclusion

Contributions of this thesis

In her book *Écrire l'histoire des femmes et du genre (Writing the History of Women and Gender)*, Françoise Thébaud invites historians to grasp women "as agents of history, in their diffuse resistance, their gestures or their positive actions [and to] bring out a feminine identity and a capacity for autonomy on the part of women in mixed domains, and even more so in domains that are specific to them¹". It is this objective that has been pursued in the course of this work on female intellectuals involved in the defence of the secular school. Their emergence at the turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries was a decisive moment in the symbolic battle of public speaking by women. As Juliette Rennes reminds us, two antithetical historiographies have ploughed this field:

"One view sees women as passive beneficiaries of the gradual movement towards equality. The other insists on the multiplicity of resistances and the continuity of struggles necessary to obtain a place in meritocratic institutions²". It is from the second perspective that this thesis is written. It shows how a female elite, by seizing the opportunities opened up by the republican meritocracy, subverts the social and professional role that had been recognised for it in order to impose itself in spaces hitherto monopolised by men.

To this end, this thesis pursued several methodological ambitions. Between the analysis of ideas and the attention paid to individual itineraries, the challenge was to retrace the trajectories of intellectual women by placing them in the institutional and political upheavals of an era. The aim was to avoid a catalogue of portraits and to show how these itineraries interacted and intertwined in the Belle Époque. The difficulty lay in de-anonymising some of the intellectuals and enabling the reader to identify them in a mass of names that are little known in historiography. It was also a question of adopting the postulate of the sociology of knowledge according to which "thought is integral to social being"³. The aim was also, by adopting the postulate of the sociology of knowledge according to which "thought is integral to social being", to show that intellectual productions are the result of the life history of individuals and the environment in which they evolve.

The spiritual paths of the women intellectuals at the heart of this thesis, for example, allow us to better understand the way in which they approach the question of secularism. As René Rémond implied, secular commitment is in no way the translation of a religious indifference, but on the contrary the sign of an over-investment in spiritual questions⁴. The number of women intellectuals studied here who changed their religious beliefs during their lives is indeed striking. It testifies to the place that the issue occupies in their personal lives. The table below also shows the over-representation of religious minorities in the commitment to secular schools.

1 Françoise Thébaud (preface by Alain Corbin), *Écrire l'histoire des femmes et du genre, op. cit.*, p. 86.

2 Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature, op. cit.*, p. 219.

3 Gubor Tverdota, "Freely Attached Intellectuals: Milestones for a Reappraisal of Karl Mannheim's Sociology of the Intelligentsia," *GRM Papers* [Online], 6 | 2014, accessed December 26, 2014, September 30, 2016, <http://grm.revues.org/517>.

4 Quoted by Jacqueline Lalouette, (preface by Maurice Agulhon), *La Libre-Pensée en France*, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

Spiritual evolution of intellectuals committed to the secular school⁵

<u>Name (in order of birth)</u>	<u>Evolution</u>
Clarisse Coignet	Family partly Catholic in tendency → liberal Protestantism.
Mathilde Salomon	Raised in Judaism → atheism.
Pauline Kergomard	Raised in Protestantism → agnosticism.
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello	Raised in Catholicism → atheism.
Odette Laguerre	Remains agnostic all his life.
Marie Dugard	Raised in Catholicism → Protestantism.
Albertine Eidenschenk	Brought up religiously indifferent → became Catholic and mystic in childhood and adolescence → agnostic in adulthood.
Marie Baertschi-Fuster	Raised with religious indifference → late conversion to Catholicism.
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	Catholic faith as a child and teenager → agnosticism.

This thesis also aimed to use the category of the intellectual as a means of decompartmentalising several historiographies that had previously been separated. By studying individual itineraries, the aim was to bring together works with a political focus, social history research and studies of religious history on the construction of secularism and the history of religious minorities. As far as the history of education is concerned, the aim was to break away from an approach to educational institutions based on a division by order, with most of the work focusing on either primary, secondary or higher education. It was also to break with a tendency to treat public and free education in a hermetic way. These divisions no longer exist when we analyse the sociability networks of the women intellectuals studied here. Thus, within the Ligue de l'enseignement, Pauline Kergomard, inspector general of nursery schools, Mathilde Salomon, director of a free and secular institution of secondary education, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, director of a girls' high school, Marie Baertschi, a teacher at a teacher training college, and Marie Dugard, a high school teacher, rub shoulders. Although they worked in very different educational institutions, these intellectuals worked together in the wake of Dreyfusism.

This study also aimed to take a new look at the history of the Third Republic. The aim was to examine the way in which intellectual women, although excluded from active citizenship, conceived of this political form. In their mental universe, the Republic is an ideal of humanist inspiration with which they identify. Most of them also came from the working middle classes, which Gambetta called the 'new strata' and which formed the social base of the regime. These intellectuals also constituted a moral community welded around the secular project. When he talks about these female teachers, Patrick Cabanel notes

5 Some evolve towards *atheism* and manifest the certainty of the absence of God. Those considered as *agnostics* have not shown anything so radical but live far from religious faith.

and that 'there was a deep correspondence between them and the regime⁶'. Exceptional as they were, these intellectuals were the bearers of a shared worldview and professional culture. They are also the spokespersons for the common interests of a whole group of women. The analysis of their career paths therefore offers some insights into a wider and mostly silent female community.

One of the ambitions of this work was also to adopt a political approach to educational issues, by showing how the context conditions the daily practices of teachers who are convinced that school is the place where the future of the country is played out and who therefore engage in a permanent reflexivity on their pedagogical choices. Inspection reports, conflicts with the hierarchy, and memories of former pupils made it possible to look into the classrooms. But the aim was above all to find these teachers, principals and inspectors, outside the school, because it is in contact with the public space that they become intellectuals. In order to categorise this concept, it was necessary to study the conditions of emergence of these public figures: creation of educational and professional opportunities for women; development of female or mixed speech spaces; acquisition of expertise on school issues that have become central to social debates. Through the analysis of these trajectories, the aim was to study the intellectual and professional training of some women, the spaces in which they express themselves, the social image they convey, the way in which they acquire legitimacy in debates and the strategies they put in place to circumvent their exclusion from the political sphere. By starting this study at the threshold of the 1880s - or even earlier, in some developments - the aim was to study the intellectual not only at the moment when she is a recognised and influential figure, but through her process of construction over a longer time.

Is the intellectual condemned to be a feminist?

While this work promised to study the intellectuals active in the debates about the school, the investigation inevitably followed the path of feminism, as if it were the very essence of the intellectual to commit herself to the improvement of women's lot. The most common manifestation of this feminism seemed to be the way in which these intellectuals conceived of the education of girls. Thus, while the laws of the 1880s appeared to many men to be the ultimate fulfilment of the promise to educate girls as well as boys, the female intellectuals who had themselves benefited from these innovations in their youth considered these institutions to be no more than a draft to be perfected.

For example, when Pauline Kergomard looks back on the debates on female secondary education at the time of the school laws, she notes that Camille Sée "was not

⁶ Patrick Cabanel, *Le Dieu de la République*, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

feminist, in the sense that we give to this word⁷ "and that he did not want to turn his lycées into factories for a new female identity. However, according to the inspector general, "his law was passed: the truth works". Pauline Kergomard was indeed convinced that by gaining access to knowledge, women became aware of the domination they suffered: education was therefore the essence of their liberation. Through the school laws, the regime would have provided women with weapons to challenge gender inequalities.

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben argued for a modernisation of girls' schooling. According to her, the justifications used in the 1880s to limit female education no longer hold up: it is no longer possible to educate women with the sole aim of making them mothers and wives. For her, "the work of 1880 is outdated, ideas, like morals, have made their way. Women are no longer considered as the complement of men, but as their equal. She should no longer be raised for him, but 'returned to herself'.⁸". Here we see a clear shift from a "relational" feminism⁹ "Here we see a clear shift from a 'relational' feminism, which aims to educate women to be fit for specific social functions, to an 'individualistic' feminism, which emphasises the right of women to be treated in the same way as men, as human persons. Most of the women intellectuals studied in this thesis mobilise arguments from both sensibilities together, depending on the audience they are addressing. However, several of them began to move from a 'relational' to an 'individualistic' feminism in the course of their lives. This is the case of Albertine Eidenschenk, who wrote in 1904:

Speeches in Parliament, speeches at the inauguration of girls' schools or colleges, it is always the same doctrine: man needs a companion capable of understanding and helping him; children need a mother who is an intelligent educator. But that the female soul is made like the male soul to understand and love the truth apart from any immediate interest [...] is what no one has yet said in an official way¹⁰.

In addition to their desire to provide girls with an education worthy of the name, the intellectuals studied here engaged in a twofold struggle against Catholic morality and republican prudery, both of which were equally committed to keeping gender hierarchies intact. Indeed, republican men did not see the secularisation of girls' education as an instrument of emancipation. On the contrary, this secularisation was achieved at the cost of "an increase in morality: it was a question of proving that the Catholics were wrong to raise the spectre of immorality

7 Pauline Kergomard, "À travers l'éducation, l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles", *La Fronde*, 25 September 1898.

8 Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben, "BESJ", *Revue universitaire*, 15 November 1910.

9 See Karen Offen, "Defining Feminism: A Comparative Historical Approach", art. cit.

10 A. Eidenschenk, "La femme nouvelle - culture morale", *La Femme nouvelle*, 15 April 1904.

secular¹¹ ". In these circumstances, to defend coeducation in primary and secondary schools or to advocate sex education is to contravene the injunction to moralism that characterises secular education and to make the school the matrix of female emancipation.

The situation is not fundamentally different among the few Catholic intellectuals studied here: because of their audacity, Mother Marie du Sacré-Coeur and the Viscountess of Adhemar are accused of feminism by their detractors, the nun even being considered a blue bas¹². The secular school activists saw in their struggle the timid penetration of the idea of gender equality in the Catholic Church, which appeared to them as intrinsically

"It is a 'secular' and 'republican' approach. But contrary to what freethinking intellectuals are convinced, there is nothing exclusively secular about the interest in women's rights, as Karen Offen explains: "feminism cannot be seen as a subset of any ideology, be it Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, liberal, socialist or Marxist (even if historically a feminist critique has emerged in each of these traditions by asking the primary question: 'what about women?')¹³ ". Thus, a figure like Madeleine Daniélou, without declaring herself a feminist, bears witness to the potential for reflection and renewal in Catholicism on the subject of female education. The trajectories of Mère Marie du Sacré-Cœur and Mme d'Adhémar demonstrate that there is a simultaneous desire for the improvement of female education among Catholics and lay people. The existence of these dissident personalities within the ecclesiastical institution makes it possible to show that Catholic education, far from being the obscurantist antithesis of the secular school, was, in the ten years preceding the Great War, a spur to the renovation of women's high schools.

While the denunciation of gender inequality in education is what drives many women intellectuals to adopt a feminist discourse, it is not the only reason for their commitment. Their feminism is also based on their personal experience. In seeking prestigious positions and speaking out in the public arena, they all experience transgression and are confronted with the hostility that comes with any manifestation of female ambition. Female intellectuals are thus, in one way or another, forged by anti-feminism. In the chapter of *The Second Sex* devoted to the independent woman, Simone de Beauvoir shows how, by her very existence, the intellectual constitutes a challenge to the patriarchal model. Through her work, which she sees as a means of personal fulfilment, she bridges the distance between herself and men: "she ceases to be a parasite [and] the system based on her dependence

11 Anne Martin-Fugier, *La Bourgeoise*, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

12 Han Ryner mentions her in his book on the bas-bleus: 'No, I will not slaughter Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart. I will avoid the sacrilege of touching a nun. [...] Let her continue to beg to build her normal school for nuns. I abandon her to the wrath of Monsignor Turinaz', in *Le massacre des Amazones*, Chamuel, Paris, s.d. [around 1900], 300 p., p. 252.

13 Karen Offen, "Defining Feminism: A Comparative Historical Approach", *art. cit.* Feminism must be viewed as not intrinsically a subset of any [...] ideology, whether Catholic or Protestant Christian, Judaic, liberal, socialist, or Marxist (although historically a feminist critique has emerged within each of these traditions by initially posing the question: "And what about women?"

collapses; between her and the universe there is no longer any need for a male mediator¹⁴ ". The intellectual disdains the invisibility of a domestic destiny and refuses to delegate her voice to men. Necessarily subversive, her speaking out, through the reactions of defiance that it generates, provokes or reinforces her conviction of the injustice of gender relations and necessarily leads her along the road to feminism. Moreover, as she is brought into closer contact with men in the new spaces she enters, she no longer believes so unconditionally in their supremacy, noting all the vices that dominant masculinity carries within it¹⁵. In an approach tinged with Marxism, Marie-Christine Kok-Escalé also considers that feminist commitment is consubstantial with the definition of the intellectual: "The intellectual is the one who, engaged in the public arena, monitors the powers that be. [...] Now, power belongs to men; to act as an intellectual woman is therefore to fight against the traditional patriarchy, to criticise men about the way they manage society¹⁶. "

The intellectuals studied here are also part of the feminist movement insofar as they share a "feminine conscience", or even a "feminist" conscience: whether they declare it openly or not, they almost always speak on behalf of women, and refuse, with varying degrees of virulence, "the claim of men to define what is best for them".¹⁷ "Whether they declare it openly or not, they almost always speak on behalf of women, and refuse, with varying degrees of virulence, "the claim of men to define what is best for women without consulting them¹⁸ ". All of these women intellectuals address specific women's issues, where they feel they have a special voice.

However, some of them are reluctant to call themselves feminists or even declare themselves frankly hostile to feminism, such as Marguerite Aron. Simone de Beauvoir dissected the mechanism by which women act against the interests of their sex: "To refuse to be the Other, to refuse complicity with man, would be for them to renounce all the advantages that the alliance with the superior caste can confer on them. [...] The man who constitutes the woman as an *Other* will therefore find deep complicities in her¹⁹. "

Moreover, while most of the women intellectuals studied here join the feminist ranks, they are careful to conform to what is expected of a woman. They apologise for speaking up²⁰ hesitate to speak out in mixed-gender meetings²¹ praise female freedom in the US, but consider it impossible in France²² They are suspicious of women's work and the dislocation of the

14 Simone de Beauvoir, *Le Deuxième Sexe*, tome II, Paris, Gallimard, 1986, p. 587.

15 *Ibid*, p. 602.

16 Marie-Christine Kok-Escalé, "Féminisme et sémiotique: les intellectuelles en France, un engagement spécifique?"

17 In "Defining Feminism: A Comparative Historical Approach", art. cit. Karen Offen talks about "female consciousness" and defines "feminist consciousness" as seeing "women's collective situation in the culture as unjust".

18 *In Ibid*: "men's claims to define what is best for women without consulting them".

19 Simone de Beauvoir, *Le deuxième sexe, tome I*, Paris, Gallimard, 1986, p. 23-24.

20 See Denise Billotey, 'Speech at the distribution of prizes at the Edgar Quinet Girls' High School', *Revue pédagogique*, December 1897.

21 Like Mathilde Salomon at CSIP.

22 Like Marie Dugard back from her study trip.

family as a consequence of maternal absence²³ consider that women have an inherent duty to care for others²⁴ They object to the methods of the most radical feminists, especially those who take the suffragettes as models²⁵ etc. Few, like Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, openly invited women to revolt and dared to break with social codes. If most female intellectuals intend to remain fully female, it is often with the aim - conscious or not - of "approaching the other sex with the maximum of chances²⁶". It is true that the few experiments in female non-conformism in the early twentieth century were unpromising. Madeleine Pelletier, who had decided to wear the male costume - "My costume says to the man, 'I am your equal'²⁷" - was interned on the eve of the Second World War. She wrote to H  l  ne Brion: "This is how women who distinguish themselves intellectually are treated in France. [Arria Ly] committed suicide and I am in an insane asylum²⁸".

The intellectuals of the Belle   poque were thus torn between daring and consensus-building: in order to gain acceptance for their ideas, which were considered subversive in terms of girls' education, coeducation, sex education, pacifism or secularism, they had to be careful not to frighten the decision-makers. Most of them therefore avoid any form of masculinisation, since this attitude crystallises the anxiety of men. Pauline Kergomard, for example, called herself a "feminist-feminist²⁹". The analysis of the trajectories of these women intellectuals allows us to highlight the plurality of feminism and to distinguish between a political feminism, which involves the demand for new rights (full citizenship, salary recognition, etc.) and a "practical feminism"³⁰ "This refers to the freedom of tone and movement that some women manage to adopt in a still very patriarchal society. These attempts at female independence and self-assertion are always accompanied by strategies of legitimisation that women cannot escape, unlike their male counterparts. Several decades later, things have not changed much, as Simone de Beauvoir explains:

If I want to define myself I am obliged to declare first: 'I am a woman'; this truth constitutes the background against which all other statements will be removed. A man never begins by posing as an individual of a certain sex: that he is a man goes without saying. [...] It is understood that being a man is not a singularity; a man is in the right by being a man, it is the woman who is in the wrong³¹.

23 This is the case of Pauline Kergomard, among others.

24 See Marie Baertschi, 'Questions f  minines', *L'  cho de la semaine politique et litt  raire*, 7 January 1900.

25 Pauline Kergomard complained in 1909 about the brutal intrusion of the suffragist S  verine in a meeting.

26 Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex, Volume II, op. cit.*

27 Quoted in Joan W. Scott, *The Paradoxical Citizen, op. cit.*, p. 190.

28 Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 209. She is accused of helping a 13-year-old girl raped by her brother to have an abortion.

29 Pauline Kergomard, "L'  ducation des filles dans une d  mocratie", *La Fronde*, 7 December 1899.

30 R  mi Cazals, "L'intellectuel protestant   tait un couple, Jules et Marie-Louise Puech", *Bulletin de la Soci  t   de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Fran  ais*, vol. 149, July-August-September 2003, pp. 591-610.

31 Simone de Beauvoir, *Le deuxi  me sexe, tome I, op. cit.*, p. 16.

Simone de Beauvoir's observation applies perfectly to female intellectuals speaking at the turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries. They always speak either 'as women', on behalf of so-called special skills, or 'although they are women', on non-feminine subjects. Their membership of the female gender precedes them in all speaking.

Women in a Republic of men: a specifically feminine way of acting in intellectual affairs?

The intellectuals at the centre of this thesis are both *within* and *outside* the Republic. In the Republic, because they are entrusted with the republican education of youth. Outside the Republic, because as women they do not enjoy full political rights. They therefore constantly vacillated between gratitude to a regime that had offered them a career - they were, to a certain extent, "parvenues" of the Republic, to whom they owed their situation - and criticism of the conservatism of its leaders. In their eyes, it is clear that the Republic has not fulfilled all its promises. Intellectual women are "Ms. Still"³².

While some female intellectuals abound in the suffragist ranks, many cultivate a certain distance from politics and counter what appears to be the embodiment of the excesses of masculinity. They all made a point of not imitating men³³. They want to embody a feminine way of being intellectual. Marie Baertschi states:

I have far too high an opinion of women to ever want to make them a more or less successful copy of men. Ah, certainly, I want rights for women, or rather a right, that of being women, not things, not dolls, but human persons, that is to say reasons, consciences, wills [...] but anything that aims only at making them doubles of men irritates and indignifies me³⁴.

This refusal to imitate the masculine is also manifested in an 'ethic of the pen' that is claimed to be feminine. Thus, none of the texts studied in this thesis reveals the slightest insult: such a practice is considered a manifestation of toxic masculinity. In the same logic, Pauline Kergomard refuses to name her opponents, considering that *ad hominem* attacks do not advance the debate: "it is with intention that I do not name

32 Nickname given to Maria Verona when, after a vote in the Senate against women's suffrage, she cried out: "Long live the Republic!"

33 As Florence Rochefort writes: "Feminist criticism readily presents the Republic as a regime hijacked by men for their own benefit. Republicans are sent back to their gender. ("La République des féministes", in Vincent Duclert, Christophe Prochasson (eds.), *Dictionnaire critique de la République*, op. cit. pp. 333-338).

34 Marie Baertschi, 'Questions féminines', *L'Écho de la semaine politique et littéraire*, 7 January 1900.

I am firmly resolved to remain on the ground of principle.³⁵ ". It is also striking that, while constantly referring to the Dreyfus affair, the women intellectuals almost never quote it, no doubt in order to avoid the polemical violence associated with it. Trained in the cult of rational and substantiated argumentation, they refused to imitate the male writers who were rampant in the press at a time when the major titles were displaying their polemical violence. At the end of the XIX^e century, "personal attacks, insults, are the spice that journalists and newspapers use to attract readers³⁶ ". Conversely, intellectual women wanted to embody a dignified femininity. Florence Rochefort thus notes that if *La Fronde* ventures into the polemical register, it is careful "never to commit the insult regularly denounced as an unacceptable male journalistic practice³⁷ ". Even Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, undoubtedly the most virulent in her positions, never resorts to insults: the violence of her comments is the result of an argument based on undeniable proof of the duplicity of parliamentarians.

While claiming a certain 'ethic of the pen' against the shortcomings of male journalism, many of these women intellectuals refuse to emphasise their femininity. Unlike Marguerite Durand, who liked to say that the successes of feminism in France owed much to her blond hair, Pauline Kergomard, a *feminist* in her own right, refused to allow Jane Misme, director of *La Française*, to publish her photograph: "I don't want my portrait to be reproduced. I hate this kind of publicity, which does harm to our ideas; I am sorry that women have adopted this system, which I do not like even for men.³⁸ "

If intellectual women seek to present themselves as models of ethical controversy and embody a new journalism, the same is true when it comes to making democracy work on a small scale. Thus, within the Ligue de l'enseignement, the members of the Ladies' Committee are very attached to a collective functioning and are suspicious of any capture of authority by a single person. They are an exception in the association, which is generally based on a notabilistic conception of politics. Similarly, the elections of women to the CSIP are preceded by consultations aimed at designating the best candidate as impartially as possible, who in return constantly solicits her electors to obtain their approval before presenting reform projects on their behalf. Through the repeated election of Albertine Eidenschenk, the women inaugurated a mechanism that closely resembled the imperative mandate, with the candidate being committed to representing her constituents as closely as possible. The logic is the same when Pauline Kergomard spontaneously resigns so as not to betray the trust placed in her by her voters. To our knowledge, nothing similar exists in such a systematic way among the male members of the CSIP. Excluded from the Republic, the

35 Pauline Kergomard, "Choses de l'enseignement", *La Fronde*, 12 August 1899.

36 Marc Martin, *Médias et journalistes dans la République*, Paris, Odile Jacob, 1997, p. 108.

37 Florence Rochefort, "Dreyfusisme et femmes nouvelles", art. cit.

38 Pauline Kergomard to Jane Misme, 3 October 1909, Jane Misme fonds, BMD (album 1-5, box 1-7).

intellectuals are more worthy of it than the Republicans themselves³⁹. Although they have been pushed out of the political process, they know that the Republic is their salvation. According to Ivan Jablonka:

even if it is sometimes instrumentalised by men, democracy provides a political and intellectual framework for women's emancipation. [Democracy is both the origin and the outcome of women's rights. The origin, because it promotes the idea that citizens are equal to each other and have inalienable rights; the outcome, because the emancipation of all is its *raison d'être*⁴⁰.

It must be said that intellectuals benefit from the advantages of the regime. By promoting competitive recruitment to the detriment of co-optation among peers, the Republic opened the doors of the civil service to categories that had previously been excluded. Religious minorities seized these new opportunities, but women also over-invested in their studies and their professional activity to compensate for their illegitimacy and to honour the trust they enjoyed. Many of them have several handicaps: they are often Protestant or Jewish and put their hope in a regime that claims to reject any distinction between its citizens. A sentence written by Mathilde Salomon to her co-religionist Salomon Reinach demonstrates her teleological vision of history, in which the Republic appears as the completion of an age-old struggle for justice and equality: "What so many centuries, so many wills have not finished, will our Republic do?⁴¹ ? "

In their daily work of presenting to their pupils the history of the struggles to establish the Republic since the French Revolution and praising the Republican motto, teachers take on these values. They take up the "meritocratic discourse of self-realisation through personal work and [through] the expression of individual gifts and talents⁴² ". Since the role assigned to them was to bring morals into line with the new institutions in order to entrench the regime, they became its propagandists and were therefore the most likely to be affected by its betrayals. For them, as Nicole Mosconi explains, secularism does not only have a religious content: born with free and compulsory schooling, secularism designates the "right of every schooled individual to be treated in the same way, regardless of his or her individual particularities, race, religion, class and sex⁴³ ".

As Mona Ozouf has shown, if historians of education have overemphasised the specificities of the secular school, it is because of the fact that it is the only school in the world that has the right to be a member of the community,

39 And when, like Anna Lampérière or Dick May, they act as autocrats, they are disowned by their female counterparts (see the conflict between Dick May and Pauline Kergomard over the Orphelinat des Armées).

40 Ivan Jablonka, *Des hommes justes, du patriarcat aux nouvelles masculinités*, Paris, Seuil, 2019, p. 306.

41 Letter probably written on 20 January 1901 to Salomon Reinach, Salomon Reinach collection, Bibliothèque Méjanes, Aix-en-Provence.

42 Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature*, *op. cit.*, p. 468.

43 Nicole Mosconi, "Conclusion", in Rebecca Rogers (ed.), (preface by Geneviève Fraisse), *La mixité dans l'éducation*, *op. cit.* pp. 197-204.

there is at least one feature that radically distinguishes the school that Ferry invented from the other: it is the place where the victory of the republican principle over the monarchical principle is won, consolidated and celebrated. [...] It teaches the Republic as an indisputable, almost natural form of politics. [...] The republican impregnation of the child's conscience is its true function⁴⁴.

One of the immense paradoxes of the Third Republic crystallised in the case of secular women teachers: they had made women agents of republicanisation without having recognised their right to be full citizens. It is hardly surprising, then, that some of them, although excluded from national suffrage, invested in other elections. Caught up in its paradoxes, the regime cannot refuse their candidacy in various spaces, such as the CSIP. Women took advantage of the silence surrounding their status to take up modes of expression that had often existed for a long time, but which took on a particular meaning in the Republic: the electoral process, the drafting of petitions, free expression in the press, etc. The first generation of women trained by the new regime acquired full civic maturity in the Belle Époque. It was as women, and even more so as feminists, that intellectuals fulfilled a "critical function in the service of democratic values"⁴⁵ "It was thanks to them that criticism of the regime with regard to gender discrimination was voiced.

For, as Anne-Sarah Bouglé-Moalic writes, while there are 'minimalist' republicans - who define the Republic solely in terms of its institutions - and 'maximalist' republicans - who define it in terms of its content, claiming to be the legacy of the French Revolution, proclaiming themselves to be anti-clerical and enemies of a strong executive power - none of these currents makes women's rights a component of republican culture.⁴⁶ Even those who adhere to a maximalist definition of the Republic never seek to include women⁴⁷. We can only agree with Florence Rochefort's observation: "The question of gender equality transcends the traditional oppositions of the political spectrum and those played out around the secular pact, because it is situated at another level of antagonism, that of male/female relations⁴⁸. " It is therefore to the intellectuals and their allies that we owe the entry of the "women's question" into republican culture. Such female activism within republicanism should challenge history

44 Mona Ozouf, preface to the new edition of *L'école, l'Église et la République*, [1982], *op. cit.*, p. 12.

45 Marie-Christine Granjon, "L'histoire des intellectuels: synthèse et perspectives", in Michel Trebistch, Marie-Christine Granjon (eds.), *Pour une histoire comparée des intellectuels*, *op. cit.*, p. 19-37.

46 Anne-Sarah Bouglé-Moalic, *Le vote des Françaises: cent ans de débats*, *op. cit.*, p. 12. She borrows the distinction between a minimalist and a maximalist Republic from Maurice Agulhon.

47 Ferdinand Buisson is an exception in the radical party. Nor were the socialists feminists. See Florence Rochefort and Éliane Viennot, *L'engagement des hommes pour l'égalité des sexes (XIV^e-XX^e siècle)*, *op. cit.* and Alban Jacquemart (preface by Olivier Fillieule), *Les hommes dans les mouvements féministes. Socio-histoire d'un engagement improbable*, Rennes, PUR, 2015.

48 Florence Rochefort, 'L'antiféminisme à la Belle Époque, une rhétorique réactionnaire', in Christine Bard (ed.), (preface by Michelle Perrot), *Un siècle d'antiféminisme*, *op. cit.*

political. However, many historians have considered a gendered approach to the history of the Third Republic to be irrelevant, as Joan W. Scott laments:

Gender was [for a long time] seen as a category antithetical to the serious business of real politics. [Political history - which still remains the dominant mode of historical enquiry - has been the bastion of resistance to the inclusion of materials or questions about women and gender⁴⁹.

The turn to the left in the 1900s: intellectual women in the 'sinistroyre movement

The "1900s" represent a major stage in the emergence of the public figure of the intellectual. These years form the frothy crest of the first feminist wave: the daily publication of *La Fronde*, the various congresses at the Paris Universal Exhibition, the beginnings of the new woman perched on her bicycle, the first women in men's professions⁵⁰ are all upheavals concerning the place of women in society. As Nicole Cadène writes, "times have changed, [...] the presence of women in the public space seems less incongruous⁵¹". In addition to this context, political conditions were decisive in the public discourse of the female intellectuals studied here: the Dreyfus affair, which seemed to put the very essence of the Republic at stake, constituted an injunction to action. In a previous work, we presented Dick May as "a woman in the vanguard of a new century⁵²", we highlighted the change in the regime of historicity experienced by this Dreyfusard woman as she entered the XX^e century, a feeling shared by the intellectual women at the heart of this thesis. At the time of the Dreyfus victory, when popular education initiatives were flourishing and a bridge seemed to be being built between the social classes, republican intellectuals were full of hope and took advantage of the new social conditions offered to them to impose themselves in the public space. Their action in the last two decades of the XIX^e century appears as a propaedeutic to their real entry into the intellectual world. The Belle Époque was then rich in battles in which they were able to give voice: the question of equalizing salaries among public education officials, girls' access to the baccalaureate, female representation on the CSIP and, soon, that of women's suffrage, were all grounds for commitment.

However, historiography has minimised the political character of non-electoral forms of action. Women are therefore excluded from the outset from a restrictively defined political history. It must be said that the contemporaries of these women intellectuals were no more forthcoming than historians about them. They were thus excluded from the historiography of the Dreyfus Affair from the outset:

49 Joan W. Scott, (translated by Éléni Varikas), "Genre: une catégorie utile d'analyse historique", *Les Cahiers du GRIF*, 1988, n°37-38, p.125-153.

50 Juliette Rennes (preface by Michelle Perrot), *Femmes en métiers d'hommes. Cartes postales 1890-1930*, Saint-Pourçain-sur-Sioule, éditions Bleu autour, 2013.

51 Hubertine Auclert, (ed. by Nicole Cadène), *Journal d'une suffragiste*, Paris, Gallimard, 2021, pp. 48-49.

52 Mélanie Fabre, *Dick May, une femme à l'avant-garde d'un nouveau siècle: 1859-1925*, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-31.

Scheurer-Kestner superbly ignores Séverine in his memoirs, even though she was one of the great chroniclers of the trials of the Affair, and knew and venerated him. Marguerite Durand, director of the *Fronde*, is only allowed three notes in the seven volumes of Reinach. On the other hand, when the presence of women is acknowledged, the homage paid is sometimes surprisingly mean: Séverine camped out as a "procurator general of sentimentality", Marguerite Durand "at the centre of a court of admirers"⁵³.

These examples show how the male vanguard of republicanism discredited female participation in this major crisis in French political life. However, the Affaire was an opportunity for a handful of women to try to integrate a republican culture that was being refounded. If Dreyfusism was first and foremost an ethic, did not female secular teachers, who had been trained in their secular convents to embody morality, have their place in it?

The intellectuals who threw themselves into the Affaire experienced an intense politicisation. Republican culture underwent a profound change. In addition to the rejection of all forms of religious discrimination - anti-Semitism and anti-Protestantism disappeared from republican discourse - a series of new elements were added, as Serge Berstein explains:

The choice of defending individual freedom against the reason of State, rationalism and militant secularism, an almost dogmatic attachment to parliamentarianism, distrust of the professional army (the "military caste") and the judiciary considered to be linked to antidreyfusard circles, the desire to purify the administration in order to make the "republican spirit" triumph⁵⁴ ...] the Affaire, by pushing the participants to take public positions, will lead to a radicalisation to the left among them⁵⁵.

The "1900 moment" marks an important stage in what Albert Thibaudet has called the "sinistroyre movement"⁵⁶ "This movement characterised the political evolution of teachers throughout the period. Like the teachers, who became "radicals under the opportunist Republic [and] socialists under the radical Republic"⁵⁷ Like the primary school teachers, who became "radicals under the opportunist Republic [and] socialists under the radical Republic", the intellectuals studied here saw their convictions radicalised by the Affaire and the feminist push. They were thus part of a dynamic that was specific to those involved in education: "the very function of the secular school was to maintain this immanent *sinister nature* by working to deviate children from their fathers"⁵⁸ ".
If the boys' schools maintain a polite irreverence to

53 Françoise Blum, "Itinéraires féministes à la lumière de l'Affaire", art. cit.

54 Serge Berstein, "Conclusion", in Michel Leymarie (ed.), (preface by Antoine Prost, postface by Serge Berstein), *La postérité de l'affaire Dreyfus*, op. cit. , p. 235-239.

55 Serge Berstein, "Des Seconds rôles?", in Gilles Manceron and Emmanuel Naquet (eds.), *Être dreyfusard hier et aujourd'hui*, op. cit, pp.51-57.

56 Quoted by Jean-François Chanet, "Les instituteurs entre État-pédagogue et État-patron, des lois républicaines aux lendemains de la Grande Guerre", art. cit.

57 *Ibid.*

This attitude towards inherited traditions is also present among girls. Louise Renard stated in 1911 that the secular education of girls had created a gap equivalent to two generations between schoolgirls and their mothers, the former having received a very different education from the latter⁵⁹. Anna Lampérière, who was rather hostile to this change, agreed with this observation:

The secondary education of girls, intended above all to give more intelligent wives to liberal men, is fatally deviated from and entered into the same line as feminism; for the present girl, imbued with masculine methods [...] considers herself more and more a victim because the secondary organisation of girls does not give her direct access to the various Faculties which would enable her more easily to compete with man⁶⁰.

Although the founders of secular girls' institutions had no intention of making them places where traditions were challenged, it is true that the training of secular teachers anchors them to the left, in the camp of "progress", "attachment to the republican form [being] a kind of degree zero of politics, a commitment that does not deserve its name, an elementary politeness that goes without saying⁶¹". Few personalities go further and claim to be socialists, but many adopt a 'socialising' way of thinking that is compatible with republican culture: in their eyes, socialism is synonymous with social progress and is contained in the national motto⁶². In addition to Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello and Odette Laguerre, who declared themselves socialists, several intellectuals flirted with this ideology at the turn of the century. Marie Baertschi was present at an evening at the Seine-et-Oise popular university where the Internationale was sung⁶³. Mathilde Salomon conceded in 1903 the relevance of Jaurésian ideology⁶⁴. Albertine Eidenschenk defended the socialist teachers: "If the teachers have fallen in love with socialism, it is because they have gone wholeheartedly to the people, that they have seen their miseries at close quarters and have intimately communed with them in the hope of a more just future.⁶⁵" It is true that the social sensitivity of these intellectuals is reflected more in philanthropic action than in a partisan commitment motivated by the class struggle: they remain loyal to the Republic and believe more in class union than in proletarian revolution.

If the Affaire pushed intellectuals to the left, this did not only result in a cautious approach to socialism. They refused to allow the Revenge to be imposed by their elders and argued for a break with the initially warmongering culture of the Republic; firstly

59 Louise Renard, "Les mères et les filles dans l'évolution sociale actuelle", *La Française*, 12 November 1911.

60 Anna Lampérière, *La femme et son pouvoir*, Paris, Giard et Brière, 1909, p. 24.

61 Jacques and Mona Ozouf (with V. Aubert and C. Steindecker), *La République des instituteurs*, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

62 See Bibia Pavard, Florence Rochefort, Michelle Zancarini-Fournel, *Ne nous libérez pas, on s'en charge : une histoire des féminismes de 1789 à nos jours*, Paris, la Découverte, 2020, p. 150-151.

63 Letter from J. M. Jouandanne to Daniel Halévy, 16 February 1900, Naf 28147, BnF.

64 Personal papers of Mathilde Salomon.

65 A. Eidenschenk, "Les écoles normales et le projet de M. Massé", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, n°39, April 1906.

Trained in an ideal of popular education inherent in republican culture, they soon joined the ranks of the much more subversive "educational socialism"; dissatisfied with their professional status, they gradually joined the ranks of amicalism and even trade unionism; increasingly educated, they were no longer satisfied with a secondary social role and moved closer to feminism. It is possible to hypothesise that this questioning of social dogmas by women intellectuals is a consequence of their membership of the freethinking movement, which Maurice Agulhon defines as "the school of boldness": "No doubt it was necessary for the spirit of protest to have been awakened against the Pope, against priests and against kings, so that it could, beyond that, aim at other targets and shake up other dogmas.⁶⁶ " By "taking" the girls out of the hands of the Church, the new regime played a role in their religious emancipation, which may itself have been the matrix for a wider questioning. It is likely that the boldness in religious matters spread beyond the initial project of the promoters of secular female education. Secularism, as conceived by intellectuals after the Affaire, was defined in terms of this free thought as an injunction to think critically in all areas.

Women's strategies to circumvent exclusion from the political and intellectual world

In addition to its role in the renewal of republican culture, the Affair proves that modes of participation in political life are possible outside the electoral system. Does it not demonstrate the effectiveness of petitions, press columns and intellectual sociability? Inspired by this type of action, the personalities studied in this thesis put in place common strategies to circumvent their exclusion in order to be admitted into the intellectual sphere.

First of all, they invest in the free-thinking circles stimulated by the Affair. Since "The image of the pious woman, slave to her confessor, continues to be the argument most often invoked to justify the refusal of the vote for women⁶⁷ "It is by showing themselves to be detached from any religious tutelage that secular activists present themselves as worthy of republican culture: distancing themselves from religious dogma seems to be a necessary condition for admission into the republican ranks. In this sense, if the "War of the Two Franks" allowed a considerable number of Catholic women who defended the religious school to enter politics⁶⁸In this sense, while the "War of the Two Franks" allowed a considerable number of Catholic women who defended religious schools to enter politics, it also allowed intellectual women who were committed to secularism to gain recognition from their male peers in one of the central battles of the Third Republic. The fact that they were thrust into the middle of the tensions provoked by the birth of the Godless school forced these female teachers to argue in their defence and to respond to their opponents. The experience of the controversy forced them to forge weapons that could then be used in any other debate. They adopted an active and militant attitude and created political support in the

66 Maurice Agulhon, preface, in Jacqueline Lalouette, *La Libre-Pensée en France*, op. cit, p. 11.

67 Joan W. Scott, *The Paradoxical Citizen*, op. cit, p. 143.

68 See Bruno Dumons, "Résistances des ligues féminines catholiques à l'idée laïque", art. cit.

republican. Thus, during the Affaire, while she incurred the wrath of her hierarchy, Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello gained the support of political figures who became unshakeable supporters, such as Édouard Herriot, Victor Augagneur and Francis de Pressensé. In a similar situation, Marie Baertschi formed friendships with Gabriel Monod, Maurice Bouchor and Ferdinand Buisson, who compensated for the administration's distrust of her by their influence.

However, when the pressure from the administration was too great or when the neutrality required in the ranks of public education seemed to be too costly a compromise for activists, some adopted a strategy of avoidance by exploiting the opportunities offered by free education. Thus Marie Baertschi spent part of her career at the Collège Sévigné and then spent the rest of her life at the head of a free school for social work training. Similarly, Madeleine Vernet set up her own orphanage to offer children an avant-garde education that the state institutions still rejected...

Moreover, in their legitimisation strategy, women are aware of the importance of highlighting their diplomas, at a time when these are increasingly valued socially. Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello signed several articles as a 'licenciée ès-sciences' and recalled in her public speeches that she had a bachelor's degree⁶⁹. Marie Baertschi signed her letter in support of Zola in *L'Aurore* as a "teacher at a teacher training college⁷⁰". She is sometimes presented in the press as an agrégée⁷¹. Albertine Eidenschenk presented herself as a headmistress of a normal school⁷² Marie Dugard as a high school teacher⁷³ Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben as a former Sevrienne and agrégée teacher⁷⁴ Pauline Kergomard as a general inspector⁷⁵. Most of them signed their own name, without using a pseudonym. Instead of harming them, their identity - even if it is female - associated with their professional skills appears as an argument of authority in support of their demonstration.

In her study of women active in the field of social sciences between 1890 and 1940, Hélène Charron analyses personalities who attempt, "with the weapons of the weak, that is to say, weapons that are weakly scientific, to oppose the androcentric vision of social sciences⁷⁶" (e.g. as social investigators). Conversely, the female intellectuals analysed here do not appear as amateurs in the intellectual world. By mentioning the prestigious degrees they hold, they mobilise the "weapons of the strong" and command the respect of men. Unlike their non-professional sisters analysed by Hélène Charron, the

69 See the proceedings of the *International Congress on the Status and Rights of Women*, *op. cit.* p. 142 and J. Desparmet-Ruello, "L'assimilation du diplôme de fin d'études secondaires au baccalauréat", *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, March 1905.

70 "Open letter to M. Zola", *L'Aurore*, 17 January 1898.

71 Francis Framée, "Dans une université populaire", *Le Radical*, 12 December 1899.

72 See the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes* and *L'École nouvelle*.

73 See for example 'L'Henriette du XX^e siècle', *University Review*, November 1913.

74 She introduced herself as 'Mme Paul Crouzet, former student of the Ecole Normale de Sèvres, professeur agrégée de l'Université' alongside her husband in their 1910 edition of *Le Cid* published by Privat.

75 Pauline Kergomard, *Quelques mots d'hygiène scolaire*, *op. cit.*

76 Preface by Rose-Marie Lagrave, in Hélène Charron, *Les formes de l'illégitimité intellectuelle*, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

The voice of women academics is rarely discredited in the Republican ranks. Women in the teaching elite undoubtedly enjoy the benefits of institutional integration and a certain notoriety due to their brilliant career. But it is precisely this legitimacy gained through academic credentials that worries anti-feminists, as Sarah al-Matary notes:

intellectual women are considered worse than their sisters who, writing poetry or fiction, confine themselves to the realm of the imagination [...]. That they master rhetoric at the risk of turning it against their oppressors worries many. The few women writers whose ugliness, impropriety and platitude the satirical press of the first XIX^e century mocked were an object of entertainment; those who claim the legitimacy attached to the degree represent a real social danger⁷⁷.

Women intellectuals do not just showcase their academic credentials. To gain recognition in the intellectual world and to gain acceptance for their innovative ideas, many rely on their mastery of foreign educational models. Like their male counterparts, many of them are required to participate in conferences abroad in the course of their careers, and even to go on study trips outside France. The strong point of women in the internationalisation of their thinking undoubtedly comes from their mastery of modern languages, central disciplines in their training since they are supposed to compensate for the absence of dead languages. Thus, female graduates are generally more comfortable with languages than their male counterparts. Many women act as translators or interpreters in various contexts. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben in the *Revue Universitaire* and Marie Baertschi in the *Bulletin de la Société Libre pour l'Etude Psychologique de l'Enfant* both write about international educational developments. They develop an expertise on these questions and find in foreign examples arguments to demonstrate the French delay.

Women's ability to publish in the press was also central to their aura as intellectuals. As Alice Primi writes, throughout the XIX^e century, the press was "a privileged vehicle for accomplishing this civic mission, especially since it was virtually the only means available to women to express themselves politically⁷⁸". If, at the beginning of the XX^e century, women represented only 3% of professional journalists⁷⁹ many of them, without making writing their primary activity, gained visibility through their publications. Several were appointed as editors of a regular column, which was a way of building a loyal audience, such as Pauline Kergomard, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben, Odette Laguerre, Pauline Rebour and Albertine Eidenschenk⁸⁰.

77 Sarah al-Matary, *La haine des clercs*, *op. cit.*

78 Alice Primi, "La "porte entrebâillée du journalisme", une brèche vers la Cité ? Femmes, presse et citoyenneté en France, 1830-1870", *Le Temps des médias*, 2009/1, n° 12, p. 28-40.

79 Marc Martin, *Médias et journalistes dans la République*, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

Finally, while being a woman initially appears to be an obstacle in the intellectual world, all activists at some point mobilise what Anne R. Epstein calls 'gender capital'. Epstein calls 'gender capital'⁸¹ "In mobilising this concept, this thesis argues that women activists are not only 'natural' experts in their field, they are also 'natural' experts in their field of work. By mobilising this concept, this thesis has sought to demonstrate how these women intellectuals cross the boundary between a field where their presence is considered legitimate - that of education, pedagogy, child psychology, 'women's issues' - and a field from which they are initially excluded - the political issues linked to the secular school. While calling for a wider female horizon, many do not hesitate to speak as mothers or grandmothers. They take part in a subtle game between accepting gender assignments and questioning them. It must be said that in the Belle Époque, "the idea that there is a differential nature of the sexes that is destined to be translated into differentiated social roles represents a hegemonic opinion that [...] runs through the vast majority of feminist discourse, where it stands side by side with universalist pleas that social destinies must be indexed to the individual and not to sex"⁸². " Intellectual women thus waver between two *a priori* contradictory positions. Pauline Kergomard, a feminist mother, was convinced that there were 'naturally' feminine qualities, but she also demonstrated that gender was a social construct when she argued for coeducation. The same is true of her colleagues, almost without exception: they rely both on republican universalism and on their own identity as women to make their claims.

These women mobilise various strategies, conscious or not, to get around the obstacles. They seek to demonstrate their perfect republicanism by militating in the ranks of freethinkers. They seek to demonstrate their perfect republicanism by militating in the freethinkers' ranks; reuse the rhetorical weapons forged in the defence of the secular school for other battles; put forward the diplomas they have conquered; take advantage of the opportunities offered by free education to escape a harassing administration; obtain the support of political figures in their conflicts with the institution; take advantage of their linguistic mastery to develop an expertise on foreign education models; build up a regular readership by having a column attached to their name in several magazines; use their 'gender capital' to pose as specialists.

Intellectuals in public education": being both inside and outside the institution

These intellectuals are involved both in the school world and in the social and political field. Their vision of the school is enriched by this constant back-and-forth between the public arena and

80 Respectively through the "Choses de l'enseignement" column in *La Fronde*, the "Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles" in the *Revue universitaire*, the "Chronique féministe" in the *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, the "Propos féministes" and the CSIP reports column in *L'École nouvelle*.

81 Anne Epstein, "Gender and the rise of the female expert during the Belle Époque", art. cit.

82 Juliette Rennes, *Le mérite et la nature*, op. cit. p. 16.

the blackboard. Seen from this perspective, the school appeared to them as an ideal micro-society for preparing major social changes. As early as 1881, Pauline Kergomard declared in a conference that "the place designated for democracy is the school⁸³". While the republicans insisted on the school's mission of conservation by enabling new generations to integrate into a Republic that needed to be stabilised, the intellectuals studied here insisted on the mission of social transformation that this institution should take on.

Moreover, they approached their teaching function from a resolutely political perspective. In 1903, Albertine Eidenschenk, head of the teacher training college in Saint-Brieuc, wrote: "It is a deep joy for us to work in our peaceful and studious homes to hasten the advent of the new times, the signs of which are multiplying every day⁸⁴". Among these precursors, the intellectuals saw the Affair as the triumph of reason over force. They then witnessed the Separation of Church and State. At the same time, the feminist push gave hope for the emergence of new gender relations. Finally, the pacifist campaign allowed people to dream of a world without war. In this context, the secular school had to assume its role as a matrix for far-reaching political and social change, according to these committed women.

Often civil servants in the public education system, these women acted from within and can thus be identified with the "public intellectuals"⁸⁵ "These were individuals "committed to the institution, whose actions could never be reduced to the service of power, since they developed a critical attitude towards politics⁸⁶". The intellectuals studied here are both experts integrated into the state networks that make the institution work and dissidents who regularly find themselves in conflict with the administration. Most of them come up against the conservatism of the institution, but persevere. Far from being passive recipients of an institutional culture, these teachers constantly assert their pedagogical freedom. Jean-Louis Fabiani's words apply to them: they are convinced that there is "an effectiveness in itself of the teacher's word involving a sort of short-circuiting of politics⁸⁷".

Whether we are studying intellectuals involved in the secular school or Catholic intellectuals, the capacity for autonomy of these personalities within an institution to which they are loyal is a fundamental element of their qualification as intellectuals. All of them are both supportive of an ideology and critical of the conservatism of the institution to which they are attached. The reproaches that these intellectuals address respectively to the Church or the Republic are precisely the testimony of their fidelity to these institutions and of their irrepressible desire to make them evolve in order to save them. So much so that when we look in particular at the intellectuals committed to the secular school, we end up with this paradox: they are women excluded from the Republic who take on a vanguard role in the republican struggle.

83 Pauline Kergomard, *Quelques mots d'hygiène scolaire*, *op. cit.*

84 A. Eidenschenk, "En Bretagne", *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*, October 1903.

85 Jean-Louis Fabiani, "Que reste-t-il de l'intellectuel républicain ?", *Cahiers Jaurès* 2003/3, n° 169-170, p. 45-56.

86 *Ibid.*

87 *Ibid.*

A look at the Great War and the 1920s

The Great War constitutes an undeniable *terminus ad quem* in this thesis: 1914 is a rupture in all areas. *First of all*, many female teachers were thrown into the male world in the context of the war. It was thanks to this upheaval that the administration gave in to some of their post-war demands, such as the equalisation of salaries between male and female teachers in 1919 or the assimilation of female secondary education to male education with the Bérard decree in 1924. From 1914 onwards, the number of female baccalaureate candidates, which had already been increasing for a decade, exploded: no one could now ignore the obsolete nature of the ideal of disinterested culture for girls.

Moreover, the secularisation process that had been underway in France for several decades was completely challenged by the Great War, which gave new strength to Catholicism and the right-wing parties, which triumphed at the end of the conflict in a chamber that had become blue in colour. The Republican left was completely destabilised. As Jacqueline Lalouette explains, "a turning point was reached when, after the First World War, the parties of the left and the extreme left massively ceased to make the anticlerical and anti-religious struggle their priority objectives⁸⁸".

At the same time, the face of the intellectual world was transformed by the conflict. The few intellectuals who dared to express themselves freely, such as Romain Rolland, came up against censorship. However, a female minority acquired a new aura during this period: women, and in particular women teachers, were over-represented in the pacifist struggle. Christophe Prochasson notes that the intellectual world became more feminine as a result of the conflict: "the war [contributed] to raising a few women to the legitimate rank of intellectuals: on 19 May 1919, *L'Humanité* entrusted them with the writing of a special issue, an event that was unthinkable before 1914⁸⁹".

The feminist movement was also deeply affected by the war, which tore its ranks apart. Surprisingly, this period saw the resurgence of an old formula well known to the female teachers of the Belle Époque. While in the wake of the Affaire, Marie Baertschi, Albertine Eidenschenk and Odette Laguerre reproduced in their texts the Pécaldian injunctions to "dare to be"⁹⁰ "The feminist activists took up this slogan twenty years after Pécaut's death. Thus, in August 1914, Julie Siegfried and Adrienne Avril de Sainte-Croix wrote a letter to the members of the National Council of French Women in which they proclaimed that they should "[feel] proud to be the women of our time, [...] those who, at last, 'dare to be'⁹¹". Five years later, the trade unionist teacher Hélène Brion launched her own newspaper, which bore the headline

88 Jacqueline Lalouette (preface by Maurice Agulhon), *La Libre-Pensée en France*, *op. cit.*, p. 406.

89 Christophe Prochasson (preface Madeleine Rebérioux), *Les intellectuels, le socialisme et la guerre*, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

90 Marie-Ed. Fuster, "M. Pécaut à Fontenay", *Pages libres*, 18 July 1903; Albertine Eidenschenk, "La femme française et la République", *La Femme nouvelle*, 15 January 1905; Odette Laguerre, *Qu'est-ce que le féminisme*, Lyon, Société d'éducation et d'action féministes, 1905.

91 Quoted in Christine Bard, *Les filles de Marianne*, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

"Woman, dare to be"⁹² ". On both the 'patriot' and the pacifist sides of the feminist movement, women are reusing - consciously or unconsciously - the legacy of Fontenay's director of studies.

This challenge to *dare to be* crystallises all the issues that this thesis has explored by focusing on female intellectuals. This "dare to be" is a call to boldness against the imperative of modesty that has characterised women's education until now. It is an invitation to express one's own individuality, to seek one's own path and opinion in everything. This encouragement for female teachers to assert their personality is based on the certainty that educational effectiveness depends on a certain individual boldness. As Albertine Eidenschenk explains

"One does not form characters unless one is one oneself; one does not awaken consciences unless one is a living conscience oneself. [...] One can only act on others to the extent that one *is* internally"⁹³. " Intellectual women know that education is based on the principle of imitation, which requires the teacher to be a source of inspiration, and to do so, she must 'dare to be'. In 1910, Jean Jaurès declared in the same spirit: "one does not teach what one knows or what one thinks one knows: one teaches and can only teach what one is"⁹⁴. "

In short, Félix Pécaut's "Dare to be" crystallises a new way of thinking about girls' education. Taken in hand by intellectuals who recognised themselves in this adage, school could be something other than a machine for reproducing inequalities and inculcating gender norms. The subversive potential of the Pécaldian formula perhaps explains its posterity. Looking back at the inter-war period, Christine Bard states that "countless times, this phrase by Félix Pécaut will be quoted by feminists"⁹⁵ ". The migration of this phrase from Fontenay's morning talks to the feminist discourses of the Belle Époque, and even to those of the 1920s, shows the links that existed between the new forms of schooling for girls that emerged in the 1880s and the emergence of a feminism that is presented here as an intellectual movement worthy of the name.

Pécaut's thought survives thanks to all the power of its simplicity. Thus, without claiming to be a feminist, and even after abandoning her militancy in favour of the secular school, Marie Fuster kept her master's philosophy on her lips when she addressed future Catholic mothers in 1927: "In a word, work tirelessly to develop your personality, to be someone"⁹⁶ ". Fontenay's founding experience is never far away...

The shadow cast by the "heroic times"⁹⁷ "on the XX^e century

The protean legacy of Pécaut, a leading figure in secular schools, women's higher education and the Dreyfus struggle, spans the XX^e century. Rediscovered in the 1990s thanks to

92 *Ibid*, p. 254.

93 A headmistress of a teacher training college, "La question des écoles normales", *L'École nouvelle*, 23 June 1900.

94 Quoted in Frédéric Mole, *L'École laïque pour une République sociale*, *op. cit.* p. 129.

95 Christine Bard, *Les filles de Marianne*, *op. cit.* p. 416.

96 "The role of the housewife", *The Parish and the Family*, *op. cit.* , p. 161-164.

97 This kind of expression is used by contemporary women to refer either to the period of the foundation of the secular school (1880s) or to the victory of the intellectuals in the War of the Two Franks (1900s). See e.g. Pauline Kergomard, "Through Education - Secondary Education for Young Girls", *La Fronde*, 23 Sept. 1898.

to the publications of his descendant Lucien Carrive, who brought to light the wealth of his private archives, and in particular his correspondence⁹⁸ He also attracted the attention of historians who studied the role of Protestants in the Third Republic, secular morality in schools and the Affaire⁹⁹. In turn, but this time in a new century, we discovered Pécaut through the imprint he left on the Fontenaysiennes, and, more broadly, on the female teaching elite of the turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries. After having been studied by historians of the religious and the political, he challenged the history of women and, more precisely, that of intellectuals.

Whether or not the personalities studied here had contact with him as director of studies at Fontenay, they all define him as a moral authority. But, to our great despair, the numerous letters that Pécaut exchanged with his beloved Fontenay women seem to have disappeared. They would have been a treasure trove for this study devoted to the builders of the secular school¹⁰⁰. In spite of these gaps, several clues suggest the depth of Pécaut's influence on

This is a transgenerational transmission of the "daughters" or even "granddaughters" of the author. For example, when Albertine Eidenschenk became a knight of the Legion of Honour in 1920, Pierre-Félix Pécaut gave a speech praising the woman who had been close to his father and who ensured that his legacy was passed on to the following generations¹⁰¹. Thus, in 1948, 50 years after Pécaut's death and six years after Albertine Eidenschenk's death, Christiane Persyn, who had become a primary school inspector, paid tribute to her former headmistress, *who* had never known Pécaut and who presented him as an almost timeless reference for the teachers of her generation:

"You wanted us, as M. Pécaut wished, to remain the designated guardians of the sentiments that are par excellence the hallmark of humanity, [...] enthusiasm for noble causes, even for those of truth, justice and freedom, which some would claim are more appropriate for the male sex.¹⁰² "

The struggle for 'truth, justice and freedom' in the wake of Dreyfusism, feminist resistance against the monopoly of the 'virile sex', attachment to a republican political culture imbued with ethics: these are all commitments which, well beyond Pécaut, were carried by committed men and women of the Belle Époque. The XX^e century received as its heritage this heritage to which the first intellectuals committed to the secular school actively contributed¹⁰³.

98 Lucien Carrive, "Félix Pécaut d'après sa correspondance", *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*, Vol. 142, October-November-December 1996, pp. 855-881.

99 Patrick Cabanel, *Les protestants et la République : de 1870 à nos jours*, Brussels, Complexe, 2000 and "Les nouvelles Provinciales : Félix Pécaut et la formation de l'esprit républicain dans les années 1870", art. cit. But also Vincent Duclert, *Réinventer la République. Une constitution morale*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2013 (chapter: "The secular morality of the republican school").

100 These letters, which could have been recovered by Ferdinand Buisson, do not appear in his archives kept at the Library of the Society for the History of French Protestantism. A few surveys were made in the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes* over the whole of the XX^e century, in the hope of finding copies of letters supplied by the oldest members of the association, but this has so far been in vain.

101 Christiane Persyn, *Une grande éducatrice, Madame Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942*, op. cit, p. 19.

102 *Ibid*, p. 25.

103 See, in particular, the legacies claimed in the tribute to Albertine Eidenschenk by her former pupils at the Ecole Normale de Douai in 1973: *Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, directrice de l'Ecole Normale d'Institutrices de Douai, 1905-1926*, op. cit.

Annexes

Biographical points



Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben
in Algiers, 1880 - 1890.

Photo by Arnold
Vollenweider.

Biographical point 1: Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben (1870-1961)

Jeanne Benaben was born in 1870 in Brussels, her parents having fled France during the war against Prussia. Her father was an opera singer and her mother ran the embroidery school founded by Jeanne's great-grandmother, Mme Luce, in Algiers.

Jeanne Benaben was brought up in France by Madame Luce, who died when she was eleven in 1882. In her memoirs written during the Second World War and published after her death, Jeanne Benaben recalls

exclusively about her childhood and youth. She recalls that Mme Luce taught her to read and then sent her to the Valeriani boarding school, where the girl received her primary education. Before her death, Madame Luce arranged for Jeanne's education to be given to a friend of hers, M. Lafaurie, rather than to the child's mother, who did not share her bourgeois mentality.

Jeanne Benaben entered the Collège Sévigné in 1882 and met the first headmistress, Mlle Marchef-Girard, and then Mathilde Salomon who succeeded her. However, the young girl did not regularly rub shoulders with the headmistress, as she studied in the annex of the school, which was located in Sèvres. Raised by her grandmother's old friend, M. Lafaurie, who lives vicariously through his ward, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben devoted her youth to her studies. Under pressure from her tutor, she obtained her baccalaureate in 1888 after taking private lessons in Latin and attending philosophy classes given by Renan at the Collège de France and Boutroux at the Sorbonne. She took the baccalauréat in the midst of 98 boys (and a priest, she added!) and passed with flying colours. She remembers that the few girls who took this exam at the time compensated for their In some disciplines, there are gaps, while in others they are well above the level.

Jeanne Benaben easily entered the École normale supérieure de Sèvres, where she rubbed shoulders with Anna Amieux and the tutor Louise Belugou. She recounts how, at that time, M. Lafaurie tried to control her life, asking her to write down the progress of her work hour by hour, every day, controlling her correspondence with her mother in Algeria, and preventing Jeanne from seeing her, for fear that the teenager would be diverted from her destiny by her mother's artistic soul. In her autobiography, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben recalls with great sadness these years of 'intensive force-feeding' and the oppressive tutelage of M. Lafaurie.

Brilliant throughout her studies, Jeanne Benaben obtained the agrégation de lettres in 1891. She began teaching in Lyon, under the direction of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, then at the Lycée de Rouen. It was thanks to this proximity to the capital that she prepared for and obtained her licence in 1895.

In 1898, she got married and met Paul Crouzet, an agrégé from the ENS d'Ulm. Both engaged in a thesis, they applied jointly for a travel grant in 1898, which was refused, as women were not allowed to apply.

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben gave birth to her first child, Philippe, in 1899, followed by a second, Guy, in 1901. The family first lived in Toulouse, then moved to Paris in 1906.

At that time, Paul Crouzet, a friend of Charles Péguy, was very involved in the popular education initiatives that arose in the wake of the Dreyfus Affair. He was a radical-socialist.

From the moment she married, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben followed her husband in his transfers, without systematically obtaining a post for herself. Although she did not teach continuously during the Belle Époque, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben published regularly in educational journals. She defended women teachers in secondary education and adopted a feminist point of view. Together with her husband - reputed to be "the best Latinist in France" - she supported the introduction of classical humanities in girls' secondary schools. She also defended the right of young girls to prepare for the baccalaureate. In addition, she co-authored several educational works with her husband, including selected pieces of great literary works.

During the First World War, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben agreed to teach at a boys' high school. The administration praised her "perfect good grace". It seems, to the astonishment of the inspector, that she knows how to make herself heard by this new public... Active during the Great War within the commission for the reform of secondary education for girls, she saw some of her demands come to fruition during the interwar period.

Paul Crouzet played a major role in the administration of secondary education in France and the colonies. He was a member of the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique and supported, in line with the Bérard decree, the generalisation of the study of classical humanities in secondary education, while declaring himself in favour of a single school.

In 1929, the couple was bereaved by the death of Philippe and his wife, who left behind Jean-Philippe, a one-year-old baby. Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben declared: "I have made the greatest loss one can make: that of a son". A few years later, at the age of 62, she was found unfit to teach due to high blood pressure and dizziness. She was then admitted to retirement. She died in 1961, after burying her two sons and her husband and dedicating the rest of her life to her grandchildren, in particular her grandson Jean-Philippe, who had his grandmother's autobiography published in 1971.

Historiography :

Rebecca Rogers wrote the biography of Mme Luce, Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben's great-grandmother: *A Frenchwoman's Imperial Story, Madame Luce in Nineteenth Century Algeria*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2013, 267 pp.

Karen Offen discusses Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben in 'The Second Sex and the Baccalaureat in Republican France, 1880-1924', *French historical studies*, Autumn 1983, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 252-286.

However, no study has been devoted to Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben's career.

Source of the photograph: Bibliothèque Marguerite Durand. Thematic file: Women and feminism, portraits. Call number: 099 B 186.



Marguerite Aron
date unknown

Biographical point 2: Marguerite Aron (1873-1944)

Born in 1873 into a well-to-do Jewish family, Marguerite Aron had to earn her living alone due to a reversal of fortune. She entered Sèvres in 1893. Her mother, a widow, and her brother, who was ill, were dependent on her.

Marguerite Aron was awarded the agrégation de lettres in 1897 and had a career in the provinces.

was appointed in Paris. A close friend of Camille Sée, she wrote regularly in *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles* and became famous with the publication of *Journal d'une sévrienne* in 1912, a book for which she won a prize from the Académie française. Marguerite Aron's library contains a text by Camille Sée which is dedicated to her 'in affectionate memory'. The agrégée paid tribute to the official and the private man during the fiftieth anniversary of the École de Sèvres.

At a time when many of her colleagues were calling for a reform of women's secondary education and questioning the official discourse on women's education, Marguerite Aron remained very faithful to the spirit of girls' secondary schools as they had been founded in the 1880s. She regularly denounced feminist theses. When she spoke officially, she always spoke out against the new trends that were being felt in the schools.

In June 1914, Marguerite Aron converted to Catholicism and joined the Dominican Third Order. She is accompanied in her steps by Lucie Félix-Faure-Goyau. At her baptism, her godmother was Jeanne Nirascou, a Sevrier from the class of 1886, who was her colleague at Versailles and became her friend. Marguerite Aron's career record, which reveals the astonishment of her superiors at this "resounding conversion", does not reveal any profound change in her professional practice, which remained respectful of the principle of secularism.

During the war, Marguerite Aron is said to have worked as Maurice Barrès' secretary. Known in literary circles, in the 1920s and 1930s she carried out important research work which led to publications, often awarded prizes. She was particularly interested in the history of Catholicism, and to this end travelled to Rome and the Holy Land. She also continues to pay close attention to educational issues and is in favour of a single, completely free school. She was also interested in the relationship between Judaism and Catholicism, and in 1939 she gave a lecture entitled "The Jewish problem before the Catholic conscience".

Living near the abbey of Solesmes during her retreat, she tried to participate in the rescue of Jews organised by Catholic networks, but was unable to carry out this task because she herself bore the stigma of Jewishness. She was arrested by the Gestapo as she left mass in January 1944. Sent first to Drancy, she ended her days in Auschwitz, aged 71.

Historiography: - Madeleine Berthon (preface by Françoise Mayeur), *De Solesmes à Auschwitz, Marguerite Aron (1873-1944)*, Paris, Cerf, 1993, 156 p.

The only work on Marguerite Aron is this short biography written by a former student. This text is partly based on memories and focuses on the post-First World War period. The second part of the book is a selection of texts by Aron, all written after the Great War.

Source of the photograph: Roger-Viollet Archives, online on the website of Jewish deportees from the Sarthe.



Mathilde Salomon
date unknown

Biographical point 3: Mathilde Salomon (1837-1909)

The eldest of 10 children, Mathilde Salomon was born in 1837 in Phalsbourg to a father who was sometimes described as a butcher, sometimes as a supplier of military equipment, depending on the source. The Salomon family was Jewish. It was strongly assimilated. Crippled and hunchbacked, Mathilde Salomon was exempted from housework. She is the only one of her eight sisters to

attend public school. Without the prospect of marriage, she is condemned to earn her living by herself. However, acquiring educational qualifications is one of the few professional opportunities open to middle-class girls.

In 1855, at the age of eighteen, Mathilde Salomon moved to Paris. Having passed the "brevet de capacité" - the highest diploma available to girls at the time - she made a living from teaching, working both as a tutor and in public schools. In 1872, when Alsace and Lorraine became German, Mathilde Salomon opted for French nationality. In her declaration, she presented herself as a teacher. She lived with two of her sisters in Paris.

In the following decades, Mathilde Salomon founded her own day school, where she employed one of her sisters as a piano teacher. She recruited her pupils mainly from Jewish families. She adopted the Froebel method for the smaller classes.

In 1883, she was called to head the Collège Sévigné to take over from the first director, Joséphine Marchef-Girard. Mathilde Salomon remained at the head of this free and secular secondary school for girls until her death in 1909, i.e. for 26 years.

Mathilde Salomon was also active in the philanthropic world: she was a member of l'Abri, which came to the aid of pregnant and poor women, of the Maisons Familiales de Répositions (family rest homes) for female teaching staff and of the Sauvetage de l'Enfance (child rescue) founded by Pauline Kergomard.

In 1892, Léon Bourgeois, then Minister of Public Education, appointed her as a member of the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique to represent free education. Unofficially, Mathilde Salomon played the role of representative of female secondary education as a whole, in the absence of spokespersons for this category of officials.

In 1906, Mathilde Salomon received the title of Knight of the Legion of Honour. In the summary of services she wrote, she insisted on the services that her establishment had rendered to public education, as the Collège Sévigné had prepared many young girls for the competitive teaching exams and had provided the lycées with many agrégées. The Collège Sévigné was also the first establishment to officially prepare young girls for the baccalaureate from 1905 onwards.

During this long career, Mathilde Salomon was not only a headmistress, but also a teacher, in charge of the moral classes at Sévigné. She was also the author of several school textbooks. She wrote history books, but also a work on morality. She also wrote in the educational press to promote

her vision of the education of

She is also known for having translated Chad Gadya from English into the Cahiers de la Quinzaine, a text on Jewish identity. She is also known for having translated *Chad Gadya* from English into the *Cahiers de la Quinzaine*, a text on Jewish identity. Published in 1904, this text had a lot of resonance in the wake of the Dreyfus Affair. Although Mathilde Salomon was frankly atheist, she was nonetheless attached to the religion of her childhood.

Mathilde Salomon's personal archives give us a glimpse of her personality. In 1903, she wrote: "Action puts suffering to sleep, it is the morphine of the soul". Three years later, shortly before her death, she summed up a life marked by suffering: "A life of torture, without love or motherhood".

A few months after having obtained from the departmental council the right to welcome little boys in her classes, she died at the age of 72, within the walls of the College where she had been living since she became its director. At her funeral in September 1909, a rabbi said a prayer. Also present were teachers from the College, including Alain, Salomon Reinach and Albert Thomas, who wrote in *L'Humanité* about the woman who had made her school a "laboratory for educational experiments".

Historiography :

Jean-Pierre de Giorgio (ed.), *L'école des jeunes filles, Mathilde Salomon*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2017, 188 pp. (including Rebecca Rogers, Catherine Nicault, Yves Verneuil and Vincent Duclert).

Catherine Nicault, in the *Jewish Archives*: "Mathilde Salomon, pédagogue et pionnière de l'éducation féminine", 2004/1, p. 129-134 and "Mathilde Salomon: une "Française israélite" à l'épreuve de l'affaire Dreyfus", 2013/1, p. 91-106.

These works only paint a portrait of her in small strokes. According to Rebecca Rogers, "Mathilde Salomon, as a school principal, is still waiting for her biographer.

Source of the photograph: Catherine Nicault, "Mathilde Salomon: une 'Française israélite'...", art. cit.

Original sources used in this thesis :

- Mathilde Salomon, "L'éducation des jeunes filles à Port-Royal", *Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, January 1882
- "L'éducation de Mme de Sévigné", *Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles*, January 1883
- "De l'école au régiment", *Revue politique et littéraire*, August-December 1895 (???)
- Marianne Vilain, 'Interview with Mathilde Salomon', *La Fronde*, 11 June 1898
- Mathilde Salomon, 'Struggle for Life', *University Review*, February 1899
- Practical complement to the moral education of young girls in high schools. Patronage of children by young girls", *Revue universitaire*, September 1900 (???)
- Correspondence with Salomon Reinach (about fifty letters between 1894 and 1909)
- Private archives: drafts of articles, lectures, personal notes from 1877 to 1908.
- Memories of Alain, professor at Collège Sévigné: extracts from his correspondence in Thierry Leterre, *Alain, le premier intellectuel*, Paris, Stock, 2006, 589 p.

Biographical point 4: Anna Lampérière (1854-1924)

Anna Yon was born in 1854 in Lisieux to an upholsterer father. In 1872, she obtained her elementary school certificate and became a substitute teacher in Paris from 1874. In 1877 she passed the brevet supérieur exam. She then passed the certificate of aptitude for the direction of teacher training colleges as well as the certificate for the inspection of asylum wards. In 1879, Anna Yon published a grammar book for primary schools and was appointed assistant teacher at the teacher training college in Rouen. However, she sought to move closer to Paris where she became a lecturer at the Ecole Normale de Versailles in 1880.

She then met Lucien Delabrousse, the son of a notary, who worked as a publicist - he wrote in particular for *Le Siècle* - and played an important political role as a municipal councillor in Paris and as a general councillor for the Seine department. Anna Yon became Anna Delabrousse in May 1881 after leaving her position as director of the asylum in rue Madame. After a year of marriage, Anna Delabrousse returned to the world of education: between 1882 and 1889 she directed the Cours normal des écoles maternelles de Paris, whose mission was to train nursery school staff. The Cours Normal was administered by the former Société Froebel, which became the Société de l'éducation enfantine, of which she was the general secretary. Members of the association included Pauline Kergomard, Caroline de Barrau and Mme Jules Ferry.

As far as the Cours normal des écoles maternelles was concerned, Anna Delabrousse was accompanied in her task by Suzanne Brès, the future inspector general of nursery schools, who was the institution's deputy director. In 1889, as it was not sufficiently supported by the State, the Cours normal des écoles maternelles disappeared, to the great despair of Anna Delabrousse.

This marked the beginning of a very delicate period for her. In 1890, her husband, who could not stand her professional ambitions, filed for divorce for the second time on the grounds of insubordination to marital authority. Anna Delabrousse was pregnant with her second daughter. In the face of Lucien Delabrousse's abusive behaviour, which led to a veritable campaign to discredit his wife, the court ruled in favour of his companion, who obtained custody of the girls, but at the same time found herself unemployed. Anna Delabrousse changed her name on the occasion of her divorce and opted not for her own surname but for that of her mother, presenting herself from then on under the name of Anna Lampérière.

In the absence of a job in public education, Anna Lampérière earned her living as a publicist by writing for *Le Temps* and *Le Figaro*. She asked to be reinstated as a civil servant, but in vain. She nevertheless aspired to be appointed inspector general of nursery schools, a position that her previous career had legitimised.

Although on the fringes of public education, Anna Lampérière received significant recognition from the administration, as she was appointed to the delegation

French woman who went to the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. She was a delegate to the Congress of Moral and Social Reforms.

At the end of the 1890s, Anna Lampérière met Léon Bourgeois and became a convert to Solidarism. In 1898, she wanted to combine her thoughts on women's education with the solidarist doctrine and founded the Society for Women's Studies. Two years later, during the Universal Exhibition, she organised the Congress of Social Education.

She was also a member of the organising committee of the International Congress of Women's Works and Institutions, but she vigorously rejected the epithet of feminist. Frightened by the increasing competition between men and women in the labour market, Anna Lampérière saw the role of women as being that of homemaker, or even teacher and health care worker. While she made no distinction between the intellectual capacities of men and women, Anna Lampérière applied the solidarist doctrine to relations between men and women, believing that each sex should devote itself to the social role that made it complementary to the other. She was therefore opposed to any attempt to unify studies and considered that the education of girls was far too similar to that of boys. In her opinion, the priority of women's high schools should be to train future mothers.

Anna Lampérière is paradoxically in favour of the principle of coeducation, with the school imitating the family model. However, she believes that if boys and girls attend the same school, they should be taught differently, according to their social destiny.

In the long decade before the Great War, Anna Lampérière organised conferences at the Social Museum focusing on the role of women in society. She also directed the *Progrès féminin*, which presented itself as a study and action society for the social education of women. In 1903, she published a study in the *Revue Internationale de l'Enseignement* on the creation of a specifically female higher education system to stem the influx of young women into universities. In 1909, Anna Lampérière published a summary of her thoughts on the *The "women's question" in Woman and Her Power*.

As Anne Epstein summarises, 'Anna Lampérière's militant trajectory and her visibility in the public arena belies her own "feminine" vision of solidarism, which places precise limits on the role of women outside the home'.

Anna Lampérière died in 1924, aged 69.

Historiography :

Anne R. Epstein, " Anna Lampérière, solidarité et citoyenneté féminine sous la Troisième République ", *Genre & Histoire* [En ligne], 3 | Automne 2008, online since 18 December 2008, accessed on 01 February 2017. URL : <http://genrehistoire.revues.org/394>

Anne R. Epstein, " Pas "tout à fait des nôtres": Anna Lampérière and the feminists at the turn of the twentieth century', in Christine Bard (ed.), *Les féministes de la première vague*, Rennes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2015.

Biographical point 5: Marie Dugard (1862-1931)

Marie Dugard was born in Elbeuf (now Seine-Maritime) in 1862, to a father who was a cloth manufacturer and a mother who had no profession. As a young child, she suffered an accident that affected her spine. As a young girl, she was forced to stay in bed for many months. She prepared for many exams lying on her back, such as the certificate of aptitude for teaching literature, which she obtained in 1885, and the agrégation in 1886. She made a strong impression on the jury, although unlike most of her competitors, she had never been a student at the ENS de Sèvres. Marie Dugard remained in poor health throughout her life. The inspector Eugène Manuel noted several times her sickly appearance, her more than delicate complexion, her weak voice and her 'ungainly' height.

It was after obtaining a post at the Lycée de Reims in 1886 that she met the pastor Franck-Henri Lauga, a man close to university circles, who accompanied her in her conversion from Catholicism to Protestantism. Penetrated by the faith, Marie Dugard nevertheless remained very independent of any religious institution. Appointed to Paris in 1888, she nevertheless continued to travel regularly to Reims to discuss metaphysical questions at length with Pastor Lauga.

Marie Dugard in turn played the role of conscience director for many of her pupils. Louise Weiss remembers that at the Lycée Molière a group of 'Dugard girls' had formed who admired the moral integrity and the ideal of inner perfection that their teacher pursued.

Contrary to what the editor of her obituary in the *University Review* says, Marie Dugard employed a maid, at least in the years before the First World War. Louise Weiss recalls, however, that the teacher allowed the maid to keep some of the food she prepared for her: 'The people have a right to the kind of consideration that one would not deny to one's own, if they served you'. Louise Weiss is impressed by the spartan interior of Marie Dugard's flat, where only the bookcase bears witness to the social status of the occupant.

In 1893-1894, Marie Dugard travelled to the United States to represent France at the Chicago World's Fair. She extended her trip to the West Coast and drew from her experience a book that was regularly cited in debates on women's education, coeducation and secularism during the Belle Époque. However, according to Louise Weiss, this American experience did not prevent Marie Dugard from showing a great mistrust of the feminist movement.

Marie Dugard remained single and campaigned for this form of life not to be considered a degradation. She protests against the immorality of bourgeois marriage based on financial interest.

Marie Dugard is a philosophy buff with a keen interest in American culture and language. She wrote a biography of Emerson that was a long-time reference. She also has a real love for Italy, where she travels regularly.

Very active in philanthropic circles, Marie Dugard "acted out of principle, out of apostolic discipline, as it were, and in believing that she was looking at others, she was only looking at herself, at her own conscience, the gushing source of clear moral thoughts", according to Louise Weiss. In line with this commitment to the humble, Marie Dugard joined the Red Cross at the beginning of the war, then became a nurse in a military hospital from 1915 to 1919. She spent her nights caring for the wounded and went back to school the next morning. However, "the soldiers in whom she took an interest did not, to her great regret, ask her for high reading or moral guidance, but for bars of soap".

At the end of hostilities, she compiled the most heroic episodes she had been told by the soldiers in *French Souls* and sent the book to her former patients. One of her readers replied

He said that it was "dreadful that the war alone has taught the bourgeoisie the virtues of the people and that he really does not congratulate her for not having known, for a long time, what to expect of him and his comrades". When she read this letter, she would have wept.

In 1923, three years before her retirement, Marie Dugard was awarded the Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur for her work in women's secondary education and for the many philosophical and literary works she published. She died in 1931, aged 62. True to herself, she asked to be buried in a common grave, among the humble, without ceremony. Only two members of Pastor Lauga's family were present and threw a bouquet of violets on her anonymous remains.

Historiography :

Mary Beth Raycraft, 'Marie Dugard takes notes: the spirited reaction to 1890s America in *La Société américaine* (1896) by a Parisian secondary school teacher of girls', *Forum of Modern Language Studies*, vol 51, no 3, 2015, pp.316-334

This article deals exclusively with Marie Dugard's trip to the United States. There are a few errors. Furthermore, the author makes Marie Dugard out to be a progressive and does not point out the very conservative aspects of her thinking on gender relations.

Unlike M.B. Raycraft's article, this thesis draws on Louise Weiss's memoirs, which allow us to see a teacher through the eyes of her pupil, which is rare. Marie Dugard's rich career record completes this portrait.



Odette Laguerre
date unknown

Biographical point 6: Odette Laguerre (1860-1956)

Born Garin de la Morflan, Odette Laguerre was born in 1860 in Constantinople. She is the natural daughter of a secretary at the French Embassy. Her parents married two years later and gave birth to a second child. Raised in a free-thinking world, Odette Laguerre entered a renowned private school and had access to her father's rich library. As a young adult, she gave private lessons and studied at the Sorbonne, where female students were still the exception.

It was in a Parisian salon that she met Maxime Laguerre, then a bank executive with *Crédit Foncier*, with whom she was civilly married in 1884.

From the age of 18, Odette Laguerre wrote articles on literature and the fine arts for the 100,000 subscribers of *La Mode illustrée*, as well as advice for mothers.

Thanks to a large inheritance, she moved to a village in the Ain at the end of the 1880s, where her three children were born. Despite her isolation, she continued to write. She published a work of history as well as a complete course of studies for young girls educated by their mothers. She presented herself as a secondary school teacher, which was an abuse. In this book, Odette Laguerre praises the woman as guardian of the home and praises reading that respects morality and religion. The *Bulletin de la SGEE*, moreover, has no objection to her book when it reviews it.

The years 1900 were a turning point for Odette Laguerre. In 1901, when Marguerite Durand was playing at the Célestins theatre in Lyon, Odette Laguerre asked her for an interview in a letter in which she declared herself to be a "feminist bourgeois, though happily married, and a socialist, though privileged". The following year, the director of *La Fronde* asked Odette Laguerre to replace Clémence Royer, who had just died. Odette Laguerre then became a regular contributor to *La Fronde*. Her articles reflect her socialist, freethinking, feminist and pacifist convictions.

In 1903, with the help of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello and the support of Justin Godart and Victor Augagneur, she founded the Société d'éducation et d'action féministes de Lyon. The aim was threefold: to make it an educational organisation (by organising conferences), a reformer (by taking advantage of the assistance of Lyon's jurists to launch a project to reform divorce) and a solidarity-based organisation (by launching a mutual aid society for women workers). The gospel of this association is the book of the 1900 Feminist Congress and *the Fronde* its flag. The society was a success: it had 230 members in 1905.

While organising conferences for the Société d'éducation et d'action féministes, Odette Laguerre met Maria Vérone, Gabrielle Petit, Mme Avril de Sainte-Croix, Marie Bonneval, and especially Nelly Roussel, who captivated her in one of her speeches and with whom she became

friend. Despite her weak voice, Odette Laguerre also ended up on the podium, first in 1902 at a prize-giving ceremony at a girls' primary school, then at various feminist and socialist events.

She is known for her pamphlet *What is Feminism?* published in 1905 which was to launch a series of feminist texts, unfortunately unfinished.

At the same time, Odette Laguerre opened her chalet in the Ain for holiday camps for young working women from Lyon. She shared her convictions with her husband, who was first mayor of Vieu in 1900, then a radical-socialist deputy in 1914. Hélène, Odette Laguerre's daughter, studied at the Lyons girls' high school, which was presided over by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello. Commitment is clearly a family affair in the Laguerre family, Hélène becoming, with her mother, an ardent pacifist between the wars. Odette Laguerre became involved in the International League of Mothers and Educators for Peace founded by Albertine Eidenschenk.

A pacifist since the Affaire, Odette Laguerre lived through the two world wars: she died in 1956, aged 96. Her joy at the promulgation of women's suffrage, one of the great battles of her youth, was probably not enough to compensate for the failure of a lifelong commitment to peace.

Historiography :

Although Odette Laguerre is mentioned very briefly in a few works on the history of feminism and pacifism, only one short article is entirely devoted to her:

Andrée Laffay and André Abbiateci, "Une féministe bugiste à la Belle Époque : Odette Laguerre", in Jeannine Abbiateci (ed.), *Longtemps l'archiviste s'est levé de bonne heure, Mélanges offerts à Paul Cattin*, Les Amis des Archives, Bourg-en-Bresse, 2003, 214 p.

Source of the photograph: Andrée Laffay and André Abbiateci, "Une féministe bugiste...", art. cit. They obtained this photograph from Jacqueline Cassagnol, granddaughter of Odette Laguerre.

Original sources used in this thesis :

Almost all the sources used here are therefore original, including

- Odette Laguerre, *Teaching in the family*, 1888
- (with Madeleine Carlier), *For Peace*, 1905
- (with Ida-R. Sée), *Feminist education - child protection*, 1906
- its 63 articles in *the Fronde*
- his 15 articles in the *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*
- its 3 articles in *Pages libres*
- his correspondence with Louise and Georges Renard



Madeleine Vernet
date unknown

Biographical point 7: Madeleine Vernet (1878-1949)

Madeleine Vernet, whose real name was Madeleine Cavelier, was born in 1878 in Seine-Inférieure. Her parents ran a small shop. In 1900, when her husband died, Madeleine Vernet's mother took charge of four girls from the public assistance system. This had a great influence on the life of Madeleine Vernet, who discovered the world of the "bureautins" and protested in *Pages libres* against the fate reserved for them. Victim of reprisals,

Madeleine Vernet's mother had her wards taken away. With the support of the Rouen cooperatives, Madeleine Vernet tried to set up her own orphanage, but the project failed.

In 1904, she went to Paris where she was hired as an accountant. In 1906, with new support from libertarian circles, she founded l'Avenir social with her mother's savings and the support of her sister and her partner, Louis Tribier. The orphanage was first set up in Neuilly-Plaisance, then moved to Épône to accommodate more than thirty children.

Despite the help of workers' cooperatives, the subscriptions launched by *L'Humanité* and the *Guerre sociale* and the publicity given in the *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*, the survival of the orphanage remained a daily struggle. The couple faced hostility from the mayor and the population as well as harassment from the administration, which imposed an end to the practice of coeducation in the education of the children of L'Avenir Social. The latter had to be sent to public school.

Madeleine Vernet was convinced that workers' autonomy depended on their autonomy in the field of education: as long as the instruction of the masses was in the hands of the bourgeois state or the Church, the proletariat would not be able to break its chains. Her aim is to push children to free themselves from their prejudices of class, sex, race and religion. However, Madeleine Vernet was opposed to all dogmatism and to the recruitment of youth by workers' organisations.

A maternalist feminist, Madeleine Vernet advocated free love against bourgeois marriage for a time. She also opposed part of the libertarian movement on the subject of neo-Malthusianism, which she condemned. The parents of a young daughter, Louis Tribier and Madeleine Vernet were forced to marry in 1909 to appease the ill will they faced.

On 1^{er} August 1914, when Jaurès was assassinated, Madeleine Vernet went to Paris, convinced that she could participate in a mobilisation against the war. When she arrived in the capital, she discovered the resignation of everyone and tried to put an appeal for peace in *the Rénovation*, but was refused. Failing to save the peace, Madeleine Vernet declared in *the Bataille syndicaliste* that she would take in at Épône any motherless child whose father had just been mobilised.

During the war, Madeleine Vernet was active in the pacifist movement: she took in the son of François and Marie Mayoux, imprisoned for anti-militarism, and publicly defended Hélène Brion, who was dragged before the Council of War. In 1917, she also launched her newspaper *La Mère éducatrice*, whose main theme was education for peace throughout its 32 years of existence.

In 1918, Madeleine Vernet published *L'École laïque menacée*, in which she denounced the violence of the repression against pacifist teachers. Although very critical of the republican school, Madeleine Vernet defended it against the men in power who were opposed to any idea of emancipation through knowledge. She saw in them a desire to leave the people in ignorance in order to maintain privileges of all kinds. Madeleine Vernet defended her ideas with her pen, but also by taking to the podium: in 1918 she went to Lyon, Saint-Étienne, Firminy and Saint-Chamond and was accused of pacifist propaganda on her return. The end of the war allowed the suspension of the legal proceedings against her.

In 1921, Madeleine Vernet created the League of Women Against the War. The association was dissolved in 1923 and in 1927 she founded a new society, this time a mixed one, *La Volonté de paix*. In 1928, Madeleine Vernet became secretary general of the International Committee for Action and Propaganda for Peace and Disarmament. In 1935, she was elected to the Executive Committee of the International League of Peace Fighters.

Refusing any direct partisan involvement, Madeleine Vernet left her orphanage in 1923, the year in which the communists became the majority on the board of directors.

After this date, still convinced that peace can only exist through education, Madeleine Vernet published a book for children in which she demonstrated the unity of the human species and the false nature of borders. Her husband Louis Tribier, who was always at her side, was prosecuted in 1936 for inciting military disobedience.

The pacifist Madeleine Vernet died in 1949 at the age of 71, after having lived through two world wars.

Historiography :

Geneviève Fraisse, "Et si les mères désertaient la guerre... Madeleine Vernet (1879-1949) : pacifisme et féminisme", *Les Cahiers du GRIF*, n°14-15, 1976, p. 34-38.

Hugues Lenoir, *Madeleine Vernet et l'Avenir social*, Paris, Les éditions du Monde libertaire, 2014, 66 p.

Anna Norris, 'French feminism under the test of war. Madeleine Vernet : itinéraire d'une féministe pacifiste', *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, 91 | 2015, 127-138.

Maitron online: <https://maitron.fr/spip.php?article154231>, notice VERNET Madeleine [CAVELIER Madeleine, Eugénie, Clémentine, Victorine] [épouse Tribier, dite] by Claude-Paul Couture, notice completed by Marianne Enckell, version put online on 7 March 2014, last modified on 10 January 2017

Christine Bard, 'Madeleine Vernet', in Christine Bard, Sylvie Chaperon (eds), *Dictionnaire des féministes : France, XVIIIè-XXIè siècle*, Paris, Presses universitaires de France, 2017, 1,700 p.

Source of the photograph: reproduced on a postcard from L'Avenir social, whose date is not specified but which was probably published in 1914.



Detail of a group photograph: Marguerite Bodin at the 2nd International Congress of Friends (1910)

Biographical point 8: Marguerite Bodin (1869-1940)

Marguerite Bodin was born in 1869 into a farming family in the Yonne region. She belonged to the first generation of teachers trained in the normal schools created in the wake of the Paul Bert law.

Although Marguerite Bodin sent a few comments to *La Fronde* as a reader as early as 1900 - her opinion appeared in the "Questions and Answers" section open to subscribers - the first major step in her public recognition came at the Congrès des amicales de Bordeaux, in the summer of 1901, where she had a vote in favour of pacifist history teaching in primary schools

A few months later, she took part in a competition organised by a feminist and freethinking group which promised to reward the best text demonstrating the injustice of the sexual double standard. Marguerite Bodin won the prize of honour and saw her text printed in an 80-page brochure.

Following on from her speech in Bordeaux in 1901, Marguerite Bodin founded the Société d'éducation pacifiste with the actress Madeleine Carlier the following year. The aim of the association was to convert primary school teachers to pacifist teaching. In the same vein, Marguerite Bodin joined the French League for International Disarmament founded at the end of the 19th century by Maria Chéliga.

Within the framework of the Société d'éducation pacifiste, Marguerite Bodin could count on the support of Odette Laguerre, who became the secretary of the Ain section. In a letter to her friend Nelly Roussel in 1904, the latter painted a portrait of Marguerite Bodin:

[She is a true laywoman, having given proof of great courage and rare intelligence, a supporter of coeducation, having written a report on the iniquity of the two morals which was crowned by the Congrès de l'Humanité, an ardent pacifist, having founded with my friend, Madeleine Carlier, the Society of Pacifist Education, and finally, a socialist, having many friends among advanced teachers, much appreciated by M. Boitel, M. Murgier, member of the Conseil départemental de l'Yonne, etc. Boitel, of M. Murgier, member of the Departmental Council of the Yonne, etc.

There are very few primary school teachers in France who are as sincerely devoted to social progress, as intelligent and of such high moral value as Mlle Marguerite Bodin.

In 1905, the year she published *Les surprises de l'école mixte*, a work inspired by her own experience, Marguerite Bodin spoke at the Congrès des Amicales de Lille in favour of the introduction of coeducation in primary education. An excellent speaker, she was appointed to represent the Fédération des Amicales at the international congress held shortly afterwards.

afterwards in Liège, as part of the Universal Exhibition. On this occasion, a permanent International Board of Friends was created, of which Marguerite Bodin was a member. In 1910, she again represented the French Federation at the second International Congress of Friends held in Paris.

During these years of intense activity within the Fédération des Amicales, Marguerite Bodin supported Marie Guérin's project to create the Groupes féministes universitaires in order to bring the specific demands of women teachers to the forefront.

Marguerite Bodin married Léon Goupy, a man who was just as committed as she was, in 1906. Her husband was a member of the League of Human Rights.

In 1911, Marguerite Bodin also participated in the foundation of the children's fortnightly *Les petits bonshommes*, a magazine with strong links to the CGT.

After the Great War and the death of her husband, Marguerite Bodin accepted Georges Renard's proposal to write a book entitled *L'institutrice* for the "Bibliothèque sociale des métiers" which he directed. The book was published in 1922.

Marguerite Bodin died in 1940. She left behind many texts, including a reading book entitled *Jacques et Zette*, which was published for the ninth time in 1952, 41 years after its first publication.

Historiography :

Foreword by Denise Karnaouch to Marguerite Bodin, *L'institutrice*, " Une féministe militante de la Belle Époque (1922) ", Paris, L'Harmattan, 2012, 347 p.

Unsigned *online Maitron* entry: <https://maitron.fr/spip.php?article77878>, BODIN Marguerite , version online March 30, 2010, last modified February 10, 2020.

Source of the photograph: cover of the edition of the text *L'Institutrice* by Marguerite Bodin by Denise Karnaouch, *op. cit.*



Pauline Rebour
1937

Biographical point 9: Pauline Rebour (1878-1956)

Pauline Boyenval was born in 1878 in the Manche region of France to a father who was principal of a secondary school. She first taught in nursery schools and primary schools before becoming a teacher in a higher primary school and then a teacher in a teacher training college. She prepared for all the exams required for these positions on her own.

In March 1903, she gave a lecture on the status of women at the Université populaire de Rouen. By then, she already knew her future

She was not married (the marriage, which was only civil, took place in December 1903), but she gave up her maiden name in favour of that of Raoul Rebour, who was then a teacher at the Ecole Normale de Boys in Rouen. Pauline Rebour was appointed to the upper primary school in Rouen in September 1903.

In the following years, the Rebour couple gave birth to three children and moved to Le Havre in 1907, where they both worked as upper primary school teachers.

At the turn of the year 1907 and 1908, Pauline Rebour founded the Feminist Society of Le Havre, whose board, without a president, respected the parity between men and women. It included several women teachers, some of whom were also involved in the Université Populaire du Havre or in the Freemason networks. The objective of the Société féministe du Havre was "to obtain equality between men and women from an electoral, civil and economic point of view".

The association became affiliated with Marie Guérin's University Feminist Federation and the National Council of French Women. Pauline Rebour was also the first woman to join the Le Havre section of the League of Human Rights. She was supported in her commitments by Raoul Rebour, whose support for a group of feminist schoolteachers had already been noted in 1902 by *La Fronde*.

Pauline Rebour was involved in all the battles waged by female teachers of the Belle Époque: the introduction of coeducation, equality of treatment, the teaching of morals that were fairer to both sexes, etc. On the strength of her experience as a teacher, she also protested against the place taken by home economics in women's education to the detriment of general knowledge. She asserted that this discipline restricted the professional horizons of young girls by preparing them for the only profession that was not remunerated.

Pauline Rebour's great struggle was for women's right to vote: in 1909 she supported the Dussaussoy-Buisson bill in favour of women's suffrage and was active in the municipal elections of 1912.

In 1912, she was appointed as a tutor at the Edgar Quinet primary school in Paris, which brought her closer to the headquarters of the French Union for Women's Suffrage. She was elected to the central committee in 1913 and became its deputy general secretary in May 1914, together with

Cécile Brunshvicg. During the great feminist demonstration of 5 July 1914, she was one of the four women to speak in front of the statue of Condorcet.

During the Great War, she rallied to the Sacred Union. She took advantage of the columns of *La Française* to emphasise the way in which rural schoolteachers succeeded, during the conflict, in replacing absent mayors. This was a further argument in favour of women's suffrage.

During the war, Pauline Rebour obtained a law degree and was called to the bar in Paris. She taught law at the new school for factory superintendents founded during the war. She also acted as a lawyer during the interwar period. A great lecturer, Pauline Rebour travelled all over France and gained great public visibility. She was elected member of the General Council of the Ligue de l'enseignement.

She was awarded the rank of Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur under the Blum government in 1937. She died in 1956, aged 78.

Historiography :

This biographical note owes much to Claire Saunier-Le Foll's text in the *online Maitron*: <https://maitron.fr/spip.php?article231453>, REBOUR Pauline [née BOYENVAL Pauline, Étienne, Marie], version online August 25, 2020, last modified December 6, 2020.

Claire Saunier-Le Foll has been preparing a thesis entitled "Women, associative practices and social action in Seine-Inférieure during the Great War" under the supervision of Manuela Martini since 2016.

The information in Claire Saunier-Le Foll's article has been supplemented by the portrait that *The Frenchwoman* made Pauline Rebour on 13 February 1937, when she received the Légion d'honneur.

In the context of this thesis, only the articles published by Pauline Rebour in *L'École nouvelle* have been studied, which in no way implies that her action as an intellectual is limited to this weekly.

Source of the photograph: 'Les trois nouvelles légionnaires de l'U.F.S.F', *La Française*, 13 February 1937.

Annexes

Data used to construct the graphs in this thesis

The following two tables show the number of women's contributions to the *Revue pédagogique* and the *Bulletin de la Société générale d'éducation et d'enseignement* between 1880 and 1914. The titles of the articles give an idea of the type of fields in which women wrote in these journals. Some of these articles only appear because they were written by women: they have not necessarily been analysed in the context of this thesis.

The two tables below are partly redundant with those devoted to the articles used as sources for this thesis in the *Revue pédagogique* and the *Bulletin de la Société générale d'éducation et d'enseignement* (pages 12 and 21 of the third volume entitled Sources and bibliography), which select the texts according to whether they are written by women or men.

Data used to construct the graph on p. 391 of this thesis

The following are the 121 women's contributions, classified by year, published in the *Revue pedagogique* between 1880 and 1914¹

<u>Year</u>	<u>N b2</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Title of the article</u>
1880	5	Ms P. W. Cocheris	"Pedagogy of needlework
		Ms Lamotte	"Secondary education for girls
		Ms Chasteau, head teacher of a teacher training college	"On the faculty of activity and its influence in education
		Ms Chasteau, head teacher of a teacher training college	"On the faculty of activity and its influence in education" (continued)
		Ms Chasteau, head teacher of a teacher training college	"On the Faculty of Activity and its Influence in Education" (continued)
1881	5	Miss Matrat	"Nursery schools and the decree of 2 August 1881
		Miss Matrat	"Nursery schools and the decree of 2 August 1881 (<i>continuation and end</i>)
		Ms P. W. Cocheris	"Pedagogy of needlework
		Ms P. W. Cocheris	"Pedagogy of needlework (<i>continued</i>)
		Ms P. W. Cocheris	"Pedagogy of needlework (<i>continuation and end</i>)
1882	1	Miss Brès, director of nursery schools	"Standard courses for the preparation of kindergarten principals
1883	4	Ms E. Penel	"An educational excursion to Württemberg
		Miss Matrat	"The Guardian Schools of Holland
		A teacher from a teacher training college	"From note-taking to lessons
		Miss Loizillon	"Kindergartens in the United States
1884	6	Ms M. L.	"Our pre-schools (inspection notes)
		Ms X, Assistant Teacher	"Fragments of an intimate letter
		Ms Laure de Châtillon	"A visit to the South Kensington Museum and School
		Ms Jeanne Mairet	"Little Mummy, New
		Ms Clotilde Rey	"A bit of aesthetics in a maternal asylum

1 Only articles have been kept, excluding critical reviews of books.

2 Number of female contributions per year.

		Ms S. Bourseul	"Like master... like mule".
1885	4	An assistant teacher	"Note on the teaching of good manners in teacher training colleges
		Ms C. Gay	"A conference on diction
		Ms E. de Pressense	"Appeal to mothers, about summer camps (poetry)
		Ms C. Laperly	"Children's schools in Switzerland (travel notes)
1886	1	Ms J. Michelet	"Readings for our eyes
1887	3	Ms Anna Delabrousse	"Louis de Ronchaud and the artistic decoration of schools
		Ms Edgar Quinet	"Edgar Quinet and his work
		A grandmother	"About our daughters (fragments of correspondence)
1888	5	Ms A. M. Delabrousse	"Report on the decoration of schools, approved by the Children's School Society, 2 July 1887
		P. Racinet, former teacher	"Reading aloud in the early grades from the point of view of correcting pronunciation".
		A student of the Fontenay-aux-Roses school (composition)	"On education that suits women
		Ms Laure Collin	"Musical pedagogy: June 1888 lecture to nursery school teachers
		Miss Matrat	"The education of abnormal children in the Scandinavian states, extracts from a report
1889	8	Ms Pauline Kergomard	"Necrology: Mrs Caroline Barrau de Muratel
		Ms G. A. Dillon	"Note on the Normal College of Teachers in New York
		Ms Pauline Kergomard	"Women in Primary Education" (International Pedagogical Congress)
		Miss Marie Matrat	"Note on the Central Teacher Training College in Madrid
		Ms Laure Collin	"Pédagogie musicale: conférence o f April 1889, to the student teachers of the École normale d'institutrices de la Seine
		Ms L. Murique	"Gymnastics exercises for girls in Basel
		Miss Dorothea Beale	"An Englishwoman's (Miss Beale's) views on our educational work
		Ms Kergomard	"Pre-school holidays
1890	1	Ms Pauline Kergomard	"The rescue of childhood (from the newspaper <i>L'Ami de l'Enfance</i>)
1891	6	Ms C. Coignet	"About the education of the natives in Algeria
		Ms Pauline Kergomard	"The Avignon school exhibition, report addressed to the director of primary education

		Pauline Kergomard	"Some reflections on the subject of the pupil-mistress uniform
		Ms Edgar Quinet	"Our classics and popular education: excerpts from <i>The Truth in Education</i>
		A headmistress of a normal school	"Reading at the Ecole Normale: an excerpt from a principal's report
		Ms R. Thevenelle, Inspector of Nursery Schools	"The lace and ribbon industry in the Haute-Loire (extract from a report)
1892	5	Miss E. Williams	"Women's higher education in England
		Ms Henry Greville	"Indiscipline (unedited fragment)
		Miss Antonine de Gerando	"About prize distributions
		Ms Marie Thomas (Inspector General)	"Manual work in the girls' school
		Ms Marie Rauber	"L'ecole ménagère en Suisse (extract from a report to the Minister)
1893	9	Ms R. Thevenelle, inspector general of nursery schools	"The Patronage Committees in Lorraine
		Ms Marie Koenig, former nursery school inspector	"Agricultural education in the primary school (seven to nine years old section)
		A headmistress of a normal school	"The teaching of cooking in teacher training colleges".
		A normal school teacher	"About the normal school: Why does the annex school seem, in general, to have given less satisfactory results than the normal school itself?
		A headmistress of a normal school	"Some reflections of a headmistress on literary studies at the Ecole Normale
		Miss L. H., headmistress of a teacher training college	"About the teaching of arithmetic at the Ecole Normale
		Mrs C. R.	"A school festival in Switzerland
		A candidate for the certificate of aptitude for primary inspection and management of teacher training colleges	"Curiosity in children: a copy of one of the aspirants admitted to the last session of the certificate of aptitude for primary inspection and for the direction of teacher training colleges".
		Ms Marie Rauber	"The middle schools for girls in Belgium
1894	9	Ms C. Rauber	"Vocational schools for girls in Belgium
		Ms M. Dugard	"De la coeducation des sexes aux États-Unis, extrait d'un rapport au ministre de l'Instruction publique".
		A headmistress of a normal school	"Necrology: Miss Ferrand
		Ms C. Rauber	"Schools and household classes in Belgium
		Ms Cecile B (translator)	"Survey of religious ideas in California" (document translated by Miss Cecile B.)
		Ms M. Grandin	"Education in America in the family and in the school
		Ms Z.	"Teaching sewing and housework

		Ms Pauline Kergomard	"A meeting of trainees at the teacher training college in Limoges (August 1894)
		A teacher from Puy-de-Dôme	"The charity of a worker
1895	3	Ms Slawinska, Director of the Teacher Training College in Caen	"Two lectures by M. Maurice Bouchor at the teacher training college in Caen
		Ms Pauline Kergomard	"Notes on the Bordeaux Child Protection Congress
		Miss Jeanne Darlu	"The Edinburgh <i>Summer Meeting</i>
1896	9	Mrs Anna - Mr Yon Lamperrière [<i>sic</i>]	"The Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement in Bordeaux
		Ms R. Thevenelle	"The teacher training colleges and social misery
		Ms M. Baertschi	"Congress of Higher Education for Girls in Coblenz
		Miss Pernessin	"Thomas Arnold, lecture delivered before the Association franco-anglaise de Paris, by Mr. P. A. Barnett, Royal Inspector of Schools in England (translated and summarised by Mlle Pernessin)
		Ms B. Chegaray	"Competition of the Central Union of Decorative Arts (women artists)
		Miss Saffroy	"Les écrivains pédagogues de l'Antiquité, préface d'un recueil d'extraits préparé par Mlle Saffroy "
		Miss R. Lecomte, director of the teacher training college of Haute-Loire	"The patronage of female workers and apprentices in the town of Le Puy (extract from a report)
		Ms P. Kergomard	"In Geneva: Second Child Protection Congress
		Ms J. Blanc	"Three weeks in London (Travel impressions)
1897	4	Miss H. Malmanche, Inspector of Commercial Education	"Correspondence
		Ms Berthe Chegaray	"The teaching of drawing and the feminist movement in decorative art
		Miss Koblenz	"Chairs of Pedagogy in American Universities (document translated by Miss Coblenz)
		Ms Denise Billotey	"Speech at the prize-giving ceremony at the Edgar Quinet School
1898	0		
1899	0		
1900	2	Ms P. Kergomard	"Les écoles maternelles" (excerpt from a lecture given at the Ecole Normale de Coutances to the teacher-students and teachers of the department)
		A former student of Fontenay	"Inauguration of the bust of Felix Pécaut in Fontenay
1901	2	R. Thevenelle, Inspector General of Nursery Schools	"Nursery schools in 1900
		Gabrielle Coblenz, Associate Professor of the University	"An English pedagogue in the 16th century, Roger Ascham
1902	1	Ms Pauline Kergomard	"Teaching in the kindergarten

1903	1	Ms O. Robin	"Advice on reading
1904	3	Miss L. Troufleau	"Pedagogical notes on the teaching of the French language
		Ms D. Billotey	"Children's literature
		Miss L. Troufleau	"The teaching of grammar
1905	0		
1906	0		
1907	3	Ms G. Thevenelle, Inspector General of Nursery Schools	"Medical assistance through schools
		Miss A. Fievet	"Physical science in the primary education of girls
		Miss Duparc	"The celebrations of the XXVth anniversary of the creation of secondary education for girls
1908	6	Ms P. Kergomard	"L'ecole maternelle" (extract from a general inspection report)
		Miss Fanny Bignon, science teacher at Edgar Quinet school	The "holiday courses" in Iena
		Mathilde Parmentier, teacher at the Lycee de Saint-Quentin	"A congress in Upsal (9th Congress of Swedish Girls' High School Teachers)
		Miss M.-E. Moore, member of the Tynemouth Education Committee	"The professional preparation of school teachers in England
		Ms. C. Gehin, Director of the Bar-le-Duc Teacher Training College	"School holiday camps".
		Miss Pollet, teacher at the Lycee de Jeunes Filles de Lille	"The Art in Schools Congress in Lille
1909	6	Ms M. Janin, Director of the Edgar Quinet School	"The Question of Moral Education at the London Congress" (extract from the report of Mme Janin, delegate of the Ministry of Public Education to the London Congress)
		Ms J. Renauld	"Note on the spirit of moral education
		Ida R. See	"Teaching French to foreigners in some provincial universities
		Miss Carret (lecturer at Wellesley College)	"The issue of French language teaching in the United States
		Mathilde Parmentier	"Ellen Key and the question of education
		A candidate for the certificate of competence	"Composition de pedagogie d'une aspirante au certificat d'aptitude à l'inspection primaire et à la direction des ecoles normales
1910	1	Valentine Puthod	"Teaching French in an American college
1911	2	Miss F. Teutscher, teacher at the Lycee de Jeunes Filles du Mans	"Book-based education
		Miss M. Ginier, primary inspector in Paris	"Women's inspection of nursery schools and girls' schools

1912	3	Jeanne Barrère	"The educational work and method of Miss Montessori in Italy"
		Henriette Lesueur	"Pierre Loti, poet of the past"
		Ms M. Clement	"Some reflections on Intense Living in the United States"
1913	1	Anne Nadal-Milice, Director of the Saintes College	"Mrs Humphry Ward's Childhood Social Work"
1914	2	Ms. D. Billotey, Director of Teacher Training College	"La femme educatrice (conference held at the Ligue de l'Enseignement)"
		Mrs. J. Collombel, Director of the Ecole prim. sup. de Marseille	"For the health of young girls (Extract from a report addressed to the Minister of Public Education)"

Data used to construct the graph on p. 392 of this thesis

Here are the 39 women's contributions, classified by year, published in the *SGEE Bulletin* between 1880 and 1914³

<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Title</u>
Ms L.	Feb. 1897	"Minutes of the pedagogical congress held in Versailles on 25, 26, 27 August 1896, 18th question: household schools, note".
Countess of Diesbach	Feb. 1903	"Household education"
A Christian mother	July 1903	"Household schools"
Ms B. Griveau	Jan. 1904	"Ladies' Patronage Committee"
Miss D.	June 1904	"The Arras Congress and Mutuality: Household Education Exhibition"
Viscountess of Vélard	Oct. 1906	"The role of the mother in education, from the family, patriotic and religious point of view"
Ms. Decaux	June 1907	"The recent household standard education reviews"
Ms. Decaux	Sept. 1907	"The national congress in Angers: agricultural and household education"
Ms Paul Griveau	June 1908	"the lady patrons"
Ms. Decaux	June 1908	"Household teaching examinations at the moral household school in Rue de l'Abbaye".
Ms A. Wagner	Oct. 1908	"Girls' associations" (Les amicales de jeunes filles)
Mme de Gottrau de Watteville	Jan. 1909	"The first international congress of domestic education, in Fribourg, Switzerland"
Miss Desrez	April 1910	"Secondary education for girls: its elements and purpose" (preparing girls for the baccalauréat in free education?)
Ms. Decaux	May 1910	"The examinations for the domestic education diploma in France".
Ms. Decaux	June 1911	"The Household Education Diploma Examinations at the Rue de l'Abbaye in 1911".
Pauline Lavergne	May 1912	"Revue des revues féminines" (monitors Catholic magazines that show women their duty)

3 Only articles have been kept, excluding critical reviews of books.

Annex

A non-exhaustive overview of the women's networks in which the secular school supporters studied in this thesis evolved

Intellectual socialization spaces ¹ → Personalities ²	<i>La Fronde</i>	<i>The new woman</i>	Congress of Secondary School Teachers (1899)	Congress on the Status and Rights of Women (1900)	Congress of Women's Works and Institutions (1900)	International Congress on Moral Education (The Hague, 1912)	Free Society for the Psychological Study of the Child	Ligue de l'enseignement	Peaceful Education Society	Fontenaysian community
Clarisse Coignet								(1870)		
P. Kergomard										
J. Desparmet-Ruello									(probable links)	
Marie Baertschi										
A. Eidenschenk	(probable links)								(probable links)	
Marie Dugard										
Mathilde Salomon						(deceased)				
J. Crouzet-Benaben										
Odette Laguerre										
Marguerite Bodin										
Denise Billotey										(not fontenays.)
Louise Debor								(probable links)		
B. Edwards-Pilliet										
Madeleine Carlier ³										
Louise Napias										
Suzanne Brès										(not fontenays. but integrated)
O. Gevin-Cassal										
Maria Verona										
Marie Bonneval										

1 This table would be more complete if it included a column for the National Council of French Women, which has not been sufficiently studied to appear here.

2 In bold, the Parisian women. In grey, women who have made education their profession.

3 Probably Parisian, but not certain.

École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales

Doctoral school of EHESS

Centre for Sociological and Political Studies Raymond Aron (CESPRA) PhD in

Contemporary History (22) and Education Sciences (70) Mélanie

Fabre

<p>Thesis directed by The chalk, the pen and the podium Vincent Ducier (researcher (HDR) at CESPRA (CNRS-EHESS)) and Rebecca Rogers (professor, University of Paris, CERLIS) Trajectories of intellectuals committed to secular schools Date of defence: 25 November 2021 (France, 1880s - 1914)</p>		
Rapporteurs	1	Volume 1 (Sources and Bibliography) Carole Christes, Professor, University of Le Havre Normandie
	2	Yves Verneuil, Professor, Lumière Lyon 2 University

Jury	1	Céline Béraud, Director of Studies HDR, École des hautes études en sciences sociales
	2	Patrick Cabanel, Director of Studies HDR, École pratique des hautes études
	3	Florence Rochefort, Research Fellow, CNRS

The chalk, the pen and the podium

Trajectories of intellectuals committed to secular schools

(France, 1880s - 1914)

Sources and bibliography

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PART ONE ARCHIVES

(public and private archives, manuscripts and correspondence)

1- National Archives

Career files in the collections of the Instruction publique (F/17/) and the Académie de Paris (AJ/16/) (per person) :

Jeanne Dejean de la Bâtie (F/17/22316/B)
Louise Belugou (F/17/22602/A)
Lucie Saffroy (F/17/22543/A + AJ/16/1481)
Mrs Henri Marion (F/17/21253/A)
Jeanne Crouzet Benaben (AJ/16/1025 + F/17/24295) and her husband
Paul
Crouzet (F/17/24727)
Mme Jules Favre (AJ/16/1067)
Jeanne de Friedberg (F/17/22872)
Léonie Allégret (F/17/22599/A)
Marie-Thérèse Allégret
(F/17/23176)
Joséphine Marchef-Girard (F/17/23420)
Léa Bérard-Carmoutères (F/17/23670)
Henriette Würmser (F/17/24059)
Marguerite Aron (F/17/24282)
Anna Amieux (F/17/24471)
Marie Rauber (AJ/16/1420 + F/17/22118/A)
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello (F/17/23284 + F/17/22067) and her father
Alphonse Ruello (F/17/21675)
Pauline Kergomard (F/17/23588/B)
Amélie Allégret (F/17/23809)
Émile Masson (husband of Elsie Masson F/17/25852)
Madeleine Daniélou (AJ/16/6189)

Clarisse Coignet (F/17/2949 - educational mission) Anna
Lampérière (F/17/3014/2)
Marie Baertschi-Fuster (F/17/23692)
Albertine Eidenschenck (F/17/23836/B) and her husband
Laurent Eidenschenck (F/17/22193/A)
Anna Yon/Delabrousse/Lampérière (F/17/22819)

Minutes of the CSIP meetings, Public Education Fund (by year) :

F/17/12968 (1887-8)	F/17/12976 (1902-3)
F/17/12969 (1889)	F/17/12979 (1904)
F/17/22118/A (1890)	F/17/13642 (1905-6)
F/17/12971 (1892-3)	F/17/13643 (1907)
F/17/12972 (1894-5)	F/17/13643 (1908)
F/17/12973 (1896-7)	F/17/13645 (1909)
F/17/12974 (1898)	F/17/13621 (1912-1915)
F/17/12975 (1899)	F/17/13464 (1915-1918)
F/17/13641 (1900-1)	

Marie Dugard (F/17/2383)

Circulars for the elections with electoral programmes on the whole country
period: F/17/13619 - F/17/13620

Other sources at the National Archives:

Archives of the Children's School Society
(F/17/10893)

Archives of free schools (including Collège Sévigné) (F/17/14186 - F/17/14187)

Léonore database: Legion of Honour files (including Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, Albertine Eidenschenk, Marie Dugard, Pauline Kergomard).

2- Marguerite Durand Library

Autograph letters and manuscripts classified by name, 1: A to H: documents relating to Marie Bonneval, Ferdinand Buisson, Madeleine Daniélou, Louise Debor, Geneviève Favre.

Autograph letters and manuscripts classified by name, 2: I to Q: documents relating to Pauline Kergomard, Odette Laguerre, Dick May, Louise Napias.

Autograph letters and manuscripts classified by name, 3: R to Z: documents relating to Maria Vérone, Madeleine Vernet, Véra Starkoff, Hélène Sée, Camille Sée, Clémence Royer, Nelly Roussel, Gabrielle Réval, Céline Renooz, Louise Renard, Pauline Rebour.

Documentary files on Madeleine Vernet and Pauline Kergomard.

3- Bibliothèque nationale de France New French acquisitions

Correspondence received by :
Edouard Lockroy, including letter from Pauline Kergomard (NAF 25162) Arvède Barine, including letter from Clarisse Coignet (NAF 18341) Daniel Halévy, including letters from Marie Baertschi (NAF 28147) Hermione Quinet, including letters from Mme Paul Bert (NAF 15511) Emma France, including letter from Madeleine Vernet (NAF 15442)

4- Interuniversity Library of the Sorbonne

Correspondence contained in the Eugène Manuel fonds, MS 1936, Bibliothèque Victor Cousin. He was a general inspector, president of the jury of the women's agrégation and received many letters from women teachers.

5- Historical Library of the City of Paris

Marie-Louise-Bouglé fonds, in particular the Céline Renooz sub-fonds (MS-FS-15) containing her correspondence.

Georges Renard fonds (call numbers Ms 2482 to Ms 2627) containing correspondence received by the couple as well as drafts of Louise's lectures and published articles.

6- Méjanes Library

Salomon Reinach fonds, unmarked. Contains his incoming correspondence (including letters from Mathilde Salomon and Dick May).

7- Library of the Society for the History of French Protestantism

Ferdinand Buisson fonds, 022Y, containing correspondence received (including letters from Marie Baertschi).

8- Memories from here (archives of the Bernese Jura documentation centre)

Documents relating to the family of Marie Baertschi: Fonds Schwob - Büttiker - Tavannes Watch (Family archives) - DOC050321.

9- Lyon Municipal Archives

Archives relating to the Lycée de jeunes filles de Lyon: 176WP51.

10- Private archives belonging to the descendants of Mathilde Salomon

Obtained thanks to the kindness of Natacha Salomon and Claire Tardieu. Diary kept by Mathilde Salomon between 1877 and 1908 (not much written: short notes) + drafts of texts and lectures.

PART TWO

SELECTION OF TEXTS USED IN THIS THEMATIC CLASS BY TYPE OF PUBLICATION

Each of the following tables lists the texts considered relevant to the problematic of this thesis in the systematic review of the 16 types of sources described on pages 28 and 29 of the manuscript of this thesis (end of the general introduction).

Articles selected for this thesis in the *Revue pédagogique*

Magazine searched for the period from its creation in 1878 to 1914. Periodicity: monthly, approximately 430 issues consulted.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Title (if applicable, additional elements)</u>
Jacquet	June 1879	"Letter to M. Chalamet, deputy, against the creation of female primary inspectors
Suzanne Brès	November 1882	"Normal courses for the preparation of kindergarten principals
Eugene Manuel	February 1882	Critical review of Clarisse Coignet's book: <i>De l'éducation dans la démocratie</i>
Gabriel Compayré	February 1887	"The new book by M. Gréard: Education of women by women
Gabriel Compayré	December 1887	"The pedagogy of Port Royal
A. M. Delabrousse ¹	December 1887	"Louis de Ronchaud and the decoration of schools
A. M. Delabrousse	May 1888	"Report on the decoration of schools
Pauline Kergomard	January 1889	"Obituary of Caroline de Barrau
Pauline Kergomard	May 1889	"Studies on the issues forming the programme of the 1889 International Congress - Women in Primary Education".
Pauline Kergomard	December 1889	"Holidays at the nursery school
Ferdinand Buisson	October 1890	"The first primary inspector
Pauline Kergomard	December 1890	"The inspection of girls' schools by women
Clarisse Coignet	April 1891	"About the education of indigenous people in Algeria
Pauline Kergomard	June 1891	"L'exposition d'Avignon" (school exhibition - state of the art of practical work in upper primary education)
Pauline Kergomard	September 1891	"Some reflections on the subject of student teachers' uniforms".
Miss E. Williams	March 1892	"Women's Higher Education in England
Félix Pécaut	April 1892	"The headmistress of a normal school
Marie Rauber	December 1892	"Household school in Switzerland".
Marie Rauber	December 1893	"The middle schools for girls in Belgium
Ms C. Rauber	February 1894	"Vocational schools for girls in Belgium
Mr. [Marie] Dugard	March 1894	"On the coeducation of the sexes in the United States, excerpt from a report to the Minister of Public Instruction".
Ms C. Rauber	April 1894	"Schools and household classes in Belgium

¹ Another name for Anna Lampérière.

Pauline Kergomard	December 1894	"A meeting of trainees at the teacher training college in Limoges, August 1894
Pauline Kergomard	October 1895	"Notes on the Bordeaux Child Protection Congress
Lionel Dauriac	December 1895	Critical review of Pauline Kergomard's book, <i>L'éducation maternelle dans l'école</i>
Anna-M. Yon-Lampérière	January 1896	"The congress of the Ligue de l'Enseignement in Bordeaux
Ms M. Baertschi	February 1896	"Congress of Higher Education for Girls in Coblenz
Pauline Kergomard	July 1896	Critical review of Suzanne Brès' book, <i>Jeux et occupations pour les petits</i>
Pauline Kergomard	November 1896	"Second Child Protection Congress in Geneva
F. Buisson	July 1897	"Women teachers and the Revue des Deux Mondes
Ms Denise Billotey	December 1897	"Speech at the prize-giving ceremony at the Edgar Quinet School
Miss Price	June 1898	"The Fontenay school judged by an Englishwoman
C.	June 1898	"The Book of Mary of the Sacred Heart
Pauline Kergomard	April 1900	"Les écoles maternelles" (a lecture given at the Coutances teacher training college to the student teachers of the department)
Pauline Kergomard	June 1902	"Teaching in kindergarten
J. Toutain	October 1902	"History teaching in Fontenay
D. Billotey	December 1902	Account of the <i>Diary of a teacher</i> , by Mr Léon Déries, inspector of the academy
Lavisse	September 1903	"The secular school
D. Billotey	July 1903	Review of <i>Institutrice</i> , book by E. de Suze
Ms D. Billotey	August 1904	"Children's literature
Gabriel Compayré	September 1905	"Demia and girls' education
Gabriel Compayré	October 1906	"Gender coeducation in the United States" (attack on this pedagogical principle)
Miss A. Fiévet	May 1907	"Physical science in the primary education of girls
Miss Duparc	June 1907	"The celebrations of the 25th anniversary of the creation of secondary education for girls
Pauline Kergomard	January 1908	"The kindergarten" (extract from a general inspection report)
Ms M. Ginier	March 1911	"The Female Inspection of Nursery and Girls' Schools
E. Dodeman	July 1911	"Women's inspection in girls' schools" (response to Marie Ginier's article)
Ms D. Billotey	June 1914	"The woman educator

Articles selected for this thesis in *Secondary Education for Girls*

Journal created by Camille Sée, analysed for the period from its creation in July 1882 to December 1914. Periodicity: monthly, i.e. 390 issues analysed.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Title (if applicable, additional elements)</u>
M.S. [Mathilde Salomon].	August 1882	"The education of young girls in Port-Royal
Mathilde Salomon	January 1883	"The education of Mme Sévigné
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello	December 1883	"Secondary education for girls at the Zurich exhibition
Adolphe Brisson	January 1884	"The Sevigne School and the Monceau School
Anonymous	January 1884	"Secondary education for girls at the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello	February 1884	"Secondary education for girls at the Zurich exhibition
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello	March 1884	"Secondary education for girls at the Zurich exhibition
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello	April 1884	"Secondary education for girls at the Zurich exhibition
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello	July 1884	"Science programmes in girls' high schools, reply to M. Camille Sée
Anonymous	August 1884	"The Higher Council of Public Instruction and secondary education for girls
Anonymous	August 1884	Chronicle - "The girls' high school in Lyon
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello	September 1884	"Secondary and higher education for girls in Geneva and secondary education in France
Anonymous	September 1884	"Prize distributions in girls' high schools and colleges - Lycée de Lyon".
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello	June 1885	"Lesson models, course in zoology and comparative physiology
Anonymous	August 1885	"Distribution of prizes in girls' high schools and colleges - Lyon
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello	January 1886	"Sample lessons - 2 nd degree equations
Anonymous	January 1889	"Chronicle (about the commission on improvements in secondary schools)
Paul Souday	February 1896	"Mrs. Jules Favre
A[dèle]. Fanta	November 1897	"Critique of a secondary school textbook by Mr. Wychgram, headmaster of the girls' secondary school in Leipzig".
Gabriel Compayré	November 1897	Reproduction of his speech at the Lycée de Lyon during the prize-giving ceremony.
Mr Darboux	July 1898	Speech at the inauguration of the bust of Mrs Jules Favre.
Henry Lemonnier	July 1898	Speech at the inauguration of the bust of Mrs Jules Favre.

Miss Belugou	July 1898	Speech at the inauguration of the bust of Mrs Jules Favre.
Paul Souday	July 1899	"Mrs. du Sacré-Coeur and the clerical press
Henry Lemonnier	January 1900	"The Sèvres School since its foundation (1881-1900)
Anonymous	February 1901	"Chronicle of secondary education for girls at the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique
Camille Sée	March 1905	"The secondary school leaving certificate and the upper primary school certificate
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello	March 1905	"The assimilation of the secondary school diploma to the baccalaureate
L. Belugou	April 1905	"About the secondary school leaving certificate
Eugène Blum	January 1906	"Sanctions in girls' secondary education".
Anonymous	January 1906	"Chronicle. Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique".
X.	December 1906	"The issue of raising the salaries of female secondary staff
X.	January 1907	"The issue of raising the salaries of female secondary staff
Marguerite Aron	March 1907	<i>Girard</i> , book by G. Compayré.
M. A. [Marguerite Aron].	May 1907	"Equal treatment in secondary education
Marguerite Aron	June 1907	"The Sèvres Day
Miss Belugou	June 1907	"Sèvres Day, morning, speech by Miss Belugou
Ms Küss	June 1907	"The Sèvres Day, speech by Miss Küss
Marguerite Aron	December 1907	Critical review of <i>L'évolution intellectuelle et morale de l'enfant</i> (G. Compayré).
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello	April 1908	Speech on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Lycée de Lyon.
M.A. [Marguerite Aron].	July 1908	Critical review of <i>L'éducation intellectuelle et morale</i> (G. Compayré).
J.F.	January 1909	"Mrs. Jules Favre
Marguerite Aron	February 1909	Critical review of <i>L'adolescence - études de psychologie et de pédagogie</i> (G. Compayré).
H. Degouy-Wurmser	July 1909	Staff communication - general questions: "About history teaching in girls' high schools
Miss Belugou	February 1912	Speech on the occasion of Mr Darboux's jubilee.
B...	February 1912	"The Diary of a Sevrier
Marguerite Aron	May 1912	"For the improvement of women's education
Marguerite Aron	December 1912	"The fashion for examinations in women's education

Marguerite Aron	July 1913	"About Reading Explained and Literary History
Miss Desprez	October 1913	"Contribution to French Female Secondary Education
E. Flobert	November 1913	"Preparation for the baccalaureate in girls' high schools
M.A. [Marguerite Aron].	December 1913	"Inauguration and commemoration
M.A. [Marguerite Aron].	December 1913	Critical review of <i>La vraie femme du savant : Mme Pasteur</i> .
Ms J. Vaudouer	January 1914	"The teaching of morals in girls' high schools".
Ms E. Flobert	March 1914	"The primary classes in the Lycées de jeunes filles".
Anonymous	August 1914	Critical review: <i>Young girls today</i> .

Articles selected for this thesis in the *University Journal*

Magazine searched for the period from its creation in 1892 to December 1914. Periodicity: monthly, 242 issues consulted.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Title (if applicable, additional elements)</u>
Ms Dugard	January 1892	"Girls' education: a few words on secondary education reform
Jeanne Chauvin (Doctor of Law)	February 1893	"Law teaching in girls' high schools".
Mr Dugard	February 1894	"Two days at Wellesley College
Ms Dugard	February 1895	"On the overwork of women teachers in secondary education".
Miss Yvonne Bérillon (teacher at Brest high school)	May 1895	"May Day at Oxford University
Miss L. M. Camus	February 1896	"De l'éducation des femmes en Amérique, d'après un livre nouveau" (review of M. Dugard's work - apologie d'une rénovation du secondaire féminin en France)
Marie Dugard	December 1896	"On the study of French authors in the first period of secondary education for girls
Ms C. Humiecka and Ms Dugard	February 1897	"On the study of French authors in the first period of secondary education for girls (reply by Miss C. Humiecka to Marie Dugard's text, then reply by Marie Dugard) Humiecka to Marie Dugard's text, then reply by Marie Dugard)
Paul Crouzet	December 1897	"Secondary school teachers and the high culture of democracy
Mathilde Salomon	February 1899	"Struggle for Life" (comments on the <i>Religious Teachers</i> of Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart - a virulent attack on

		Catholic education of young girls, praise for the republican work)
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	June 1899	"The teaching of Antiquity in girls' high schools (on the inadequacies of the teaching of this period in high schools, on the need to introduce ancient languages in the curriculum of girls)
A.B.	June 1899	"Feature of the month: feminism and education
Paul Crouzet	July 1899	"Do we need a doctrine for popular education?
Miss A. Roofers	October 1899	"The teaching of ancient literature in girls' high schools
Marie Dugard	November 1899	"On the modern education of girls" (deplores the fact that education in the family and at school do not have the same goal)
Marie Dugard	December 1899	"On the modern education of girls (continued)
Marie Dugard	January 1900	"On the modern education of girls (continued)
Marie Dugard	June 1900	"Du rôle des professeurs hommes et femmes dans l'enseignement des garçons et dans celui des jeunes filles" (report for the 1900 International Congress on Secondary Education - analysis of the situation in various countries to recommend reforms in France)
Mathilde Salomon	July 1900	"Practical complement to the moral education of young girls in secondary schools. Patronage of children by young girls" (report for the International Congress of Secondary Education of 1900)
Marguerite Bondonis	April 1901	"The teaching of history and morals
Ms M. Mourgues	May 1901	"Science education at the World Fair
Marie Dugard	November 1901	"Teacher training in secondary education
Marie Dugard	December 1901	"Teacher training in secondary education
Augusta Moll-Weiss	October 1902	"Girls' boarding schools in the future
Henri Marion	March 1902	"Girls' education
Ms A. Gonnet	June 1905	"The graduation diploma in girls' high schools and colleges".
Ms B. Savery	October 1905	"About the graduation diploma
Ms J. P. Crouzet-Benaben	October 1908	"An educational and family day (Carnot High School Parents' Association party)
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	March 1909	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	April 1909	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	May 1909	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	June 1909	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	July 1909	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	October 1909	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	November 1909	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	December 1909	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	January 1910	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	February 1910	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Miss G. Véroux, teacher at the girls' high school in Lille	February 1910	"French composition and the culture of originality in girls' high schools
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	March 1910	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Amicale du lycée de jeunes filles de Toulouse	March 1910	"The urgent need for female secondary education
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	April 1910	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Miss A. Amieux, teacher at the Lycée Victor Hugo	April 1910	"The teaching of science in girls' high schools and the reform of the preparatory classes
Miss A. Amieux	May 1910	"The teaching of science in girls' high schools and the reform of the preparatory classes
Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben	May 1910	"The overwork of female staff".
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	May 1910	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	June 1910	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Miss F. Teutscher, associate professor at the Lycée de Rouen	June 1910	"A shortcoming of women's higher education
Miss P. Régnié	July 1910	"Girls' colleges in America".
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	September 1910	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Miss Varlet, Director of the Teacher Training College in Lyon	October 1910	"About the overwork of female staff".
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	October 1910	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	November 1910	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	December 1910	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Miss B. Bastoul, high school	December 1910	"The sanctions of female secondary education, baccalaureate or diploma?

teacher		
of young girls in Toulouse		
Miss F. Teutscher, associate professor at the lycée du Mans	January 1911	"On some shortcomings of women's education".
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	January 1911	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	February 1911	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	March 1911	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	April 1911	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	May 1911	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	September 1911	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	October 1911	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	November 1911	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
Jeanne P. Crouzet-Benaben	November 1911	"Female secondary school students and their needs" (secondary schools no longer meet the needs of students: they need to be modernised)
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	December 1911	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles
L[éonie]. Allégret	June 1912	"The boarding school for girls and the university (praises a reform of the boarding school concept, description of what she did at the Lycée de Versailles)
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	January 1912	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	February 1912	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	March 1912	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	April 1912	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	May 1912	"Bulletin of Female Secondary Education".
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	June 1912	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	September 1912	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	October 1912	"Bulletin of Female Secondary Education".
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	November 1912	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	December 1912	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin

Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	January 1913	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	February 1913	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	March 1913	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	April 1913	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	May 1913	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	June 1913	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	July 1913	"Bulletin of Female Secondary Education".
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	Sept-Oct 1913	"Bulletin of Female Secondary Education".
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	November 1913	"Bulletin of Female Secondary Education".
Ms Dugard	November 1913	"L'Henriette du XXè siècle" (Speech delivered on 12 October 1913 for the 25th anniversary of the Lycée Molière, prosopopeia of Molière's Henriette, praise of women's colleges)
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	December 1913	"Bulletin of Female Secondary Education".
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	January 1914	"Bulletin of Female Secondary Education".
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	February 1914	"Bulletin of Female Secondary Education".
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	March 1914	"Bulletin of Female Secondary Education".
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	April 1914	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	May 1914	"Bulletin of Female Secondary Education".
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	June 1914	"Bulletin of Female Secondary Education".
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	July 1914	"Bulletin de l'enseignement secondaire féminin
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	Oct-Nov 1914	"Bulletin of Female Secondary Education".
Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben	December 1914	"Bulletin of Female Secondary Education".
Ms J. Anglès	May 1914	"Diploma of completion of studies
Ms J. de Mestral-Combremont	February 1932 (outside the chronological limits)	"Obituary of Marie Dugard (her professional, personal and spiritual life, an assessment after her death in October 1931)

Articles selected for this thesis in the *Bulletin of the General Society of Education and Teaching*

Magazine searched for the period from 1880 to 1914. Periodicity: monthly, 408 issues consulted.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Title (if applicable, additional elements)</u>
L. Lescœur	August 1884	"L'éducation secondaire des jeunes filles et la question des examens" (criticism of the Sée law, a speech by Jules Ferry and Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello - quotes <i>L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles</i>)
Ch. Clair, S. J.	November 1884	"Les femmes savantes et la République" (commentary on the report of the agrégation féminine by Eugène Manuel - general criticism of the secular education of girls)
L. Lescœur	November 1885	"Les lycées et collèges de jeunes filles en 1885" (a critique of girls' lycées based on the claims of <i>L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles</i>)
Anonymous	November 1891	"Catholic Association of Ladies and Misses in Education" (aim of the association: to develop lectures on the Christian faith for future female teachers + real professional training for teaching)
Abbé Lapalme	February 1893	"Catholic Association of Teaching Ladies and Damsels" (report for the Catholic Teaching Commission in Paris, May 1892)
C. Eight	May 1893	Critical review of Odette Laguerre's book, <i>L'Enseignement dans la famille</i> .
Gabriel Alix	August 1895	"Opportunistic laws and the education of women" (diagnoses a simultaneous war on childhood and the Christian woman = war against God)
C. Eight	May 1896	Critical review of the <i>Nouvelle Éducation de la Femme dans les classes cultivées</i> , by the Countess of Adhemar (reviews the chapter "Dogmatics of Love")
Arnold Mascarel	July 1896	"Girls' secondary education - the need for curriculum reform" (critique of girls' high school curricula)
A. d'Herbelot	July 1898	"The question of the teaching nuns (series of reproaches to Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart)
Anonymous	August 1898	"The question of teaching nuns (congratulations from 4 bishops following the article by A. d'Herbelot)
Anonymous	September 1898	"The education of women after J. de Maistre and Napoleon I
L. Lescœur	April 1899	"Moral education in the official primary school (moral education as a battleground between the Church and the school)
A. d'Herbelot	April 1899	"The Teaching Nuns" (criticism of Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart and her books - condemnation from Rome)
L. Lescœur	November 1901	"The State as mother of the family' (through the lycées, the State replaces the mother of the family - <i>ad hominem</i> criticism of Sée - use of the <i>Sévriennes</i> by G. Réval)
L. Lescœur	December 1901	"L'État mère de famille" (criticism of Sèvres and Mme Jules Favre - quotes passages from <i>Les Sévriennes</i>)
Ms B. Griveau	January 1904	"Ladies' Patronage Committee

L. Lescœur	November 1904	Critical review of <i>Evade</i> , a novel by a lay teacher.
Anonymous	November 1904	"Chronicle of Christian education committees and works. L'enseignement ménager" (on the development of after-school works as compensation for the disappearance of the teaching nuns)
Viscountess of Vélard	October 1906	"The role of the mother in education, from the family, patriotic and religious point of view
Charles Daniélou	April 1907	"L'école normale catholique" (presentation of the school in the context of the Briand bill to impose diplomas on free school teachers - appeal for donations)
L. Lescœur	October 1907	"Les revues féminines d'éducation laïque" (criticism of journals in which intellectuals of a freethinking nature express themselves)
Ms Paul Griveau	June 1908	"The Lady Patrons
Ms A. Wagner	October 1908	"Girls' associations" (Les amicales de jeunes filles)
F. Lejeune, vicar of Arras	April 1909	"Gender coeducation" (implementation of coeducation = outrageous violation of the law)
Anonymous	September 1909	The "Ecole normale libre d'enseignement supérieur pour les jeunes filles" (the only officially declared free institution for girls in higher education)
Anonymous	September 1909	"The Catholic Teachers' Training College (description of Miss Desrez's school - call to register or donate)
P. R. du Magny, professor at the Law Faculty of Lyon	March 1910	"Secondary and higher education for girls" (criticism of the princesses of science and the neutrality of secular education - mentions the threat of the Briand bill)
Miss Desrez	April 1910	"Secondary education for girls: its elements and purpose" (on the value of having girls prepare for the baccalauréat in free education)
Henry Taudière	February 1911	"The Catholic Normal School, a free institution of higher education for girls
J. Guibert	June 1911	"The aim of the Committee for Secondary and Higher Education for Girls
Pauline Lavergne	May 1912	"Revue des revues féminines" (monitors Catholic magazines that show women their duty)
Miss Chauvière	June 1912	"The session on the teaching of girls (at the Congress of diocesan directors of free education, May 1912)
Miss Liégeois	July 1912	"The determination of examinations likely to be most useful for the education of young girls" (one of the reports to the Congress of Diocesan Directors of Free Education in May 1912)
Ms Teillard-Chambon	July 1912	"Draft programme for the secondary education of girls" (one of the reports to the May 1912 Congress)
Miss Taillandier	July 1912	"L'École Fénelon, Institut normal de jeunes filles, à Clermont-Ferrand" (one of the reports to the May 1912 Congress)
Ms Mouillet	July 1912	"L'école supérieure de jeunes filles de Besançon" (one of the reports to the Congress of diocesan directors of free education in May 1912)

A. Briot	July 1912	"The present state of free secondary education for girls" (one of the reports to the May 1912 Congress - an overview of the situation of free education for women)
Anonymous	October 1912	"The Catholic Teachers' Training College (assessment after 5 years of existence)
Pauline Lavergne	November 1912	"Review of women's magazines
Ms Hamel	February 1913	"Catholic Free Education for Girls" (the need to train women to teach in secondary schools)
Ms Pauline Lavergne	May 1913	"Review of women's magazines
Anonymous	May 1913	"A free university for young girls in Neuilly-sur-Seine (on the evolution of Madeleine Daniélou's free teacher training college)
Pauline Lavergne	May 1913	"Review of women's magazines
Miss Chauvière	June 1913	"The study day devoted to the teaching of young girls (summary of the meeting of diocesan directors of free education in May 1913 - proposal to create an agrégation de l'enseignement libre)
Miss Taillandier	July 1913	"On the intellectual education of young girls - should it be directed towards secondary education? (report presented at the study day of 21 May 1913 - criticises the heritage of the nuns and concedes the superiority of the public school)
Miss Mesnager	July 1913	"Pedagogical utility of projection sessions in the secondary education of girls" (report presented at the study day of 21 May 1913)
Louis Prunel	July 1913	"General principles which should govern the course of religious instruction in free secondary schools for girls" (report presented at the study day on 21 May 1913)
Joseph Laurentie	July 1913	"De la légalité de l'enseignement secondaire féminin" (report presented at the study day of 21 May 1913 on the conditions governing free secondary education)
Ms Paul Hamel	November 1913	"The Catholic Teachers' College, a higher education establishment for girls (presentation + appeal for donations)
Ms Pauline Lavergne	November 1913	"Review of women's magazines
Pauline Lavergne	November 1913	"Review of women's magazines
Ms Paul Devigne	November 1913	"Mixtures and notes
Ms. Decaux	February 1914	"The restrictive programmes of the Higher Patent".
Miss Debordes	July 1914	"Le cours de jeunes filles à Marseille: monographie" (monograph presented on 28 May 1914 at the Congrès de l'enseignement libre)
Ms Pluzanski	July 1914	"Le collège Sainte-Marie, à Neuilly" (report presented on 28 May 1914 to the Congrès de l'enseignement libre - the Collège Sainte-Marie is part of Madeleine Daniélou's Université libre)
Miss Desrez	July 1914	"La situation de l'enseignement secondaire libre à Paris" (report presented on 28 May 1914 to the Congrès de l'enseignement libre)
Miss Liégeois	July 1914	"The condition of female teachers in free secondary education" (report presented to the Congress in May 1914)

Miss H. Descamps	December 1914	"L'école normale diocésaine de Lille" (monograph on this school)
Ms L. Tarry	December 1914	"L'école libre de la paroisse Notre-Dame des Anges, à Bordeaux" (monograph on this primary school)

Articles selected for this thesis in *L'École nouvelle*

Magazine searched for the period from its creation in October 1897 to September 1914. Periodicity: weekly, 814 issues consulted.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Title (if applicable, additional elements)</u>
Anna Lampérière	14 April 1900	"Social education
Lucie Saffroy	21 April 1900	"Miss Saffroy's candidacy for the Conseil supérieur de l'Instruction publique".
A director [Eidenschenk].	30 March 1901	"The revision of the curriculum in teacher training colleges
A director [Eidenschenk].	6 April 1901	"The revision of the curriculum in teacher training colleges
A comp. course director [Eidenschenk].	27 April 1901	"The revision of the curriculum in teacher training colleges
Marie Édouard-Fuster	16 August 1902	"I don't instruct, I awaken
Marie Fuster	8 November 1902	"Holiday Impressions" (criticises the methods of childcare by nuns during the holidays - in particular the poor quality of the songs)
Ms Ed-Fuster	31 January - 7 February 1903	"M. Pécaut à Fontenay" (also published in <i>Pages libres</i> and the <i>Bulletin des fontenaysiennes</i>)

Maria Verona	7 February 1903	"Our mail
Ms Eidenschenk	6 June 1903	"Election to the High Council of Public Instruction, circular by Mrs Eidenschenk
A director [Eidenschenk].	12 April 1902	"A voice for teachers".
A headmistress of a normal school [Eidenschenk].	16 June 1900	"The question of teacher training colleges
A headmistress of a normal school [Eidenschenk].	23 June 1900	"The question of teacher training colleges
A headmistress of a normal school [Eidenschenk].	7 July 1900	"The question of teacher training colleges
Ms E. Fuster	12 December 1903	"Justice in schools (criticism of the graded assessment system)
Ms. Deghilage, Messrs Lechantre, Murgier	21 May 1904	"Declaration" (collective text and collective candidature for the CSIP elections).
A. Eidenschenk	1 ^{er} October 1904	"Small and big secrets of happiness" ¹
A. Eidenschenk	4 February 1905	"To the teachers: Why I am talking to them
A. Eidenschenk	1 ^{er} July 1905	"To the teachers: Little and big secrets of happiness - loving the

¹ We have not mentioned in this table the 26 articles that make up this series entitled "Small and great secrets of happiness" published between 1^{er} October 1904 and 23 June 1906. These texts were later collected in a book: A. Eidenschenk-Patin,

Variétés morales et pédagogiques. Petits et grands secrets du bonheur, Paris,
Delagrave, 1907.

		truth "
A. Eidenschenk	12 August 1905	"To the teachers: Little and big secrets of happiness - justice
A. Eidenschenk	9 September 1905	"The new third year of teacher training colleges
A. Eidenschenk	2 June 1906	"The internal supervision of teacher training colleges".
Internal teachers of the EN of Grenoble	21 July 1906	"Internal supervision in teacher training colleges" (response to A. Eidenschenk's article of 2 June 1906)
A. Eidenschenk	21 July 1906	"Response to the internal teachers at the Ecole Normale de Grenoble
A. Eidenschenk L. Eidenschenk	28 July 1906	"Compulsory evening classes
A. Eidenschenk	17 November 1906	"The love of the toilet
Ms Kergomard	12 January 1907	"Pre-schools - response
A. Eidenschenk	6 April 1907	"Equalisation of female to male treatments".
Miss Brès	18 April 1908	"The schoolchild from two to six years old
A. Eidenschenk-Patin	2 May 1908	"Candidacy of Mrs Eidenschenk" (elections to the CSIP)
Ms Eidenschenk	22 May 1909	"Federation of University Feminist Groups
Miss Marie Guérin	6 November 1909	"Primary Feminist Federation of France and the Colonies

Pauline Rebour	29 January 1910	"Feminist statements
Pauline Rebour	26 February 1910	"Feminist comments - Equal treatment is accepted in the Chamber of Deputies".
Pauline Rebour	16 April 1910	"Feminist statements
Marie Guérin	21 May 1910	"Towards success
Pauline Rebour	11 June 1910	"Feminist statements
Pauline Rebour	20 August 1910	"Feminist statements
Marie Guérin	17 December 1910	"Election tactics
Pauline Rebour	17 December 1910	"Feminist statements
Alice Havette	25 March 1911	"Mother and teacher
Pauline Rebour	1 ^{er} April 1911	"Feminist statements
Alice Havette	13 May 1911	"Pedagogy and hygiene
Pauline Rebour	20 May 1911	"Feminist statements
Alice Havette	10 June 1911	"Summer camps".
Pauline Rebour	24 June 1911	"Feminist statements
Alice Havette, Paris city teacher	2 September 1911	"To the teachers , to young mothers".
Alice Havette	30 September 1911	"Equal treatment
Alice Havette	21 October 1911	"Equal treatment
Alice Havette	18 November 1911	"A necessary response
Pauline Rebour	25 November 1911	"Feminist statements
Alice Havette	6 January 1912	"Equal treatment
Alice Havette	10 February 1912	"Equal treatment
Alice Havette	2 March 1912	"Equal treatment

Pauline Rebour	23 March 1912	"Feminist statements
Alice Havette	13 April 1912	"School hygiene
Alice Havette	20 April 1912	"School hygiene
Pauline Rebour	20 April 1912	"Equal treatment
Alice Havette	4 May 1912	"School hygiene
J. Deghilage and C. Michel	11 May 1912	"Candidatures for the High Council of Public Education".
Alice Havette	18 May 1912	"School hygiene
Alice Havette	25 May 1912	"School hygiene
Alice Havette	15 June 1912	"School hygiene
Alice Havette	29 June 1912	"School hygiene
Pauline Rebour	29 June 1912	"The very fair equality
Pauline Kergomard	6 July 1912	"Acknowledgement (of the care she received from the teaching staff after her granddaughter's death)
Alice Havette	3 August 1912	"Pedagogy and hygiene
Alice Havette	24 August 1912	"To the teachers, to the mothers
A. Eidenschenk	5 October 1912	"Women and Inspection
A. Eidenschenk	26 October 1912	"Superior Council of Public Education".
A. Eidenschenk	2 November 1912	"Superior Council of Public Education".
Pauline Rebour	2 November 1912	"Feminist statements
A. Eidenschenk	9 November 1912	"Superior Council of Public Education".

A. Eidenschenk	16 November 1912	"Superior Council of Public Education".
A. Eidenschenk	30 November 1912	"Superior Council of Public Education".
Pauline Rebour	30 November 1912	"Feminist statements
Pauline Rebour	14 December 1912	"Feminist statements
Alice Havette	14 December 1912	"Pedagogy and hygiene
Alice Havette	21 December 1912	"For teachers".
A. Eidenschenk	28 December 1912	"Superior Council of Public Education".
Alice Havette	4 January 1913	"Pedagogy and hygiene
Pauline Rebour	4 January 1913	"Feminist statements
A. Havette	11 January 1913	"Pedagogy and hygiene
Albertine Eidenschenk	18 January 1913	"Urgent Notice" (survey of readers about their preferences for school holiday dates for teacher training colleges)
Pauline Rebour	25 January 1913	"Feminist statements
Pauline Rebour	8 March 1913	"Feminist statements
Alice Havette	8 March 1913	"Pedagogy and hygiene
Pauline Rebour	29 March 1913	"Feminist statements
Alice Havette	5 April 1913	"Pedagogy and hygiene
Albertine Eidenschenk	12 April 1913	"Superior Council of Public Education".
A. Eidenschenk	19 April 1913	"Superior Council of Public Education".

A. Eidenschenk	26 April 1913	"Superior Council of Public Education".
Pauline Rebour	3 May 1913	"Feminist statements
Marthe Chenon	10 May 1913	"Preparing for the kindergarten classroom".
Alice Havette	10 May 1913	"Pedagogy and hygiene
Pauline Rebour	31 May 1913	"Feminist statements
A. Havette	14 June 1913	"Pedagogy and hygiene
Pauline Rebour	5 July 1913	"Feminist statements
Pauline Rebour	2 August 1913	"Feminist statements
Pauline Rebour	6 September 1913	"University Congress of Bordeaux".
E. Eidenschenk [sic]	6 September 1913	"Superior Council of Public Education".
Pauline Rebour	11 October 1913	"Feminist statements
Pauline Rebour	15 November 1913	"The Couriau case
Pauline Rebour	6 December 1913	"High school students
Pauline Rebour	20 December 1913	"The small classes
Alice Havette	27 December 1913	"Pedagogy and hygiene
P. Rebour	24 January 1914	"The question of kindergartens
A. Havette	24 January 1914	"Pedagogy and hygiene - for teachers
P. Rebour	28 February 1914	"Feminist statements
Alice Havette	7 March 1914	"The nest of mutualists
Pauline Rebour	28 March 1914	"Feminist statements

A. Eidenschenk	28 March 1914	"Superior Council of Public Education".
A. Eidenschenk	4 April 1914	"Superior Council of Public Education".
Emma Borey	4 April 1914	"Why not?" ("Why not put a needle or a pan in the hands of the boys?")
A feminist	11 April 1914	"Should you be a feminist?"
Ms Thiébault	18 April 1914	"La Belle-Nivernaise" (recommends a play for patronages)
P. Rebour	2 May 1914	"Feminist statements
Pauline Rebour	30 May 1914	"I wish to vote
Michelle Rolla	13 June 1914	"Anti-feminist remarks" (response from a reader opposed to Pauline Rebour)
The editorial staff	15 August 1914-26 September 1914	"To our subscribers

Articles selected for this thesis in the *Bulletin des fontenaysiennes*

Magazine stripped from its foundation in November 1894 to July 1914, i.e. 63 issues because there is a gap (n°40 between April 1906 and April 1907).
Periodicity: quarterly.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Date and number</u>	<u>Title (if applicable, additional elements)</u>
Alphonse Darlu	May 1895, No. 2	"Socialism and the social question
Félix Pécaut	July 1897, No. 7	"Letter from M. Pécaut to the President of the Paris Teachers' Association (on the subject of peri- and post-school education)
S. Lauriol	July 1897, No. 7	"About a recent article" (reaction to "Women who teach", text published by Talmeyr in <i>La Revue des deux mondes</i>)
Félix Pécaut	December 1897, No. 8	"Letter from M. Pécaut (continuation of the letter published in July 1897, n°7)
Miss Williams	December 1897, No. 8	"The Women's Institute and the Grosvenor Crescent Club
A. Eidenschenk	July 1899, No. 13	"The Present Duty" (about the role of female teachers in the middle of the Affair)
Rachel Albert	July 1899, No. 13	"University Extension in England
Ms A. Eidenschenk	December 1899, No. 14	"Neutrality
M.B. [Marie Baertschi]	January 1900, n°15	"Invisible powers in the formation of character
J. Gignan	April 1900, n°16	"Minutes of the regional assembly in Chambéry (where Albertine Eidenschenk heads the teacher training college)
M.B. [Marie Baertschi]	April 1900, n°16	"Study on the pedagogy of Fénelon
Ms Billotey	January 1901, No. 18	"About the moral education of girls
Ms A. Eidenschenk	July 1901, No. 20	"La Solidarité féminine de Chambéry
Anonymous [Marie Baertschi]	July 1901, No. 20	"Various issues - Practical preparation for the teaching profession" (report presented to the Congress of Women's Works and Institutions in 1900)
Anonymous	December 1902, n°26	"News from Fontenay
Anonymous [Marie Baertschi]	June 1903, No. 28	"A Republican Educator. M. Pécaut in Fontenay" (also published in <i>Pages libres</i> and in <i>L'École nouvelle</i>)

A. Eidenschenk	October 1903, n°29	"In Brittany
Anonymous	January 1904, No. 30	"News from Fontenay
Anonymous	October 1904, n°33	"Minutes of the meeting of 4 August 1904
Anonymous	January 1905, n°34	"Minutes of the meeting of 2 November 1904
Anonymous	January 1905, n°34	"Minutes of the meeting of 30 December 1904
Anonymous	April 1905, n°35	"Minutes of the meeting of 6 March 1905
Anonymous	October 1905, n°37	"Minutes of meetings
M.M. then E. Kieffer	January 1906, n°38	"Feminism, the roadblock (about the institution's reluctance to appoint female inspectors)
A. Eidenschenk	April 1906, n°39	"Les écoles normales et le projet de M. Massé" (defence of teacher training colleges in the face of a reform project)
A. Eidenschenk	April 1907, n°41	"Albert Sorel" (obituary in honour of his former teacher)
A. Eidenschenk	April 1907, n°41	"Supervision in Teacher Training Colleges".
A. Goué	July 1907, n°42	"Supervision in Teacher Training Colleges, a study of Mrs Eidenschenk's proposals
Anonymous	October 1907, n°43	"Minutes of the meeting of 5 August 1907
Anonymous	April 1908, n°44	"The entrance exam to the Ecole Normale
Anonymous	July 1908, n°45	"Postal Voting for the Election
Anonymous	October 1908, n°46	"Minutes of the Annual Meeting of 3 August 1908
Miss Kieffer	October 1909, n°50	"National Women's Council
A. Eidenschenk	April 1911, No. 54	"Should our work be anything other than that of Mr. Pécaut?"
Anonymous	April 1911, No. 54	"News from Fontenay
Anonymous	April 1911, No. 54	"Fontenay and the Student Association
Miss Fanta	July 1911, No. 55	"French Froebelian Union
Mr Ginier	April 1912, No. 57	"Note on the issue of female inspection in girls' schools
Anonymous	October 1912, n°59	"Minutes of the General Meeting of 5 August 1912
Anonymous	March 1913, No. 60	"News from Fontenay

Anonymous	November 1913, n°62	"Feminist Communications: 10th International Women's Congress
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Articles selected for this thesis in *La Fronde*

Compiled between 9 December 1897 and 1^{er} March 1905 (duration of *La Fronde's* existence during the Belle Époque). Periodicity = Daily from 9 December 1897 to 1^{er} September 1903 and monthly from 1^{er} September 1903 to 1^{er} March 1905.

Total => 2,107 issues consulted.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Pauline Kergomard	"Through Education, Foreword	09-12-1897.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education, once upon a time	10-12-1897.
Maria Pognon	"International justice through primary schools	10-12-1897.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education, today	11-12-1897.
A teacher (Pauline Kergomard ¹)	"Letter from a teacher".	16-12-1897.
Pauline Kergomard	"Some reflections suggested by the letter of the Union of Free Secular Education	21-12-1897.
Louise Georges Renard	"Student Christmas	26-12-1897.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education, coeducation	14-01-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education, coeducation	15-01-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education, coeducation	16-01-1898.
Louise Georges Renard	"Young girls".	25-01-1898.
Clémence Royer	"The teaching power	12-02-1898.
Clémence Royer	"The teaching power	13-02-1898.
Clémence Royer	"The teaching power	14-02-1898.

1 Pauline Kergomard reproduces in this article a letter she received from a teacher.

Pauline Kergomard	"Through education, the feminisation of primary education. I- the law... without the Prophets".	18-02-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education, the feminisation of primary education. II- Elected councils".	19-02-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education, the feminisation of primary education. III- The female inspectorate".	20-02-1898.
Anonymous	"Manifesto	01-03-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"The 'Friends of the School' manifesto	02-03-1898.
Louise Georges Renard	"Girls to be married".	04-03-1898.
Clémence Royer	To the "Friends of the School".	08-03-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education, teaching the little ones	17-03-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education, the nursery school	18-03-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education, nursery school staff	19-03-1898.
Louise Georges Renard	"Bourgeois prejudice	26-03-1898.
Louise Georges Renard	"Women and Legends	12-04-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education: elementary primary education. Compulsory education".	16-04-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through Education: Elementary Primary Education. The Curriculum"	17-04-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through Education: Elementary Primary Education. The school"	18-04-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through Education: Primary Schools	20-05-1898.

	higher education for girls".	
Pauline Kergomard	"Through Education: Girls' Upper Primary Schools	21-05-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education: girls' vocational schools	22-05-1898.
Marianne Vilain	"Around a denunciation, Interview with Miss Salomon	11-06-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education: examinations, the primary school certificate	18-06-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education: examinations, the elementary certificate	19-06-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education: examinations, various examinations, various diplomas and higher certificates".	20-06-1898.
Clotilde Dissard	"Gender coeducation in France, its origins, its history, its trends	28-06-1898.
Clotilde Dissard	"Gender coeducation in France, its origins, its history, its trends	29-06-1898.
Clotilde Dissard	"Gender coeducation in France, its origins, its history, its trends	30-06-1898.
Louise Debor	"Our daughters. Their education. The bankruptcy of marriage. Bourgeois life".	07-09-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through Education, Holidays, Boarding and Externship	20-07-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through Education, Holidays, The Need for Holidays for Externs".	21-07-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through Education, Holidays, Camps and School Trips	22-07-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Again the boarding school, the boarding school from a female point of view".	24-08-1898.

Pauline Kergomard	"Still boarding school, outside necessary".	25-08-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Still boarding school, let's abolish boarding school, but let's create boarding schools".	26-08-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"The martyrdom of children	01-09-1898.
Ms Louis Castel	"A feminist nun	02-09-1898.
Ms Louis Castel	"A feminist nun	03-09-1898.
Ms Louis Castel	"A feminist nun	04-09-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"The martyrdom of children	06-09-1898.
Mary Léopold Lacour	"Mr. Paul Robin".	14-09-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"The martyrdom of children	20-09-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education, secondary education for girls".	23-09-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education, secondary education for girls".	24-09-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Through education, secondary education for girls".	25-09-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things about teaching. The Rennes Congress".	01-10-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things about teaching. The Rennes Congress".	02-10-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things about teaching. The Rennes Congress".	04-10-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	13-10-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	14-10-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	17-10-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	20-10-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	21-10-1898.

Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	26-10-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	03-11-1898.
Louise Debor	"Clerical teaching	09-11-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	21-11-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things of education. The School des Roches".	10-11-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things about teaching. M. Buisson and the students".	04-12-1898.
Louise Debor	"New education - the School des Roches".	07-12-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"About Aniane	10-12-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things of l'enseignement. M. Lavis'sse's baccalauréat".	13-12-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	28-12-1898.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	14-01-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	04-02-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	11-02-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	18-02-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	25-02-1899.
Marcelle Tinayre	"About the libertarian school	26-02-1899.
Louise Debor	"About popular education	01-03-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	04-03-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	11-03-1899.
Jane Doria	"Sport and intellectuals	23-03-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	25-03-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	01-04-1899.

Pauline Kergomard	"The Congress of teachers of Secondary Education".	07-04-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"The Congress of teachers of Secondary Education".	08-04-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	08-04-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"The Congress of teachers of Secondary Education".	10-04-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things of Teaching, The Secondary School Teachers' Congress	15-04-1899.
Julia Wlada	"A women's university in America	17-04-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things of Teaching, The Secondary School Teachers' Congress	29-04-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	06-05-1899.
Savioz	"Social Morality Review	11-05-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	20-05-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	27-05-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	03-06-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	10-06-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	17-06-1899.
Osmont	"The School for Journalists	17-06-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	24-06-1899.
Louise Debor	"About education physical and moral education".	28-06-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	01-07-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	15-07-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	22-07-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	29-07-1899.

Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	05-08-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	12-08-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	21-08-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	12-09-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	22-09-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Things to teach".	30-09-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"The beautiful and popular education	07-10-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Children's souls	12-10-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"The first week of the People's University	16-10-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Progress is being made".	20-10-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"XIXth Congress of the League de l'Enseignement".	05-11-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"XIXth Congress of the League de l'Enseignement".	07-11-1899.
Louise Debor	"Child Psychology in the Family and in the School	10-11-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Physionomy and general psychology of the 19th Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement	16-11-1899.
Maria Pognon	"Secondary Education Survey - Women are not consulted	20-11-1899.
Louise Debor	"Open letter to Mrs Maria Pognon, President of the French League for Women's Rights	22-11-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"The law of education to the House".	23-11-1899.
Louise Debor	"About the critical education of the people	08-11-1899.

Maria Pognon	"Women's education	24-11-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"The Free Society free for the psychological study of the child".	27-11-1899.
Louise Debor	"Second open letter to Mrs Maria Pognon	29-11-1899.
Marie-Louise Néron	"The Maria Deraismes patronage	04-12-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"The education of girls in a democracy".	07-12-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Education in reverse	14-12-1899.
Anonymous (P. Kergomard ²)	"The Popular University of the XIVth district".	19-12-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"Education in reverse - masculine and feminine virtues	22-12-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"A work programme for 1900	31-12-1899.
Pauline Kergomard	"A suggestive statistic	07-01-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"Teachers and students at the exhibition	12-01-1900.
Louise Debor	"Rational education of women	18-01-1900.
Louise Debor	"Rational education of women	19-01-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"The university 'monopoly'".	20-01-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"The university 'monopoly'".	26-01-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"The first month of the Popular Union of the 16th district	31-01-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"The university 'monopoly'".	01-02-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"The university 'monopoly'".	09-02-1900.
Andrée Téry	"The Republican School	12-02-1900.

² This article quotes excerpts from Pauline Kergomard's opening speech to the UP.

Pauline Kergomard	"Outline of a teaching based on child psychology".	16-02-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"Outline of a teaching based on child psychology".	22-02-1900.
Louise Debor	"Conflict in Women's Education	28-02-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"The bourgeoisie "delays".	02-03-1900.
Renée Rambaud	"The conferences	03-04-1900.
Louise Debor	"About Folk Art	14-03-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"The Mutual Work of Nursing Homes	14-03-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"Charity and... Charity Sales	16-03-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"Saved!... He is saved! Thank God!"	24-03-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"A questionnaire adopted by the Free Society for the Psychological Study of the Child	30-03-1900.
Maximilienne Blais	"The new school laws in England".	04-04-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"Elections at the Council of Superior Council of Public Education".	10-04-1900.
Maximilienne Blais	"The issue of women's entry into German universities	13-04-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"Elections at the Council of Superior Council of Public Education".	16-04-1900.
Louise Debor	"A feminist	18-04-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"Elections at the Council of Superior Council of Public Education".	20-04-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"Elections at the Council of Superior Council of Public Education".	24-04-1900.
Jeanne Brémond	"Maternal education".	24-04-1900.

Andrée Téry	"Liberalism in the University	16-05-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"Elections at the Council of Superior Council of Public Education".	18-05-1900.
Marie-Louise Néron	"Mr. Georges Renard".	24-05-1900.
Louise Debor	"The Exhibition School	07-06-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"An Antifeminist Novel	10-06-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"The institutions and the congress of Primary Education".	30-06-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"The education of the young girl at the Congress of Women's Organisations and Institutions	08-07-1900.
Louise Debor	"The two feminisms	16/07/1900.
Andrée Téry	"Congresses. Post-school works".	17-07-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"After the cremation of Nelly Lieutier	17-07-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"The inauguration of the bust of Félix Pécaut	02-08-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"Primary education	03-08-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"Primary education	04-08-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"Primary education	05-08-1900.
Pauline Kergomard	"Primary education	08-08-1900.
Louise Debor	"The teaching of hygiene for women".	11-08-1900.
Louise Debor	"Girls' readings	19-08-1900.
Louise Debor	"Social education	27-09-1900.
Clémence Royer	"Women in boys' schools".	27-10-1900.
Daniel Lesueur	"Social education	08-10-1900.
Louise Debor	"Mothers' school	02-11-1900.
Andrée Téry	"The woman and the school placement	03-11-1900.

Maximilienne Blais	"Popular education in England	04-11-1900.
Andrée Téry	What alaw on congregations should be	30-11-1900.
Maria Verona	"The Nationalists of Education".	15-12-1900.
Marguerite Bodin	"Coeducation	23-12-1900.
Marguerite Bodin	"Art and social art	06-01-1901.
Marguerite Bodin	"Fatalism	07-01-1901.
Andrée Téry	"Investigating the congregations of women".	08-01-1901.
Clémence Royer	"Education reform	11-01-1901.
Clémence Royer	"Public education and its purpose	14-01-1901.
Clémence Royer	"Language teaching	16-01-1901.
Marguerite Bodin	"The Anglo-Saxons and their respect for women	20-01-1901.
Ida R. Sée	"The joy of pain	28-01-1901.
Marguerite Bodin	"The joy of pain	28-01-1901.
Marguerite Bodin	"The forbidden fruit	28-01-1901.
Harlor	"Latin and Women	01-02-1901.
Marguerite Bodin	"Sensitivity	04-02-1901.
Anonymous	"Patronage Maria Deraismes	07-02-1901.
Marguerite Bodin	"Education in the family	17-02-1901.
Louise Debor	"Education reform	24-02-1901.
Marguerite Bodin	"Coeducation	03-03-1901.
Louise Debor	"Small pedagogical problems".	05-03-1901.
Louise Debor	"Let's secularise	14-03-1901.
Marguerite Bodin	"Latin as a universal language	17-03-1901.

Clémence Royer	"Neutral education".	25-03-1901.
Marguerite Bodin	"Duconcret à to the abstract and the teaching of language".	25-03-1901.
Marguerite Bodin	"Freedom of education".	31-03-1901.
Clémence Royer	"Secular colonial education	30-03-1901.
Louise Debor	"The doll at school	06-04-1901.
Louise Debor	"Two educations".	20-04-1901.
Marie-Louise Néron	"Before, during and after school	26-04-1901.
Anonymous	"The Sophie Germain School	23-05-1901.
Renée Rambaud	"The French League of Education	24-05-1901.
Louise Debor	"The motherhood of schoolteachers".	27-06-1901.
Renée Rambaud	"The civic freedom of teachers and professors	20-06-1901.
Anonymous	"Equal treatment of female and male teachers	29-06-1901.
Louise Debor	"Museums and the people	11-07-1901.
Tolla	"Physical education for girls	31-07-1901.
Andrée Téry	"The village teacher	14-07-1901.
Marguerite Bodin	"Martial education	14-07-1901.
Madeleine Carlier	"Martial education	14-07-1901.
Maria Verona	"The treatment of teachers	15-07-1901.
Louise Debor	"To the school certificate	18-07-1901.
Maria Verona	"Survey on the budget of schoolteachers	18-07-1901.
Maria Verona	"The Congress of the League de l'Enseignement".	04-08-1901.
Maria Verona	"Teachers and the social movement	18-08-1901.

Maria Verona	"Popular education".	17-08-1901.
Odette Laguerre	"Is the is it only a destructive force?"	22-08-1901.
Maria Verona	"The emancipation of primary education".	22-08-1901.
Maria Verona	"The treatment of female teachers	25-08-1901.
Louise Debor	"School songs and poems	26-08-1901.
Harlor	"Secular education and its religious work	28-08-1901.
Maria Verona	"School Camps".	04-09-1901.
Maria Verona	"Teacher's wives".	17-09-1901.
Ida R. Sée	"For the little ones	19-09-1901.
Odette Laguerre	"For the sake of reason	21-09-1901.
Jean Hellé	"For teachers".	29-09-1901.
Jean Hellé	"For our girls	01-10-1901.
Maria Verona	"The health of women teachers	02-10-1901.
Odette Laguerre	"To the teachers	08-10-1901.
Renée Rambaud	"Teachers and the budget".	09-10-1901.
Marianne Vilain	"The work of the teachers	21-10-1901.
Ida R. Sée	"Hygiene at School	17-11-1901.
Ida R. Sée	"Freedom of conscience	30-11-1901.
Renée Rambaud	"The Ile de France School	02-12-1901.
Bradamante	"Our civic morality	07-12-1901.
Louise Debor	"Women in Boys' High Schools".	08-12-1901.
Odette Laguerre	"The morality of the future	10-12-1901.
Berthe Galien	"Around the secular school	21-12-1901.

Odette Laguerre	"Patriotism and militarism	22-12-1901.
Renée Rambaud	"Girls' high schools and the report of the Mr Maurice Faure".	23-12-1901.
Clémence Royer	"Secular Youth	31-12-1901.
Ida R. Sée	"Respect for the child	03-01-1902.
Ida R. Sée	"Lamoral in in of women's education".	04-02-1902.
Renée Rambaud	"For teachers".	06-02-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"The duty of beauty	09-02-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"Thinking of Clémence Royer	13-02-1902.
Renée Rambaud	"The treatment of female teachers	18-02-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"Our sons	23-02-1902.
Alice Maur	"Education and the State	01-03-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"Law of death, law of life	07-03-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"Civic celebrations	15-03-1902.
H.H.	"Secular education	18-03-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"On the move	22-03-1902.
Maria Verona	"Female perseverance".	22-03-1902.
Ida R. Sée	"Instruction and education	24-03-1902.
Maria Verona (Jeanne Déghilage ³)	"The petitioning of women teachers	28-03-1902.
Anonymous (Alexandra Myrial ?)	"Teaching in the Popular Universities".	02-04-1902.
Maria Verona	"The Condorcet Society	02-04-1902.
Alexandra Myrial	"Teaching in the Popular Universities".	03-04-1902.

3 Marie Vérone reproduces a letter from Jeanne Déghilage.

Maria Verona	"Congress: secondary school teachers	05-04-1902.
Maria Verona	The Congresses: Teachers secondary school teachers".	06-04-1902.
Harlor	"Democratising secondary education	07-04-1902.
Louise Debor	"Civic Education	11-04-1902.
Renée Rambaud	"To the student's circle	15-04-1902.
Ida R. Sée	"Character education	22-04-1902.
Maria Verona (Marguerite Bodin ⁴)	"In the midst of a struggle	21-04-1902.
Maria Verona	"The petitioning of women teachers	25-04-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"Their Republic	26-04-1902.
Jeanne H. Caruchet	"Memories of the Sorbonne	30-04-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"Women's action	03-05-1902.
Ida R. Sée	"The doctor at school	02-05-1902.
Ida R. Sée	"Young girls - then and now	08-05-1902.
Louise Debor	"Household cooperation	28-05-1902.
Maria Verona	"La Ligue de l'enseignement	30-05-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"Peaceful education	01-06-1902.
M.D., Head of Teacher Training College	"Letter to the Director	09-06-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"Necessary actions	09-06-1902.
3 female teachers from teacher training colleges	"The teachers of normal schools".	14-06-1902.
Maria Verona	"The teacher's budget - the realities of a survey	15-06-1902.

⁴ Maria Verona quotes a letter from Marguerite Bodin.

Marie-Louise Néron	"The question of popular theatre	18-06-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"Feminism in the village	18-06-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"Love according to the anarchist ideal	25-06-1902.
Thecla	"Education and colonisation	25-06-1902.
Françoise Benassis	"Morality through Religion and Science	28-06-1902.
Maria Verona	"The work of the teachers	28-06-1902.
Ida R. Sée	"Learning to learn	29-06-1902.
Maria Verona	"The repeal of the Falloux law	30-06-1902.
Paul de Bellegarde	"The repeal of the Falloux law	02-06-1902.
Thecla	"Hygiene and the School	06-07-1902.
J. Prudommeaux- Dallet	"Primary schools in peril	05-07-1902.
Renée Rambaud	"For teachers".	12-07-1902.
Sita	"The work of the trousseau	14-07-1902.
Maria Verona	"Primary education in Switzerland	16-07-1902.
Ida R. Sée	"The right to work	13-07-1902.
Maria Verona	"The recruitment of teachers	11-08-1902.
Françoise Benassis	"Secular duty	16-08-1902.
Ida R. Sée	"Female teachers in boys' schools	21-08-1902.
Maria Verona	"The staff of the teacher training colleges	20-08-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"The conflict	06-09-1902.
Maria Verona	"Coeducation in Finland	16-09-1902.
Maria Verona	"Freedom of education".	20-09-1902.
Maria Verona	"The work of the Ligue de l'enseignement	24-09-1902.

Odette Laguerre	"Freethought and feminism	25-09-1902.
Odette Laguerre / Maria Verona ⁵	"Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement	27-09-1902.
Maria Verona	"Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement	28-09-1902.
Odette Laguerre / Maria Verona	"Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement	29-09-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement	30-09-1902.
Maria Verona	"Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement	01-10-1902.
Odette Lagerre	"Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement	02-10-1902.
Maria Verona	"The Primary Peril	07-10-1902.
Andrée Téry	"The teacher's defence	13-10-1902.
Maria Verona	"Resignation?"	16-10-1902.
Louise Debor	"Hygiene and education	18-10-1902.
Aline Daux	"For childhood".	20-10-1902.
Maria Verona	"The public education service	20-10-1902.
Mr Mauger	"Primary peril".	22-10-1902.
Maria Verona	"Teaching books	25-10-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"The education of tomorrow	26-10-1902.
Ida R. Sée	"Classical morality	28-10-1902.
Paule Branzac	"Let's secularise women	04-11-1902.
Paule Branzac	"The appointment of female teachers	05-11-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"Secular festivals	06-11-1902.
Louise Debor	The Free Thought and "honest people".	09-11-1902.
Paule Branzac	"Appointment of teachers	09-11-1902.

5 Odette Laguerre and Maria Vérone are the two special envoys of *La Fronde* to the congress. They often co-write their reports on the congress.

Odette Laguerre	"For Peace	11-11-1902.
Andrée Téry	"Secular Youth	15-11-1902.
Paule Branzac	"Every man for himself	15-11-1902.
Louise Debor	"The question of the People's Universities	16-11-1902.
Paule Branzac	"Freedom of education".	17-11-1902.
Odette Laguerre (Jeanne Desparmet- Ruello ⁶)	"Inauguration of a new high school for girls in Lyon	18-11-1902.
Andrée Téry	"Clerical, the teachers?"	20-11-1902.
Odette Laguerre	"Household and feminism	21-11-1902.
Paule Branzac	"The appointment of female teachers	21-11-1902.
Paule Branzac	"The divorce	24-11-1902.
Maria Verona	"The appointment of female teachers	01-12-1902.
Paule Branzac	"The appointment of female teachers	09-12-1902.
Marie-Louise Néron	"Colonial education in schools	10-12-1902.
Paule Branzac	"Indignity	11-12-1902.
Louise Debor	"Women teachers and secular duty	12-12-1902.
Françoise Benassis	"Education and morality	13-12-1902.
Valérie Périgault	"The baccalaureate and girls' high schools	14-12-1902.
Marianne Vilain (Pauline Kergomard ⁷)	"Pauline Kergomard's lecture	15-12-1902.
Paule Branzac	"The appointment of female teachers	20-12-1902.
Odette Laguerre (Jeanne Desparmet- Ruello)	"Portraits of women. Mrs Desparmet-Ruello, dean of secondary school principals".	26-12-1902.

6 Reproduction of extracts from Pauline Kergomard's speech.

7 Cite Pauline Kergomard's speech.

Ruello ⁸)		
Paule Branzac	"Appointment of female teachers	27-12-1902.
Maria Verona	"The educational year	01-01-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"Cantonal delegates	08-01-1903.
Paule Branzac	"Male selfishness".	08-01-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"Disarmament	15-01-1903.
Paule Branzac	"The treatment of teachers".	18-01-1903.
Paule Branzac	"The treatment of male and female teachers".	25-01-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"Handicrafts	29-01-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"The protégés of the Mission	31-01-1903.
Paule Branzac	"The treatment of male and female teachers".	02-02-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"Female students at the University of Paris	12-02-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"Secular works	15-02-1903.
Renée Rambaud	"Women teachers before Parliament".	18-02-1903.
Renée Rambaud	"Women teachers before Parliament".	21-02-1903.
Paule Branzac	"To the teachers	25-02-1903.
Ida R. Sée	"School health	27-02-1903.
Anonymous	"The centenary of Edgar Quinet in Lyon	27-02-1903.
Ida R. Sée	"New girls - the student	02-03-1903.
Renée Rambaud	"Women teachers before Parliament	04-03-1903.
Renée Rambaud	"Pedagogical aptitude and private education".	05-03-1903.

⁸ This article is a portrait of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello.

Odette Laguerre	"Feminism and politics	15-03-1903.
Ida R. Sée	"The defence of life	20-03-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"The ethical movement	02-04-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"The 23rd Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement	09-04-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"The 23rd Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement	10-04-1903.
Madeleine Carlier	"Sentimental education	10-04-1903.
Anonymous (probably Odette Laguerre)	"The 23rd Congress of the Ligue de l'enseignement	16-04-1903.
Paule Branzac	"Advice to teachers	21-04-1903.
Paule Branzac	"Episcopal pride	05-05-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"The peaceful movement	06-05-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"Feminism and the big issues of the day".	24-05-1903.
Anonymous (J. Desparmet-Ruello ⁹)	"Feminist Education and Action	27-05-1903.
Paule Branzac	"The secular state	29-05-1903.
Madeleine Carlier	"Women teachers".	02-06-1903.
Paule Branzac	"What can teachers hope for?"	04-06-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"Democratic education	05-06-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"Democratic education	08-06-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"Democratic education	09-06-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"The Alsace-Lorraine question and peace	10-06-1903.

⁹Description of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's action, quoted regularly.

Odette Laguerre	"At the New Crusaders	12-06-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"Is it a crack?"	13-06-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"What is the status of the Dreyfus case?"	15-06-1903.
Ida R. Sée	"Useless scrolls	17-06-1903.
Ida R. Sée	"Free teacher	26-06-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"The outcome	01-07-1903.
Ida R. Sée	"Holiday	04-07-1903.
Madeleine Carlier	"Travel grants	06-07-1903.
Anonymous	"The feminist movement in Lyon	29-07-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"The mother's right	01-08-1903.
Anonymous	"Feminist education and action	27-08-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"Lay teachers" (Institutrices laïques)	01-10-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"Through the school	19-11-1903.
Rachel Albert	"Teaching in teacher training colleges	01-12-1903.
Odette Laguerre	"Mutuality in motherhood	01-12-1903.
Harlor	"Coeducation	01-01-1904.
Odette Laguerre	"The teacher training colleges	01-01-1904.
Odette Laguerre	"The teacher training colleges	01-02-1904.
Odette Laguerre	"The teacher training colleges	01-03-1904.
Parrhisia	"The future of our girls - teachers and schoolmistresses	01-03-1904.
Odette Laguerre	"The teacher training colleges	01-04-1904.
Odette Laguerre	"The teacher training colleges	01-05-1904.
Parrhisia	"The future of our girls - V - Teachers	01-05-1904.

Anonymous	"The Society of Education and action féministes".	01-06-1904.
Odette Laguerre	"In education".	01-06-1904.
Odette Laguerre	"Portrait of a woman: Mrs. Eidenschenk	01-07-1904.
Odette Laguerre	"In education".	01-08-1904.
Odette Laguerre	"The Swiss Civil Code project	01-09-1904.
Marguerite Durand	"Lefeminism à at Ligue de l'enseignement".	01-11-1904.
Louise Chaboseau-Napias	"The Joan of Arc Affair	01-02-1905.
Anonymous	"Feminist propaganda in Lyon	01-03-1905.

Articles selected for this thesis in the *Journal of Social Morals*

Magazine searched over its entire existence: from 1899 to 1903. Periodicity: quarterly, 16 issues consulted.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Title (if applicable, additional elements)</u>
The founders of the Review	January-March 1899	"Programme (moral and social relations between the sexes are central to the future of the human race - international character of the journal - call for women's collaboration)
Georges Renard	April-June 1899	"Le mariage tel qu'il devrait être, critique bibliographique" (review of <i>Le rôle social de la femme</i> by Anna Lampérière and <i>Leur égale</i> by Camille Pert - denunciation of the marriage-affair)
Ms Georges Renard	July-Sept. 1899	"Miss or Madam (for standardization under the title of Madam)
Georges Renard	July-Sept. 1899	"The Right to Love. About some recent books" (defends the term and the struggle of "feminism")
L. Duproix	July-Sept. 1899	"The Ecole Normale Supérieure de Sèvres
Olympe Gevin-Cassal, Inspector General for Children's Services	July-Sept. 1899	"Around the French cradles" (on his inspection tours to control the placement of infants - against the natalist policy)
Olympe Gevin-Cassal	Oct-Dec 1899	"Clerical education" (attack on "clerical prisons": orphanages, boarding schools, convents)
Louise Georges Renard	Oct-Dec 1899	"True story (story of a young girl's suicide in a village after being seduced and betrayed)
Georges Renard	March 1900	"Le bilan du divorce" (review of the book by Hugues le Roux)
Pauline Kergomard	October 1900	"L'éducation intégrale des jeunes filles" (praise for the progress made by the Republic in women's education - context of the War of the Two Frances - through integral education, prepare young girls for autonomy)
Édouard Vittoz	March 1901	Critical review of <i>L'éducation moderne des jeunes filles</i> by Marie Dugard

Articles selected for this thesis in *La Femme nouvelle*

Review stripped for the period from its inception in April 1904 to its demise in February 1906. Frequency: fortnightly (but irregular). 18 issues consulted. *La Femme universitaire* is a supplement offered free of charge to university subscribers of *La Femme nouvelle*.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Title (and possibly additional elements)</u>
L. [Léa] Bérard	15 April 1904	"Our Programme" (announcement of the project in the first issue)
A. Eidenschenk	15 April 1904	"The new woman - moral culture"
Lexi [unidentified pseudonym].	15 April 1904	"Madame Louise-Georges Renard (portrait)"
A. Eidenschenk	15 April 1904	<i>Review</i> section: "Whites versus Yellows" (on the Russian-Japanese conflict)
A. Eidenschenk	1 ^{er} May 1904	"The new woman"
Louise Georges Renard	April to Sept. 1904	"A Young Girl" (series of fictional texts with an autobiographical tone)
Ms Paul Bert	15 June 1904	"Sociology: Paul Bert and the liberal education of women"
A. Eidenschenk	15 June 1904	<i>Review</i> section: "Disarming the Alps"
A. Eidenschenk	1 ^{er} July 1904	<i>Review</i> column: "Milk prejudice and its victims"
Madeleine Carlier	15 July 1904	<i>Sociology</i> section: "Two youths".
Madeleine Carlier	1 ^{er} August 1904	"L'Esprit militaire" (critical review of a pacifist novel by Stéphane Pol)
A. Eidenschenk	1-15 Sept. 1904	"In Brittany" (a two-part text about his experience in clerical Brittany)
A. Eidenschenk	15 January 1905	<i>Sociology</i> section: "French women and the Republic"
Paule Branzac [J. Desparmet-Ruello].	1 ^{er} February 1905	"L'Évadée" (review of <i>L'Évadée</i> , published by "a secular schoolteacher", but not very secular in spirit)
L. Bérard	1 ^{er} February 1905	In the supplement of <i>La Femme nouvelle</i> entitled <i>La femme universitaire</i> , "Directrices et répétitrices", the following is published
A. Eidenschenk	15 April 1905	<i>Journal review</i> section: "Pour la paix" (critical review of the book by M. Carlier and O. Laguerre)
Louise Georges Renard	15 May 1905	<i>Sociology</i> section: "American education" (on coeducation in higher education in the United States)
Louise Renard	15 July 1905	"Russian Students" (her memories of her husband's Russian students when he was teaching in Lausanne)
Louise Renard	1 ^{er} and 15 August 1905	"A professional school (on the upper primary school in Ganneron Street and the course of M. Bonneviel)"
Madeleine Vernet	15 Nov. 1905	"The socialisation of education and the social future"
Léopold Rocher	15 February 1906	In <i>La femme universitaire</i> , 'Les Surprises de l'école mixte' (review of Marg. Bodin's book)

Articles selected for this thesis in the *Annales de la jeunesse laïque*

Review covering the period from its creation in June 1902 to July 1914.

Periodicity: Monthly, i.e. about 170 issues in total. Including special issues published in 1904, 1909-1910 and 1914. A gap in December 1913 (issue not found). Odette Laguerre's "feminist column" section disappeared after June 1907.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Type of item</u>	<u>Title</u>
Odette Laguerre	February 1904	Fictional dialogue	"Between Moms
Louise Georges Renard	May 1904	Critical review of the Margueritte brothers' book	" <i>The Commune</i> , by Paul and Victor Margueritte
Ms Paul Bert	June 1904	Opinion piece - defending her late husband	"About patriotism
Odette Laguerre	July 1904	Opinion piece in response to Ms P. Bert	"Peaceful education in schools
Odette Laguerre	January 1905	Fictional letter	"To a religious friend
Odette Laguerre	February 1905	"Feminist chronicle	"Judgment of President Magnaud
Odette Laguerre	March 1905	"Feminist chronicle	"Searching for paternity
Odette Laguerre	April 1905	"Feminist chronicle	"Love and the code
Odette Laguerre	May 1905	"Feminist chronicle	"The housewife
Odette Laguerre	June 1905	"Feminist chronicle	"The causes of our weakness
Odette Laguerre	July 1905	"Feminist chronicle	"Towards civil emancipation
Madeleine Vernet	August 1905	True story - pamphleteering tone	"Justices!"
Madeleine Vernet	September 1905	Call for donations + presentation of <i>L'Avenir social</i>	"Socialist and secular education
Madeleine Vernet	November 1905	Poem with a pamphleteering tone	"The legacy of Christ
Odette Laguerre	November 1905	"Feminist chronicle	"Gatti de Gamond
Madeleine Vernet	December 1905	"Social Studies	"Fatherhood
Odette Laguerre	December 1905	"Feminist chronicle	"An electoral programme
Odette Laguerre	December 1905	"Feminist chronicle	"The free marriage
Anna Franchi	January 1906	"Feminist chronicle	"The emancipation of the Italian girl

Odette Laguerre	January 1906	Play with a pamphleteering tone (on domesticity)	"Good from America
Odette Laguerre	February 1906	Critical review of the book by Marguerite Bodin	"The surprises of the mixed school
A reader	February 1906	Response to the article "Fatherhood" by Madeleine Vernet	"Mere objection".
Odette Laguerre	March 1906	Opinion piece	"The wedding of tomorrow
M.V.	March 1906	Poem with a pamphleteering tone	"To the daughters of the Tzar!"
Odette Laguerre	April 1906	Opinion piece	"The Legend of Death
MR V.	April 1906	Call for donations for <i>L'Avenir social</i>	"The Social Future
Odette Laguerre	May 1906	"Feminist Chronicle - a plea for the right to vote for the female intellectual elite	"What we will see in a few days
Marie Bonneval	September 1906	Opinion piece	"Pacifist education
Odette Laguerre / Ida R. Sée	September 1906	Extract from their brochure	"Child protection
M.V.	September 1906	Article on <i>L'Avenir social</i>	"The Social Future
Odette Laguerre	January 1907	Opinion piece	"Between mother and daughter
Madeleine Vernet	March 1907	Opinion piece	"About <i>Free Love</i> in the Senate
Gabrielle Lipmann	July 1907	Opinion piece	"School reforms
Émile Ségui	September 1907	Article in reaction to <i>L'Amour libre</i> , by Madeleine Vernet	"Free Love
Miss E. Rousson, high school teacher	September 1907	Report presented to the Congress of Secular Youth	"The education of women
Gabrielle Lipmann	September 1907	Opinion piece	"Reflections on the Army
Madeleine Vernet	November 1907	Response to Émile Ségui	"Response to <i>Free Love</i> ".
Madeleine Vernet	January 1908	<i>L'Avenir social</i> is looking for female staff	"To the teachers who are friends of <i>the SA</i>

Articles selected for this thesis in *Free pages*

Magazine stripped for the period from its creation in January 1901 to October 1909 (end of the existence of *Pages libres* in an autonomous way: becomes a supplement of *La Grande Revue*). Periodicity: weekly, 18 volumes and 470 issues.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Title (if applicable, additional elements)</u>
Organising Committee	1 ^{er} January 1901	"Short statement (announcement of the journal's objectives, first issue)
Marie Édouard-Fuster	2 February 1901	"The secular spirit" (transcript of a conference in a UP)
Marie Édouard-Fuster	10 August 1901	"The right to religion" (reaction to the book by J.P. Milliet of secularist tendency)
Marie Édouard-Fuster	28 September 1901	"Observation (about his own spiritual journey)
Elsie F. Wright	18 January 1902	"The life and work of John Ruskin
Odette Laguerre	6 December 1902	"The Two Lives and Divorce Reform" (comments on the Margueritte brothers' book)
Odette Laguerre	25 April 1903	"The evolution of the sexes and the transformation of marriage
Marie Ed. Fuster	18 July 1903	"M. Pécaut à Fontenay" (also published in the <i>Bulletin des fontenaysiennes</i> and in <i>L'École nouvelle</i>)
Madeleine Vernet	31 October 1903	"Letter from a Cauchoise to a Parisian (advice on military service for Cauchois peasants)
Madeleine Vernet	2 April 1904	The "bureautins" (situation of the wards of the Assistance publique)
Madeleine Vernet	14 May 1904	"Des remèdes" (letter from Madeleine Vernet in response to objections received by <i>Pages libres</i> about the bureautins)
Mathilde Salomon	3 December 1904	From his translation of <i>Chad Gadya!</i> from English (author: Israel Zangwill)
Madeleine Vernet	29 April 1905	"A woman in a village" (about her mother who takes in wards in the Pays de Caux)
Elsie Masson	4 March 1905	"The Ruskin School Home
Elsie Masson	4 March 1905	"An American Individualist: Henry David Thoreau
Madeleine Vernet	11 November 1905	"Les Bureautins, faits nouveaux" (reveals the pressure she has been under from the administration of the Assistance publique since the publication of her articles in <i>Pages libres</i>)
Odette Laguerre	12 May 1906	"Women's Electoral Rights
Elsie Masson	18 August 1906	"Readings: The Legend of Gusta Berling (comments on a book of legends written by a Swedish teacher)
Alice Hertz	20 October 1906	"An English Normal School: Pupil Mistresses in Kindergarten" (after his own experience at the <i>Maria Grey training college</i> in London which is modelled on the Froebel method)
Ida R. Sée	22 December 1906	"Foreign Readings: The Life of Children (commenting on the book by Italian Paola Lombroso)

Ida R. Sée	16 March 1907	"An Italian feminist novel: Una Donna
Elsie Masson	27 April 1907	"Drunkenness and depopulation in England
Elsie Masson	28 September 1907	"Reading: the rhapsode of Dambovita (book about Romanian peasants in the context of the recent agrarian revolts)
Ida R. Sée	5 October 1907	"Two schools in Lyon (on the Martinière des jeunes filles and the Vernay open-air school, all founded under the impetus of Herriot)
Elsie Masson	16 November 1907	"The Industrial Republic of Upton Sinclair (commentary on a book on the future of socialism)
Elsie Masson	16 November 1907	"Foreign Readings: Play Gardens (on play gardens in England and the USA)
Elsie Masson	7 March 1908	"Foreign Readings: An Impossible Novel" (commentary on the novel by socialist Robert Blatchford, not yet translated)
Ida R. Sée	30 May 1908	"The School Health Record
Elsie Masson	8 August 1908	"Notes and reading: In the Land of Comfort (a sharp critique of English capitalist society)
Alice R. Hertz	16 January 1909	"Readings: Early Childhood Education (book review by Jeanne Girard, Inspector General of Nursery Schools)
Émile Chartier (Alain)	25 September 1909	"Speech delivered at the funeral of Mathilde Salomon

Selected discussions for this thesis in the *Union for Truth's Free Conversations*

Of the 10 series published between 1904 and 1914 :

- *Electoral reform - electoral equality*, interview of 21 November 1909, intervention by Pauline Kergomard.
- *Questions relating to the economic and legal status of women - L'autorité maternelle*, interview of 15 November 1908, intervention by Pauline Kergomard.
- *Questions relating to the economic and legal status of women - In which public jobs would it be advantageous to introduce women?* interview of 14 February 1909, interventions by Pauline Kergomard, M. Berthélémy, A. Leroy-Beaulieu, Louise Compain, Mme Porgès.

Articles selected for this thesis in the *Bulletin de la Société libre pour l'étude psychologique de l'enfant*

Review compiled from its creation in October 1900 to 1914. Periodicity: 4 to 6 bulletins per year + years with a monthly publication. About a hundred issues consulted.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Title (if applicable, additional elements)</u>
The editorial staff	October 1900	"Statutes" (presentation of the newsletter + composition of the bureau)
Ferdinand Buisson	October 1900	"A few words on the purpose of the company"
Marie Fuster	October 1900	"The Study of Childhood in the United States"
Pauline Kergomard	January 1901	"The drawing of small children (criticism of the official programmes on this subject)"
Marie Fuster	July 1901	"Bibliography (the value of knowing what is going on elsewhere - particularly reports from the Anglo-Saxon world)"
Marie Fuster	July 1901	"Biographical study on children's drawings (based on a study by the University of California)"
Marie Fuster	January 1903	"Observations on the language of two little girls"
Marie Fuster	October 1903	"Rousseau and modern pedagogy"
Pauline Kergomard	January 1904	"Conference: Why do we need to know the nature of the child?"
Marie Fuster	May 1904	First survey of the Commission on "Moral Sentiments" (reflection on the methodology of the survey)
Ms Fuster - Ms Fiévet	Between May and December 1905 ²	"On unruly and rebellious children"
Editorial	January 1906	Agenda for the meeting of 14 December 1905 (communication from Marie Fuster - representation of the society at the London School Health Congress)
Marie Fuster	February 1906	"Perception of children, notions of things" (comments on an article by Binet + his own experiments)
Marie Fuster	March 1906	"Children's perception, notions of things (continued)"
Marie Fuster	1906-1907 ³	"Commission on the qualities and defects of children (Marie Fuster's work with a primary school inspector on laziness)"
Ms Moll-Weiss	January 1908	"Influence of food on the psychic development of the child".
Marie Fuster	January 1909	"Children's feelings" (after receiving her little nephew at her home in the presence of her two children)
Editorial	February 1910	"The International Committee on Educational Psychology"

2 It is impossible to give more details: there are missing pages in the microfilm at the BnF.

3 It is impossible to be more precise because of the gaps in the microfilm.

Elements from the Ligue de l'enseignement sources used for this thesis

The *Bulletin de la Ligue de l'enseignement* was searched from the creation of the Ladies' Committee in 1901 until 1^{er} quarter 1905 as well as 1^{er} quarter 1907 (only issues kept in the BnF between 1901 and 1914). Periodicity: monthly and quarterly. A total of 14 issues have been consulted. The *Correspondance de la Ligue de l'enseignement* (periodicity: weekly) was consulted for the period from 1904 to 1914.

In these sources, the sections offering minutes of the Ladies' Committee meetings and any communications from this group were consulted. In general, there was no specific title for these sections.

<u>Source and date</u>	<u>If possible, specify</u>	<u>Key information</u>
<i>Bulletin</i> January-February 1901		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation and composition of the Women's Cooperation - Encouragement of lay patronage for girls - Aim: to bring education levels closer together
<i>Bulletin</i> May 1901		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aim of the Ladies' Committee - Encouragement of women's post-schooling - Circulars sent to potential members
<i>Bulletin</i> May 1901	Opening session: 18 April 1901	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personalities present - Opening speech by the President of the League - Summary of the inaugural session
<i>Bulletin</i> June 1901	Meeting of 9 May 1901	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minutes of the meeting - Household education / Breastfeeding - History of calls for women's education at recent congresses - Link between Alumnae Associations and Patronages / Placement of girls - Preparation of the next national congress in Caen - Call for the creation of departmental committees written by Marie Dugard - Invitation to the meeting of the Maria-Deraismes patronage
<i>Bulletin</i> July 1901	Session of 13 June 1901	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading of Louise Napias' report to the Congress - Imbalance between boys' and girls' patronage: difficult to bring girls together outside the family + difficult to find female helpers to found a social work - Advance of the Catholic girls' patronage - Miss Saffroy aims to interest mothers in the work - Reconstitution of the committee under the unifying name of Jules Ferry
<i>Bulletin</i> July 1901	Session of 13 June 1901	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requests for subsidies referred to the General Council - Miss Saffroy is to make a circular: how to occupy the young people in the patronages? - Committee blocks the number of entries → already reaches 51 members => diverts them to the Parisian Circle

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Circulars to presidents of member societies: presentation of the Ladies' Committee and the need for girls' patronage - Report on the visit to Œuvre du Trousseau - Report on the visit of the Workers' Family Association - Report on the complementary course of domestic and household education at the City of Paris School
<i>Bulletin</i> August-September 1901		- Composition of the Ladies' Committee + the Parisian Circle
<i>Bulletin</i> October-November 1901	XXI ^e ELEC National Congress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report by Miss Napias on the Democratic Patronage of the Young Girl - Ms Blanche-Schweig asked that speakers visit local societies to recruit - Intervention by Pauline Kergomard on physical exercise in patronage - Lecture by Mrs. Kergomard: Talk on the Democratic Patronage of the Young Girl
<i>Bulletin</i> Oct-Nov 1901	Speech by E. Jacquin	- Speech at the prize-giving ceremony at the Chartres girls' college: tells the story of a poor girl who dreamed of being rich in order to escape from the care of the household, and how good it is to be the Providence of the family.
<i>Bulletin</i> December 1901		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brochure of the Ladies' Committee sent to the headmistresses of high schools, colleges and girls' classes - Report by Mrs Frédel on pre-school education in schools - 3 February: Maria Deraismes patronage celebration - description of this patronage
<i>Bulletin</i> January-February 1902		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report by Mrs Blanche-Schweig to create courses in child rearing and rational education for mothers - Organisation of courses by women doctors - Report on the visit to the Union des jeunes filles des VIII^è et XVIII^è emanating from the lycée Racine
<i>Bulletin</i> March-April 1902	Session of 13 February 1902	- Pauline Kergomard explains the operation of the home economics course in Brussels primary schools from which she returns
<i>Bulletin</i> May-June 1902	Session of 10 April 1902	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report on the visit to the former pupils of the Paul Bert school - Copy of an article by Édouard Cornély on the Maria Deraismes patronage
<i>Bulletin</i> August-September 1902	GA of the Women's Cooperation, 5 June 1902	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presidency of Ms Jules Ferry - The Cooperation has subsidised some twenty patronages or alumni associations - Speech by Ms Billotey on Cooperation, its objectives and achievements
<i>Bulletin</i> October-December 1902	Preliminary session of ELEC Congress in Lyon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reproduction of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's presentation: the organisation of UP in the provinces - Presentation of the UPL - Calls for a resolution: the League encourages UP in the propagation of scientific methods and philosophical principles - Another resolution: the organisation of the UP must be detached from confessional concerns, or any personal ambition - Other resolution: aim of UP = to teach the processes of discussion + observation + analysis + the notion of human dignity + moral goodness + the taste for high things + solidarity
<i>Bulletin</i> October-November-	XXII Congress of the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Various wishes of the Ladies' Committee - Mrs Blanche-Schweig's candidacy for election to ELEC's General Council

December 1902	League in Lyon	- Maria Verona takes advantage of the vow to raise teachers' salaries to demand equality (adopted) - Speech by Pauline Kergomard, who is delighted with the action of women in ELEC - Report by Cornély on the local ladies' committees
<i>Bulletin</i> Oct-Nov-Dec 1902	Session of 6 Nov. 1902	- Mrs. Édouard Petit founded a domestic education course in Ménilmontant
<i>Correspondence</i> 1902-1903	21 Dec. 1902	- Marriage of Miss Napias to Mr. Chaboseau in the presence of Buisson
<i>Correspondence</i> 1902-1903	7 June 1903	- General Assembly of the <i>Women's Cooperation</i> - speech by Miss Dugard: calls for the union of women of all classes + showed that the secular nature of the work should federate and not divert collaboration
<i>Correspondence</i> 1902-1903	21 June 1903	- Ladies' Committee sends Miss Saffroy to represent it at the Saint-Louis Exhibition in 1904
<i>Correspondence</i> 1904-1908	24 Jan. 1904	- Presentation by Mrs Moll-Weiss on L'École des mères and her desire to found the equivalent in Paris
<i>Bulletin</i> 1 ^{er} quarter 1905		- Amiens Congress: the mother should stay at home as much as possible → advantages of sedentary work - Vow to abolish the workrooms
<i>Bulletin</i> of 1 ^{er} quarter 1907	Session of 13 Dec. 1906	- Demand for greater freedom of direct action by the Ladies' Committee in the League + female representation on the General Council
<i>Bulletin</i> of 1 ^{er} quarter 1907	Session of 14 February 1907	- General Council's response to the Committee: Opposition to discussing the League's statutes - Response proposed by Louise Chaboseau-Napias: the Ladies' Committee renounces the appointment of a mixed Commission but wants more women to be appointed to the General Council
<i>Correspondence</i> 1904-1908	21 Jan. 1906	- Refusal of Mrs Jules Ferry to renew her powers
<i>Correspondence</i> 1904-1908	26 May 1907	- Communication from Mrs Edwards-Pilliet: report on nursery education + calls for (female) doctors to teach in girls' normal schools
<i>Correspondence</i> 1904-1908	6 Sept. 1908	- Meeting between delegates of the Ladies' Committee and the Minister to support the wish of the Besançon Congress to give a role to women doctors in the teacher training colleges + desire to create a free normal course in childcare at the Sorbonne
<i>Correspondence</i> 1909-1910	21 Nov. 1909	- Implementation of the Besançon vow: opening of a course by Ms Edwards-Pilliet
<i>Correspondence</i> 1909-1910	20 Feb. 1910	- Blanche-Schweig proposes a report on the role of women in post-school work
<i>Correspondence</i> 1913-1916	22 June 1913	- Committee asks Louise Chaboseau-Napias for a report for the next congress on the role of women in social hygiene issues
<i>Correspondence</i> 1913-1916	5 April 1914	- 1 ^{er} National Congress of Secular Works of Trousseau and Household Education in Primary Schools

Speeches included in this thesis at the Second International Congress of Women's Organizations and Institutions, 18-23 June 1900⁴

<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Content of the intervention</u>
Pauline Kergomard	18 June	Tribute to her late friend Caroline de Barrau
Pauline Kergomard	19 June	Wishes for equal intellectual culture for both sexes in primary school, for education in secondary school that develops the personality of girls, for all higher education to be open to women, for coeducation.
Pauline Kergomard	20 June	Vow in favour of the multiplication of UPs.
Ms Yon-Lampérière	20 June	Intervention against female labour, outside the family, described as an anomaly.
Pauline Kergomard	20 June	Female prisoners should not be paid less than female workers.
Pauline Kergomard	21 June	Description of the briefs received by the congress: importance of women's education, of women's action in boys' schools, of recognising the place of women in the history curriculum, question of moral and sexual education.
Ms Yon-Lampérière	21 June	On female labour presented as contrary to biological laws and social interest.
Ms Dugard	21 June	Denounces the pressure of religious institutions on women's wages and their exploitation of child labour.
Pauline Kergomard	21 June	Children leave school before the end of compulsory education to work. It is important to ensure that compulsory schooling is respected and that children are not allowed to work for profit before the age of 16.
Ms Dugard	21 June	Vow adopted: <i>That, in the education of young girls, greater emphasis be placed on questions concerning their duties towards servants [...] and the need for every woman to take an active interest in works of social union.</i>
Pauline Kergomard	21 June	On the regulation of domestic work.
Ms Alphen-Salvador	21 June	Presentation of the newly established Professional School for Home Care Nurses.
Louise Debor	21 June	Calls for the teaching of hygiene in girls' teacher training colleges, to which it would like to add a crèche.
Marie Baertschi	22 June	Report on girls' teacher training colleges to implement a reform (organisation of studies, higher certificate, etc.).

Ms Henri Marion	22 June	Presentation of his report: organisation of women's education = the key point of any evolution. Explains the teaching programme at Sèvres and the system of courses in the lycées.
Mr. Foncin, Inspector General	22 June	A woman's place is in the family, work outside the home is unnatural. For men to teach girls too. Recognises the right of women to inspect in primary and secondary schools.

- 4 Source: *Deuxième congrès international des Œuvres et Institutions féminines* tenu au Palais des Congrès de l'Exposition Universelle de 1900 (18 to 23 June 1900) sous la Présidence d'honneur de Léon Bourgeois et sous la présidence de Mademoiselle Sarah Monod (4 volumes), actes rédigés par Mme Pégard, Paris, Charles Blot, 1902

Pauline Kergomard	22 June	Presents her report on women's inspection, criticises the administration's lack of trust in women.
Ms Bézobrazow	22 June	Vow that women in secondary or higher education should be treated equally to their male counterparts.
Pauline Kergomard	23 June	On the education of young offenders after the revolt in the juvenile colony of Aniane.
Ms Edwards-Pilliet	23 June	Voeu adopted in favour of a preparation for the baccalaureate in girls' high schools.

Speeches included in this thesis at the International Congress on the Status and Rights of Women, held on 5, 6, 7 and 8 September 1900⁵

<u>Speaker(s)</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Content of the intervention</u>
Ms Féresse-Deraismes	5 Sept.	Presentation of the Maria-Deraismes patronage and its kingpin, Louise Napias.
Pauline Kergomard	6 Sept.	Rights of domestic workers, hostility to employment of underage girls, need to educate employers.
P. Kergomard - L. Debor - O. Gevin-Cassal	6 Sept.	The status of the housewife and the desire for remuneration for women's work in the family.
Ms Harlor	6 Sept.	Defines integral education that should apply to all sexes, praises coeducation, willingness to integrate women in UP.
Louise Debor	7 Sept.	On the initiation of girls into solidarity to prepare them for citizenship. Difference between Catholic charity and republican solidarity.
Pauline Kergomard	7 Sept.	Vow: that all children go through a single primary school and that only the best go on to secondary school.
Ms Edwards-Pilliet	7 Sept.	Wants to encourage girls to take the baccalaureate without changing the shape of women's secondary education: calls for the introduction of optional courses in secondary schools.
Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello	7 Sept.	Opposition to girls taking the baccalaureate, defends the school-leaving certificate and asks that it be considered equivalent to the baccalaureate. Question of girls' access to the professions.
Pauline Kergomard	7 Sept.	Vow: that crèches be annexed to girls' schools and colleges to introduce them to childcare.
Mary Léopold-Lacour	7 Sept.	In favour of expanding coeducation. Cempuis as a model school.
Pauline Kergomard	7 Sept.	Defends Ms Lacour's presentation. Advocates for coeducation at all ages. Criticises the boarding school.
Pauline Kergomard	7 Sept.	The leadership of co-educational schools should be entrusted to women.

5 Source: *International Congress on the Status and Rights of Women, held on 5, 6, 7 and 8 September 1900 at the Universal Exhibition, Palais de l'Économie sociale et des congrès*, Paris, imprimerie des arts et manufactures, 1901.

THIRD PART

ADDITIONAL SOURCES CLASSIFIED BY INTELLECTUAL

The following pages bring together sources that complement the previous ones and that allow for a more detailed analysis of the personal trajectory or intellectual production of the ten main intellectuals studied in this thesis. Only those sources that do not appear in the previous tables are referenced here (for example, the articles of each intellectual published in *L'École nouvelle* or the *Revue pédagogique* are not cited here).

In the tables below entitled "Published articles", the shaded lines indicate the sources produced by third parties that refer to the intellectual in question (interview, portrait, mention of the person's name or activity in a report, signature in a petition, etc.). Unshaded lines, on the other hand, indicate texts produced by the intellectual under study.

Additional sources concerning Clarisse Coignet

Administrative sources

Educational mission to Constantinople and Greece: F/17/2949

Published works selected for this thesis

Clarisse Gauthier-Coignet, *De l'enseignement public au point de vue de l'Université, de la commune et de l'État*, Paris, C. Meyrueis, 1856, 368 p.

C. Coignet, *La morale indépendante dans son principe et son objet*, Paris, G. Baillière, 1869, 194 p.

Mme Coignet, *Rapport présenté au nom de la Commission des dames chargée d'examiner les questions relatives à la réforme de l'instruction primaire*, Suivi d'un appendice par Mme Fanny-Ch. Delon, Paris, P. Dupont, 1871, 143 p.

Mme C. Coignet, *Cours de morale à l'usage des écoles laïques*, Paris, Le Chevalier, 1874, 311 p.

Mme Coignet, *De l'éducation dans la démocratie*, Paris, C. Delagrave, 1881, 344 p.

C. Coignet, *Où allons-nous*, Paris, H. Paulin, 1903, 68 p.

C. C., *Memoirs*, 4 volumes, Lausanne, impr. C. Pache-Varidel, 320 p., 301 p., 377 p., 332 p., 1899 - 1904.

C. Coignet, *Cours de morale à l'usage des écoles laïques*, Paris, F. Alcan, 1911

C. Coignet, *De Kant à Bergson : réconciliation de la religion et de la science dans un spiritualisme nouveau*, Paris, F. Alcan, 1911, 157 p.

Published articles

<u>Date</u>	<u>Review</u>	<u>Title</u>
2 March 1872	<i>Blue magazine</i> ⁶	"The Primary Education Bill
7 March 1874	<i>Blue magazine</i>	"On the teaching of morals in secular schools
5 September 1874	<i>Blue magazine</i>	"Speech at the distribution of prizes for girls' vocational schools
11 and 18 September 1875	<i>Blue magazine</i>	"The women's movement in England - political suffrage
29 November 1879	<i>Blue magazine</i>	"Impressions of a journey, a peasant school in the Florence countryside

6 Nickname of the *Political and Literary Review*.

19 April 1879	<i>Blue magazine</i>	"Secondary education for girls - the bills of Messrs Camille Sée and Paul Bert
24 July 1880	<i>Blue magazine</i>	"Secondary education for girls. On the teaching of morals. Plan, method, spirit".
14 August 1880	<i>Blue magazine</i>	"Public education, a few words on secondary education for girls
23 July 1881	<i>Blue magazine</i>	"A secular school in Naples, Mrs Schwabe
6 August 1881	<i>Blue magazine</i>	"A painting school in Rome, Miss Mayor
4 April 1891	<i>Blue magazine</i>	"Indigenous schools in Algeria, March 1890
31 October 1891	<i>Blue magazine</i>	"French schools in the East" (extract from a report to the Minister of Public Education)
25 June 1892	<i>Blue magazine</i>	"Algeria: Government of the Natives

Correspondence

- To Hermione Quinet: letter of 28 January 1880 (NAF 15512)

- To Arvède Barine: letters of 15 July 1882, 24 August 1882, 30 August 1882, 6 September 1885, 2 May 1906 → friendly correspondence, intellectual matters, publication of *Memoirs* (NAF 18341)

Additional sources concerning Mathilde Salomon

Published works selected for this thesis

Mathilde Salomon, *De la part des femmes dans la propagation des langues vivantes*, conference organised by the Society for the Propagation of Foreign Languages in France at the Hôtel des Sociétés Savantes, session of 30 January 1894, Paris, 1894, 7 p.

Mathilde Salomon, *Premières leçons d'histoire de France*, Paris, Cerf, 1884, 224 p.

Mathilde Salomon, *À nos jeunes filles. Lectures et leçons familières de morale, d'après le programme des Écoles primaires de jeunes filles*, Paris, Léopold Cerf, 1893, 144 p.

Published articles

<u>Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Title (and content)</u>
2nd half of 1895 (dated 22 August)	<i>Political and literary review</i>	"From school to the regiment" (question of school patronage, example of the Collège Sévigné)
19 April 1898	<i>The Century</i>	"A Cosmopolitan (tribute to Salomon Goldschmidt, donor to the Collège Sévigné)
7 June 1898	<i>The Gaul</i>	"Through the press" (mentioned as a member of the League of Human Rights (LDH))
8 June 1898	<i>The Gaul</i>	"Letterbox" (defends its right to be listed as a member of the LDH committee)
11 June 1898	<i>La Fronde</i>	"Around a denunciation. Interview with Miss Salomon", portrait by Marianne Vilain
29 November 1898	<i>The Aurora</i>	Mathilde Salomon's name appears in the list of those protesting "in the name of the disregarded right, against the prosecution and persecution of Colonel Picquart, the heroic architect of the revision", in the name of the Ligue des droits de l'Homme.
2 December 1898	<i>The Aurora</i>	Mathilde Salomon's name appears in the protest received this time at the headquarters of the newspaper <i>Le Siècle</i> , published by <i>L'Aurore</i> .
1 ^{er} July 1908	<i>Paris Review</i>	"Baccalauréat de jeunes filles" (on Collège Sévigné's attempt to prepare its students for the baccalauréat)
17 September 1909	<i>L'Humanité</i>	"Mathilde Salomon", by Albert Thomas: tribute to her death.

Archives of the private forum

Diary in loose leaf form with notes covering the period 1877-1908. A single sheet for the year 1877, the next for 1887, and then regular sheets until Mathilde Salomon's death.

A diary generally composed of sentences of a philosophical nature, but also personal reflections, some figures relating to the Collège Sévigné, comments on personalities, on some events in his daily life, on the Dreyfus affair.

There are also drafts of texts (articles, reports for the CSIP, conferences, etc.) in this archive: "Modern Languages and Peace", "Note on Primary Education", "Men and Women in Secondary Education, International Congress on Secondary Education", "Coralie Cahen", as well as texts on the subject of rest homes for secondary staff, secondary education reform, the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen as a basis for civic education, and overwork in women's secondary schools.

Correspondence

To Salomon Reinach: 44 letters between 1894 and 1909 → mainly about the Collège Sévigné where Salomon Reinach teaches, the Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Dreyfus Affair (Salomon Reinach collection, Bibliothèque Méjanes, Aix-en-Provence).

Information from other sources

Elements in the correspondence maintained by Alain (who taught at the Collège Sévigné from 1906) with Marie-Monique Morre-Lambelin and in his private archives. Elements cited in Thierry Leterre, *Alain, le premier intellectuel*, Paris, Stock, 2006, 589 p.

Fiftieth anniversary of the Collège Sévigné, 1880-1930, celebrated in the Grand Amphithéâtre of the Sorbonne, on 5 April 1930.

Collège Sévigné - Le Livre du Centenaire, 1880-1980, Paris: F. Nathan, 1982, 191 p.

Administrative sources

Debates at the CSIP (Archives de l'Instruction publique, Archives nationales) :

Intervened in the sitting of 17 January 1896 on the question of modern languages in the entrance examination for teacher training colleges (F/17/12973). Intervened in the sitting of 16 December 1908 on the question of exemption from the baccalauréat for girls (F/17/13644).

Vows in which his signature appears: F/17/12972, F/17/12973, F/17/12974, F/17/12975, F/17/12979, F/17/13642,

F/17/13645. Legion of Honour file: record number: L2450040; file number: LH//2450/40.

Files in the archives of the Education Department with mentions of the Collège Sévigné among other free schools: F/17/14186, F/17/14187.

Additional sources about Pauline Kergomard

Administrative sources

Career files in the archives of the Education Ministry: F/17/23609, F/17/23588/B The Children's School Society in the archives of the Education Ministry: F/17/10893

Published works

Pauline Kergomard, *Quelques mots d'hygiène scolaire*, brochure of a conference held on 25 May 1881, Montauban, n.d., 16 p.

Pauline Kergomard, preface to Lucien Mathé, *L'Enseignement de l'hygiène sexuelle à l'école*, 2nd edition, Paris, 1912, pp. V-XII.

Articles on Pauline Kergomard

"Le centenaire de Mme Kergomard", *La Française*, 21 May 1938, (tribute for the centenary of her birth, based on a text by Denise Billotey).

In Ferdinand Buisson (ed.), *Nouveau dictionnaire de pédagogie et d'instruction primaire*, 1911: 'Mme de Barrau', 'Mme Campan', 'Cours pratique des salles d'asile ou école Pape-Carpentier', 'Maternelles (écoles)'.

Correspondence

To Édouard Lockroy: 1 letter of 26 November 1877 → asks for his support in publishing his book of *Causeries sur l'histoire naturelle pour les tout petits* (NAF 25162).

To Céline Renooz: 2 letters and 2 replies (crossed correspondence in May and June 1888)→ on Pauline Kergomard's refusal to collaborate in *La Revue scientifique des femmes* (Fonds Céline Renooz, fonds Marie-Louise Bouglé, Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris).

To Eugène Manuel: 3 letters (from January, July and August 1890) → on the 1899 Congrès des Œuvres et institutions féminines, as well as recommendations of candidates for the agrégation (Correspondance d'Eugène Manuel, Bibliothèque interuniversitaire de la Sorbonne).

To Ferdinand Buisson: 1 letter on 7 August 1898 congratulating him on his conversion to Dreyfusism (Geneviève and Alain Kergomard (introduction by Jean-Noël Luc), *Pauline Kergomard*, Rodez, Fil d'Ariane éditeur, 2000).

To his sons Jean and Joseph Kergomard: numerous letters reproduced *in extenso* in Geneviève et Alain Kergomard, *op. cit.*

Other sources

Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Moral Education in The Hague, published by Miss Attie G. Dyserinck, The Hague, Nijhoff, 1913. Dyserinck, The Hague, Nijhoff, 1913 (reproduction of her speeches in favour of the secular school, notably during the sessions of 23, 24 and 26 August 1912).

Hélène Sarrazin, *Élisée Reclus ou la passion du monde*, Paris, la Découverte, 1985.

French Committee for Pre-school Education, *Pauline Kergomard. Un cinquantenaire 1925-1975*, Coutances, 1975, 80 p., (including a part "Souvenirs sur Pauline Kergomard" by her grandson Pierre Kergomard).

Debates at the CSIP

<u>Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Content</u>
29 July 1887	F/17/12968	Proposal to revise the Sèvres programmes to avoid overwork countersigned by 7 people
8 November 1889	F/17/12969	During the debate, supports the need for the Principal to give grades to students like teachers: insists on his educational role.
November 1889	F/17/12969	Report on the material that the municipality must provide to the communes for nursery schools and kindergartens, sets out the list of the minimum material required.
29 July 1890	F/17/12970	Report on gymnastics in primary school. Disagrees with the reworking of the kindergarten curriculum, proposes new wording, adopted.
28 December 1890	F/17/12970	Submits a motion, countersigned by others, for the creation of normal courses for better technical preparation in upper primary schools (especially for drawing and handicrafts).
4 June 1891	F/17/12970	Co-signatory of a vow to revise the curriculum for girls in high schools: avoid overwork.
15 April 1892	F/17/12971	Copy of the letter published by Pauline Kergomard in <i>L'Instituteur</i> of 20 April 1892 to announce her candidacy.
15 April 1896	F/17/12973	Copy of an article in <i>L'Ami de l'enfance</i> of 15 April 1896: Pauline Kergomard announces and supports Miss Saffroy's candidacy for the CSIP.

Additional sources concerning Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello

Published articles

<u>Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Title (and content)</u>
29 Sept. 1902	<i>The Reminder</i>	"The Teaching Congress (on Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello's intervention on UP)
26 February 1903	<i>The Aurora</i>	"The centenary of Edgar Quinet in Lyon (on the organisations in Lyon, led by the UPL, which organised this celebration - concluding talk by Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello)
1904	5th series, <i>Cahiers de la Quinzaine</i>	On the UP congress, in the presence of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello + mention of her report as president of the UPL.
10 April 1904	<i>The Republican Reminder of Lyon</i>	"Chroniques journalistiques", Léon Borde (mention of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello in a pamphleteer article on the occasion of the municipal elections)
11 May 1904	<i>The Republican Reminder of Lyon</i>	"New theatre' (critical mention of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello as a voice of modesty and censorship)
24 May 1904	<i>The Aurora</i>	"The UP Congress (mention of the presence of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello)
31 August 1904	<i>The Republican Reminder of Lyon</i>	"Political notes - the conquest of Rome", Léon Borde (critical mention of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello and her participation in the Congress of Free Thought in Rome, request for revocation)
30 October 1904	<i>The Republican Reminder of Lyon</i>	"Political notes", Léon Borde (criticism of the feminist demonstrations during the centenary of the Civil Code, including mention of Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello)
September 1905	<i>3rd International Congress of Public Art in Liege</i>	Reproduction of his speech - "Popular theatre" (in relation to his experience at the UPL)
25 March 1910	<i>University Lyon</i>	"Petition" (signing a petition for a museum project on behalf of the Committee for Museum Development)
1910	<i>IVth International Congress of Public Art (Brussels)</i>	Speech - "School and Nature" (on how to organise extracurricular patronage)
5 November 1911	<i>La Française</i>	"To Mme Desparmet-Ruello" (feminist tribute on the occasion of the death of her son in an aviation competition)
29 January 1914	<i>The News</i>	"Women and journalism" (Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello cited among the female contributors to <i>La Fronde</i> at the beginning of the century)
5 August 1922	<i>L'Écho saumurois</i>	"L'Avenir familial" (Jeanne Desparmet-Ruello, vice-president of this insurance company promoting marriage and births)
14 July 1926	<i>Municipal bulletin of the city of Paris</i>	Appears as a voluntary contributor to the public debt and the raising of the franc.
27 February 1937	<i>France, Journal of Women's Education and Action</i>	"Celles qui s'en vont" (tribute on the occasion of her death)

Administrative sources

Career files (Archives de l'Instruction publique) : F/17/22067, F/17/23284. File in the Lyon municipal archives: 176WP051

Other published sources

Annales de l'Université populaire lyonnaise, n°1, January 1901 - n°2, February 1901 - n°3, July 1901 - n°4, July 1902 - n°5, July 1903.

Correspondence

To Céline Renooz: 1 letter, (29 March 1887) → about her participation in the *Revue scientifique des femmes* (Céline Renooz collection, Marie- Louise Bouglé archives, Bibliothèque historique de la ville de Paris)

To Eugène Manuel: 1 letter, (6 June 1888) → requests the direction of the lycée opened in Passy (fonds Eugène Manuel, MS 1936, Bibliothèque Victor Cousin, Bibliothèque interuniversitaire de la Sorbonne)

To Édouard Herriot: 5 letters, (13 May 1924, 15 January 1934, 8 March 1935, 6 February 1936, 21 February 1936) → letters to an old friend, congratulations on his political success (Archives municipales de Lyon, fonds in the process of being classified by Anne Forrest)

Additional sources concerning Odette Laguerre

Published works

Odette Laguerre and Madeleine Carlier (preface by Frédéric Passy), *Pour la paix, lectures historiques à l'usage de l'enseignement élémentaire et des écoles normales*, Paris, Librairie générale de l'enseignement, 1905, 200 p.

Odette Laguerre, *L'enseignement dans la famille, cours complet d'études pour les jeunes filles*, Paris, Firmin-Didot, 1888-1894 (3 volumes).

Odette Laguerre and Ida R. Sée, *L'Éducation féministe - La protection de l'enfance*, Lyon, Société d'éducation et d'action féministes, 1906, 32 pp.

Correspondence

To Georges Renard: 3 letters of February and April 1905 → thanks to Georges Renard for his support of the feminist and pacifist struggle (MS2607, Georges Renard collection, Bibliothèque historique de la ville de Paris)

Additional sources on Marie Dugard

Career file (archives of the Education Ministry) : F/17/23835

Correspondence

To Mme Quinet: 1 letter (11 July 1891) → wants to include passages from Quinet in a collection of moral readings for secondary schools (NAF 15512).

Published works selected for this thesis

M. Dugard, *La Société américaine*, 1896, Paris, Hachette, 1896, 320 p.

M. Dugard, *De l'éducation moderne des jeunes filles*, Paris, A. Colin, 1900, 88 p.

M. Dugard, *De la Formation des maQtres de l'enseignement secondaire à l'étranger et en France*, second edition, Armand Colin, 1903 [1902], 242 pp.

M. Dugard, *L'évolution contre l'éducation*, Paris, Hachette, 1910, 119 p.

Louise Weiss, *Souvenirs d'une enfance républicaine*, [10th edition], Paris, Denoël, 1938, 243 p. (Louise Weiss recalls her teacher Marie Dugard).

Additional sources on Albertine Eidenschenk

Administrative sources

Legion of Honour file: notice c-223454, call number: 19800035/462/61857.

Career file in the departmental archives of the Nord (Lille): box 2T265.

Career file in the Archives de l'Instruction publique (Pierrefitte-sur-Seine): F/17/23836/B.

Published works

Book published by Albertine Eidenschenk-Patin: *Variétés morales et pédagogiques. Petits et grands secrets du bonheur*, Paris, Delagrave, 1907, 138 p.

Books on Albertine Eidenschenk :

- Christiane Persyn (primary school teacher and former pupil), *Une grande éducatrice, Mme Eidenschenk-Patin 1864-1942*, Avesnes, L'observateur, 1950, 27 p.
- *Madame A. Eidenschenk-Patin, 1864-1942, headmistress of the Ecole normale d'institutrices de Douai, 1905-1926* by the amicale des anciennes

élèves de l'Ecole normale d'institutrices du Nord, 1978.

Published articles

<u>Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Title (and content)</u>
20 August 1902	<i>La Fronde</i>	"The staff of teacher training colleges", Maria Verona (on Albertine Eidenschenk's initiative to circulate the petition for equal pay in teacher training colleges)
1 ^{er} August 1904	<i>La Fronde</i>	"In education", Odette Laguerre (on Albertine Eidenschenk's victory at the CSIP)
September 1905	<i>Universal Congress of Freethought</i>	Mr. and Mrs. Eidenschenk among the delegates from France.
1906	<i>Primary Education Yearbook</i>	"La religieuse Bretagne
5 November 1906	<i>L'Humanité</i>	"Compulsory evening classes", Emile Glay (reproduction of a communication from Mr and Mrs Eidenschenk)
15 June 1908	<i>The Reminder</i>	"(description of her testimony before the extra-parliamentary committee)
24 July 1908	<i>The Cross</i>	Article that mentions the exclusion of M. Salomon and A. Eidenschenk from a discussion about the settlement of a vice case at the CSIP.
May 1911	<i>The Philanthropic Review</i>	Mention of Albertine Eidenschenk as deputy secretary general of the Northern Social Hygiene Alliance.
1912	<i>Report of the 2nd International Congress on Moral Education in The Hague.</i>	Albertine Eidenschenk member of the French National Committee.
February 1923	<i>Vocational Education Bulletin.</i>	CSIP session of January 1923: Albertine's wish for the establishment of a moral education course in boys' high schools.
June 1930	<i>Comedy</i>	On the occasion of the centenary of Fontenay and Saint-Cloud, the memories that Albertine Eidenschenk left in the North.
November 1930	<i>The Republican Poilu</i>	Demonstration on 7 Sept. in Vic-sur-Aisne: A. Eidenschenk, President of the International League of Mothers and Educators for Peace, gave an impromptu speech on the role of women in building peace.
June 1932	<i>Fontenaysian newsletter</i>	"A girls' school in the Paris region sixty years ago" (autobiographical account of her childhood)
December 1932	<i>Le populaire, SFIO</i>	Congress of the Aisne federation of the League of Human Rights. I intervene as president of the League of Mothers and Educators for Peace: appeal to women.
10 March 1934	<i>La Française</i>	Appeal to the spiritual leaders of the world and appeal to all mothers to save peace.
October 1936	<i>Paris-Soir</i>	Description of A. Eidenschenk as a speaker at a peace rally.
5 March 1938	<i>La Française</i>	"A good woman: Mme Eidenschenk-Patin" (speech given by Mme Bourez (a former student) to celebrate Albertine's rosette)

Sources from CSIP

<u>Date</u>	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Content</u>
24 July 1905	F/17/13642	Report on the curricula of girls' and boys' teacher training colleges followed by a proposal for reform.
19 July 1906	F/17/13643	Report on the salary of the Fontenay repetitors and proposal for an increase.
October - December 1906	F/17/13643	Co-signing of wishes: penetration of educational orders + assimilation of nursery and primary + sweeping of classrooms + gifts/buildings/honouring + sending pupils to church + mixed classes + after-school concerns and care of the school + primary inspectors + weight on the Council of Teachers
18 July 1908	F/17/12974	A motion signed by A. Eidenschenk, among others, to exempt female high school students who want to study medicine from the baccalaureate, and the ensuing discussion.
21 July 1909	F/17/13645	Report on the issue of the supervision of girls' teacher training schools.
21 July 1909	F/17/13645	Report on allowances for public school staff in Algeria followed by a motion (adopted).
Session of 30 June 1915	F/17/13646	Speech by Albert Sarraut: emotional greeting to Mmes Eidenschenk and Deghilage, who have remained in the occupied country
23 December 1916	F/17/13646	Albertine Eidenschenk reported a wish on behalf of the Primary Committee on the role of the Teachers' Council.
Session of 20 June 1918	F/17/13646	CSIP salutes A. Eidenschenk: shattered health and grief → serves the University in the Landes department.

Additional sources concerning Marie Baertschi-Fuster

Not all mentions of Marie Baertschi in the press (e.g. simple announcements of her conferences in the UP) have been cited.

Published articles

<u>Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Title (and content)</u>
January 1896	<i>Secondary education for girls</i>	"Congress held in Coblenz
17 January 1898	<i>The Aurora</i>	"Open letter to M. Zola" (text written and co-signed by Marie Baertschi)
5 August 1899	<i>La Fronde</i>	"Things about teaching", Pauline Kergomard (in praise of Marie Baertschi)
30 November 1898	<i>The Aurora</i>	Petition in support of Picquart

13 March 1899	<i>The Aurora</i>	"Le gentilhomme de Vogüe" (letter of protest in defence of Pécaut's work)
20 March 1899	<i>The Aurora</i>	"A small lesson (commentary on Marie Baertschi's powerful protest)
2 April 1898	<i>Municipal magazine</i> (after publication in the <i>PI General Handbook</i>)	"A girls' college in China".
12 December 1899	<i>The Radical</i>	"In a UP" by Francis Framée (description of a lecture by Marie Baertschi in a UP on the history of freedom of conscience)
January-July 1900	<i>Drama magazine</i>	"Bayreuth 1876-1896 (an article on Richard Wagner translated by Marie Baertschi)
7 January 1900	<i>The Echo of the Political and Literary Week</i>	"Women's issues" (presents its column, takes a stand on feminism)
1900	Paris City Council: <i>Report on the distribution of the credit for lay patronages</i>	Presentation of the Maria Deraismes Patronage, chaired by Louise Napias, of which Marie Baertschi is the secretary
13 June 1900	<i>The Radical</i>	"Freethinkers' Union (description of the Freethinkers' Union of the 14th century to which Marie Baertschi belongs)
4 February 1900	<i>The Echo of the Political and Literary Week</i>	"Girls' readings
4 March 1900	<i>The Echo of the Political and Literary Week</i>	"Children's readings
1 ^{er} April 1900	<i>The Echo of the Political and Literary Week</i>	"Fairy Tales
July-December 1900	<i>Philosophical review</i>	"The International Congress of Philosophy (author André Lalande reproduces the intervention of Marie Baertschi, secretary of the moral section)
1902	Book: <i>Social Opinions</i> of Anatole France	Part: "Speeches" (praise for Marie Baertschi and her work in the UP)
17 May 1903	National Council of French Women - 1st Public GA	Report by Marie Fuster on the unification of school curricula in secondary schools (issue of girls' access to the baccalauréat)
1912	<i>Hygiene and sanitary police review</i>	"School hygiene at the International Hygiene Exhibition in Dresden
1918	<i>Annales de l'académie de Mâcon</i>	"The fraternal assistance of the American people to the people of France" (on behalf of the American Red Cross)
27 February 1923	<i>The Cross</i>	Article on the Congress of the Christian Marriage Association where Marie Fuster studies the role of the mother in the education of children.
29 April 1927	<i>The Cross</i>	Article on the Congress of the Association of Christian Marriage where Marie Fuster speaks on the instruction of engaged couples, alongside Madeleine Daniélou.
May 1927	<i>The parish and the family. Proceedings of the Vth Congress of the A.M.C. [Association du Mariage Chrétien].</i>	Marie Fuster spoke about her work in the association and her desire to introduce child psychology courses (failure).

May 1927	<i>The parish and the family. Proceedings of the Vth Congress of the C.M.A.</i>	Report by Marie Fuster: the role of the housewife.
1928	<i>Divorce, proceedings of the international congress of the Christian Marriage Association</i>	Reproduction of his speech: "Another great victim of divorce: Love".
2 May 1930	<i>The Cross</i>	Article on the Congress of the Association of Christian Marriage where Marie Fuster condemns free union.
13 December 1934	<i>The Cross</i>	Article on an intervention by Marie Fuster on behalf of the Moulin Vert's social works at a meeting of the National Union for Women's Suffrage.
July 1936	<i>3rd International Social Work Conference</i>	Summary of Marie Fuster's intervention for France on unemployment.

Correspondence

To Ferdinand Buisson: 3 letters (22 April 1898, date torn out (1899), 2 November 1899) → situation at the Ecole Normale de Versailles, reply to a proposal to direct a secondary course, Dreyfus affair, organisation of the UP movement.

To Eugène Manuel: 1 letter (18 April 1899) → poor conception of neutrality and secularism in primary schools and link with the Dreyfus Affair (fonds Eugène Manuel, MS 1936, Bibliothèque Victor Cousin, Bibliothèque interuniversitaire de la Sorbonne)

To Daniel Halévy: 5 letters (9 December 1899, 21 December 1899, January 1900, 16 January 1900, 13 April 1900) → questions about the UP (Halévy, NAF 28147).

Mention of Marie Baertschi in the correspondence between Jean-Marie Jouandanne (Alliance socialiste révolutionnaire de Seine-et-Oise) and Daniel Halévy (10 January 19??, 16 February 1900, 7 June 1900) (Halévy fonds, NAF 28147).

Career file (archives of the Education Ministry) : F/17/23692 Information from

other sources

Daniel Halévy [texts collected and presented by Jean-Pierre Halévy], *Regards sur l'affaire Dreyfus*, Paris, Fallois, 1994.

Collège Sévigné - Le Livre du Centenaire, 1880-1980, Paris, F. Nathan, 1982, 191 p.

→ reproduction of the speech she gave at the 25th anniversary of the Collège Sévigné in 1905.

→ is mentioned by Thérèse Maurette-Dupuy, her former pupil at Sévigné in 'Mademoiselle Salomon's Sévigné College'.

Memories of former students from the inter-war period reproduced in articles published in *Vie sociale*, "Histoire des premières écoles de service social en France, 1908-1938", issue edited by Brigitte Bouquet, Christine Garcette, Georges-Michel Salomon, n°1-2, 1995.

Additional sources concerning Jeanne Crouzet-Benaben

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work

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PART FOUR

BIBLIOGRAPHY

CLASSIFICATION OF THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following bibliography indicates the scientific literature, excluding sources. 1-

Tools

First of all, there are the working tools, the tools for analysing sources and the studies of biographical methodology.

2- Context

Next, there are studies relating to the history of the Third Republic, which are necessary to grasp the political, economic, social and institutional context of the period under study, as well as works on the history of the publishing world and the press, an essential aspect of any reflection on the intellectual world.

As this thesis is situated at the crossroads of the history of intellectuals, the history of women and gender, and the history of education, the works from these three streams are grouped into as many sub-sections.

3- History of intellectuals

This sub-section brings together the works that have served as a basis for thinking about the feminisation of the concept of intellectual according to the frame of reference established by the history of intellectuals, which mobilises this concept in its meaning as a political category.

In addition to the issues of defining the concept, this historiography has enabled us to learn about the networks that were being woven in the French intellectual world at the turn of the XIX^e and XX^e centuries, as well as the forms that male commitments took at that time, in an attempt to grasp the specificity (or non-specificity) of female commitments.

Although a section on "intellectuals" appears in this sub-section, it must be noted that the introduction of the gender variable into the history of intellectuals is more the work of specialists in the history of women and gender than of the "traditional" history of intellectuals. Indeed, when Jean-François Sirinelli proposed to Nicole Racine and Michel Trebitsch to take over the Groupe sur l'histoire des intellectuels (GHRI), which he directed until 1988, it was specialists in the history of women that they turned to in order to open a project on female intellectuals¹. They invited Michelle Perrot, Éliane Viennot, Sylvie Chaperon, Nicole Mosconi and Michèle le Dœuff. It was also historians from the field of women's history who followed on from the work of the GRHI by laying the foundations for the history of intellectual women in the 2000s (Françoise Blum and Muriel Carduner-Loosfelt for *Mil neuf cent*, Florence Rochefort and Mathilde Dubesset for *Clio*).

4- History of women and gender

This thesis cannot, therefore, do without the work of women's and gender history, which has played a major role in thinking about female intellectuals. This sub-section of the bibliography

1 Nicole Racine and Michel Trebitsch write: "The history of intellectuals [having] been until now mainly a matter for men, it was therefore necessary to turn not to specialists in the history of intellectuals, but to specialists in the history of women, gender and feminism", in Nicole Racine, Michel Trebitsch (eds.), *Intellectuelles, du genre en histoire des intellectuels*, op. cit.

Consequently, it brings together works of reflection on this field, but also works relating to the history of women in the XIX^e century, necessary to grasp the margins of manoeuvre available to the latter and, on the contrary, the particular obstacles they had to face.

In addition, there is a section on the history of feminism, an intellectual movement that mobilised women who claimed their right to express independent thought in the public arena. The history of feminism was undoubtedly the first historiographical trend to take an interest in female intellectuals, usually without categorising them as such.

This section on feminism is also justified by the fact that all the personalities studied in this thesis - whether or not they claim to be feminists - are forced to position themselves in relation to this movement, whose visibility is growing at the dawn of the XX^e century.

5- History of education

By taking as its subject the commitments to the secular school made by professional teachers, this thesis has had to draw on the resources of the history of education, both to identify the institutional model of the school under the Third Republic and the debates it engenders, to grasp the specificities of girls' education, and also to understand the history of female teachers, who constitute the core of this study. Trained in new institutions from the 1880s onwards, the mission of female teachers in public education was to transmit knowledge as well as a political and moral heritage, that of the Republic. As mediators of knowledge in the service of the republican idea, they constitute the logical foundation for a study of female intellectuals.

However, the historiography of the history of education has not treated them in this way. The first female high school teachers, teacher training colleges or other female inspectors have not yet been analysed through a political reading grid².

This study would not have been possible without the existing work on the history of male and female teachers, which makes it possible to grasp the identities specific to this profession, the evolution of working conditions and the mobilisations of this professional body (unions, associations). In addition, the work that has been carried out on the corporatist groups in which the female intellectuals studied in this thesis are embedded makes it possible to put their individual paths into perspective with the norm of the community from which they come³.

6- History of secularism

While this thesis focuses on the struggles in favour of the secular school, it must be noted that this adjective is conceived in a very polysemous way by contemporaries. This sub-section of the bibliography therefore brings together the various works that address the history of this concept and reinscribe it in a social history of the religious fact in the XIX^e century and the early XX^e century.

7- Studies with a biographical dimension

This last sub-section lists existing works on central and peripheral personalities in this thesis.

- 2 Historians interested in women activists have generally preferred other pioneers, such as female lawyers, doctors or artists.
- 3 In particular, thanks to Jo Burr Margadant's prosopography of Sevriev women, Françoise Mayeur's work on high school teachers, Yves Verneuil's work on agrégés, and Jacques and Mona Ozouf's work on teachers.

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