

Waltraud Schütz

## The Fröhlich Institute, 1849–1889

Women as girls' school owners in 19<sup>th</sup> century Vienna

*Abstract:* At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century a new school form emerged in numerous European towns and cities – the private educational institute for girls. Taking the example of the sisters Betty and Marie Fröhlich, whose educational institute in the Viennese city centre shaped generations of girls, this article investigates the closer circumstances of middle class women who established and maintained such institutes in 19<sup>th</sup> century Vienna. The school form is embedded into the European context on the basis of a travel report by the institutes owners Betty and Marie. In narrowing down the scope, the development of girls' institutes in Vienna is illustrated through several examples of other girls' school owners. The Fröhlich institute stands exemplary for a range of aspects: how middle class women created opportunities for themselves and others, the use of communication channels to advertise their businesses, the balancing act of displaying the adherence with ideal gender roles whilst carving out public and commercial spaces, the ambivalences and simultaneities in the content of education itself, and the way these publicly visible women were a resource for their surroundings.

*Key Words:* Betty Fröhlich, Marie Fröhlich, Possanner von Ehrenthal family, Female School Owners, Girls' Education, Gender Roles, Habsburg Empire

“Having repeatedly discussed in these papers the general conditions of education in Austria, today we want to draw our readers' attention to a special branch of this subject, which silently but critically influences private and family life to a greater extent, than the casual observer would expect. We mean the education of the female youth, which, unlike the education of the male gender, is entrusted to private efforts, [...]. In particular, the heads of the widely known Fröhlich Institute in Vienna have distinguished themselves in this field.”<sup>1</sup>

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From the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century girls' education did not constitute a priority for authorities in charge of educational matters in the Habsburg Monarchy. Even when, in the 1860s, the first steps were taken to increase public debate and awareness of the issue, these efforts tended to address the middle classes by promoting middle class ideals about the female sphere of activity. Existing historiography points to the structural deficiencies which limited the educational and professional possibilities for women during this period; the focus on observations about backwardness and deficiencies however limits the view as James Albisetti has pointed out. Albisetti complicated the picture by contextualising Austrian regulations on secondary and higher education during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with developments in Germany and Switzerland.<sup>2</sup> Historians of education usually mention the existence of private girls' schools and female school owners in the Habsburg territories, but explain them as a marginal occurrence as in Helmut Engelbrecht's multiple-volume standard work on education in Austria.<sup>3</sup> Thorough attention is paid to the activities of Catholic religious orders and two state funded institutes, the *Civil-Mädchenpensionat*, a teacher training institute for daughters of civil servants, and the *Offizierstöchter-Institut* for daughters of military officers, as is the case in Margret Friedrich's extensive research on girls' education.<sup>4</sup> Ilse Brehmer and Gertrud Simon provide with a collection of articles and primary sources an in depth overview of several aspects of girls' and women's education in Austria from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century; private girls' schools are discussed for the early 20<sup>th</sup> century focusing on Eugenie Schwarzwald's schools.<sup>5</sup>

I want to add to this substantial research by examining a particular aspect of girls' education at the time: the private educational institute. The purpose of this article is to explore the mechanics of private girls' educational institutes for girls in Vienna more closely, to embed this school form in its broader European context and to examine the complex familial and social networks which enabled women to function as education professionals. My focus will lie on women educators in Vienna who ran private schools – so called *Töchterschulen* – from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards. These schools were educational institutes for daughters of the better earning strata of the so called *Bildungsbürgertum*, the educated bourgeoisie. The actual number of such schools was relatively low compared to state funded boys' schools at the time, since they catered to such a specific audience; nevertheless, this school form enabled women to create opportunities for themselves. A case study about the school owners Barbara and Maria Fröhlich, called Betty and Marie, will be the main narrative of the article, which is composed of four parts. The first section introduces European examples of private girls' institutes. Then the focus shifts specifically to Vienna. Several aspects of girls' schools and their owners will be analysed and illustrated with examples. Thirdly Betty and Marie Fröhlich's institute will

be examined more closely to investigate the emancipatory potential embodied in the institute owners as knowledgeable leaders. The set up and maintenance of the Fröhlich institute can only be understood in the context of Betty and Marie's family relations. Part of this family network was Gabriele Possanner, the first woman to graduate from the University of Vienna in 1897, whose career path will be briefly introduced in the last section of this article.

### Eine Inspektionsreise [An inspection journey]

“Clearly arranged notes on trips undertaken on behalf of our institute through Germany, Belgium, France and Switzerland in 1849 and 1852.”<sup>6</sup>

This headline introduced the third chapter of the educational program published by Betty and Marie Fröhlich to promote their institute in 1853. In the first two chapters the school owners laid out the “General Principles” of the education and the “Internal Organisation and Activity” of their institute in Vienna's city centre. The Fröhlich sisters had received permission to open a girls' school in January 1849. In spring and summer 1849, the newly licensed school owners travelled “with the approval” of the new Ministry of Education to Germany to visit the “best schools and educational institutes for girls” and “to establish contacts with the excellent directors of such institutes.”<sup>7</sup> The establishment of an educational institute gave Betty and Marie a reason to travel and publish, the emphasis on the “approval” by the government's school authority shows an appropriation of expertise – a capacity which was usually reserved to men. The travel report can be situated within the genre of pedagogical journeys, which were undertaken and published by (male) school and institute owners throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>8</sup> Especially during the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century such journeys had the function of networking and the gathering of information deemed useful not only for the enhancement of individual school projects, but also for governmental purposes in developing the school system. In the case of the Fröhlich sisters the travel report is kept short, focusing on comparing other institutes with their own set-up by taking on the position of objective observers who evaluate the educational institutes encountered while travelling.

In 1852, three years after their first journey, the sisters' travel activities extended to Belgium, France and Switzerland, as it was during the revolutionary years not possible to extend their travels beyond Germany.<sup>9</sup> By the time the sisters made their journey to establish and maintain contact with other school owners and to get inspiration for their own business, the private school sector for girls was already well established for over half a century in Western Europe and the Habsburg Empire.

The Fröhlich sisters described schools located in Belgium and France as usually bigger institutes which functioned as boarding schools. A typical school was situated in a big house with a garden, “several wide and airy dormitories with thirty to forty beds, a chapel, a sickroom and other fixtures for appropriate comfort [...]”<sup>10</sup> The sports halls were often ostentatiously equipped; the Fröhlich sisters deemed the provision of gym instruction for girls as *knabenhaft* [boyish] and *unzweckmäßig* [inexpedient]. In French institutes girls were closely watched and prevented from coming into contact with the outside world. The admission of external day pupils to institutes was condemned – Betty and Marie explained in their report that social class was the reason for this practice in France, since day pupils usually were from a lower middle class background.<sup>11</sup> Amongst other institutes the sisters had visited Mme Achet’s school in Paris, which was a prestigious institute at the time.<sup>12</sup> In Christina de Bellaigue’s comparative study, a picture of the layout of Mme Achet’s school featuring a spacious parlour gives a vivid impression of the importance of enclosure oriented on the model of Catholic convent schools. In many schools a “*dame du parlour* would sit by the main entrance to the school, watching over all comings and goings and chaperoning any visits to pupils.”<sup>13</sup> This feature of French schools is in line with Betty and Marie Fröhlich’s description of the effort of French school owners to prevent any contact with the outside world, which even resulted in the sisters themselves having difficulties to enter private boarding school buildings. Mme Achet’s school was attended by fifty-six pupils in 1846, which was slightly above the average number of pupils per institute in Paris at the time. In the provinces the number of pupils was twenty to thirty pupils per school, half the amount.<sup>14</sup> The Fröhlich report gives no information on the number of private boarding schools in France; certainly this school type for girls was, as in other parts of Europe, an urban phenomenon. According to historian Rebecca Rogers, the dissolution of convents had led to private initiatives which expanded rapidly. An impression in numbers gives the spreading of schools in the department of Seine: “In 1821 there had been 114 lay boarding schools in the department of Seine, 90 in Paris alone. Twenty-five years later the number had more than doubled.”<sup>15</sup>

Christina de Bellaigue has shown that in contrast to larger sized schools in France, boarding schools in England provided for a much smaller number of pupils. The number of pupils was consciously limited, oriented towards a domestic model of schooling evolving from the long tradition of private teaching.<sup>16</sup> As in other countries social background and religion played a strong role in the question of whether and where to send girls to school in Great Britain and Ireland. Upper and middle class parents from Wales and Scotland for example sought to send their daughters to private boarding schools in England in order to “lose their provincial accent and ‘habits’” as pointed out by Jane Mc Dermid.<sup>17</sup> Convent schools run by French reli-

gious orders catered to the evolving Catholic middle classes in Ireland; for Protestant parents in Ireland religion was the motivation to send their daughters to England; those boarding schools were often attended in the form of a finishing school for one or two years after private education at home.<sup>18</sup> For England in the period between 1753 to 1820, Susan Skedd's study counted "a total of 315 establishments and individuals, of which 167 were located in Oxfordshire, advertised their teaching services in the newspaper."<sup>19</sup>

The Fröhlich sisters did not discuss any specifics about Belgium on this trip, which was taken up mostly by their encounters in France. Their 1853 travel report shows knowledge of renowned institutes in the countries they visited, which is for example expressed in their deep disappointment about the closing of Josephine Stadlin's famous institute in early 1850s Zurich. No other school in the German speaking part of Switzerland was regarded as worthy of mention according to the sisters.<sup>20</sup> Josephine Stadlin was a dedicated Pestalozzi pedagogue who, like the Fröhlich sisters, remained unmarried. From 1845 to 1850 she published a journal titled *Die Erzieherin* [The Educator], and in 1847 she opened a seminary for educators.<sup>21</sup> Generally, state funded schools dominated the educational landscape in the East of Switzerland according to the Fröhlich sisters, whereas in the French speaking part of Switzerland private girls' boarding schools were numerous and small in their conception, six pupils on average per school. The downside of the small number of pupils per school were the very high tuition fees charged. Betty and Marie remarked that only very wealthy parents were able to afford to send their daughters to such schools. Sufficient financial resources were the only prerequisite for establishing a girls' school, according to the travel report, unlike in France, where the government required a formal application as well as an exam to test if a candidate was suitable to open a girls' school. In the small Swiss institutes, where a maximum of two girls shared a room, a familial atmosphere prevailed. Life was *gesellig* [sociable], and *Abendzirkel* [evening-get-togethers] were organised and attended.

After Zürich, Betty and Marie Fröhlich set out to visit educational institutes in German territories, a journey they had already undertaken in 1849. Their travels led them to cities like Stuttgart, Heidelberg, Frankfurt, Leipzig, Berlin and finally to Dresden. When visiting German institutes, the sisters were pleased to find a clear pronunciation of German, which made the expression of thoughts for pupils much easier and prevented a turbidity and "*Unbehülflichkeit*" [helplessness] caused by a "rough, undeveloped" German dialect.<sup>22</sup> Institutes in the German territories were set up as boarding schools. To admit external day pupils to an educational institute was, as in France, not common, but the Fröhlich sisters assured the readers of their pamphlet that some exceptions were made. Those exceptions, the Viennese school owners argued, showed, that a combination of boarding school and day school sim-

ilar to their own was beneficial.<sup>23</sup> In the German countries private girls' schools were founded from around the 1800s onwards and widespread by the mid-century. Prominent girls' school owners around 1800 were Caroline Rudolphi, Amalie Holst and Betty Gleim, who gained their popularity also as publishers of pedagogical writings.<sup>24</sup> The school set-up depended in similarity with schools in the Habsburg Monarchy on the specific audience a school was catering for.<sup>25</sup>

The Fröhlich sisters mentioned five private educational institutes: Therese Kempf's institute in Heidelberg, Ottilie von Steyber's school in Leipzig, Weiß' in Berlin, B. Ryhiner's in Frankfurt am Main and Elise Hebenstreit's school in Dresden.<sup>26</sup> Historian Edith Glaser analysed Ottilie von Steyber and her school in terms of the role teachers assumed as business owners. According to Glaser, from the mid-1860s on, von Steyber and her school were part of the evolving women's movement, "as a meeting place, a continuation school for the Leipzig women's association and school owners as well as teachers were involved in local and supra-regional women's associations."<sup>27</sup> The best institute by far, according to the Fröhlich sisters, was Hebenstreit's school in Dresden. This school was the one closest to their own aspirations in organisation and teaching methods. They portrayed the educator as the soul of all education. Any success stemmed ultimately not from the adaption of famous pedagogical methods or from the introduction of expensive devices but rather from the personality of the head of the institute and its teachers. The Viennese travellers underlined the thoroughness of German teacher training and the respect that teachers, also private teachers, enjoyed. With their remark about private teachers the sisters hinted at the disregard for private school owners and teachers that they often encountered in Vienna. The travels in 1849 and 1853 were not the last pedagogical journeys taken by the sisters. In 1866, during Austria's military conflict with Prussia, the sisters opened one of their frequent advertisements with the sentence:

"In the conviction that more than ever, a tireless advancement on the path of academic insights constitutes the duty of all friends of the fatherland, the institute board undertook last summer another, this time the fourth journey of fact-finding, seriously investigating the most outstanding public and private institutes in Southern Germany and France, namely in Munich, Stuttgart, Mannheim, Paris, etc."<sup>28</sup>

## Context: Private Girls' Schools in Vienna

When Betty and Marie Fröhlich opened their private girls' school in 1849, the sisters had joined a sixty-year long tradition of private girls' schools in the Habsburg Empire. The first school of this kind was opened in 1789 by Maria Anna Klement at Neuer

Markt in the Viennese city centre.<sup>29</sup> From 1786 onwards Anna's husband Johann had been a staff member in a state funded boarding school for the daughters of civil servants, later called the *Civil-Mädchenpensionat*.<sup>30</sup> From 1789 on he also worked at his wife's educational institute. Soon other institutes followed and steadily more women and sporadically also men applied for permission to set up a school. Application processes for the opening of schools left traces in the state and Catholic church archives; the Catholic church served as the school monitoring authority between 1805 and 1869. Another set of sources are the numerous advertisements for schools in newspapers and publications in the field of pedagogy which help to give impressions of this active private sector evolving at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century not only in Vienna but also in many other urban areas throughout the Habsburg territories.<sup>31</sup>

In 1819 Emperor Francis II decided that only women should be entrusted with the job of heading girls' schools; fear of immorality was likely the motivation for this decision.<sup>32</sup> The application process to head a school required two certificates. One attested to the good conduct and morality of the applicant and could be issued by the local police or for example by a landlord. A second certificate was necessary to prove knowledge in needlework; the exam was offered by the Ursuline nuns. In fact, the same Ursuline nuns in Vienna (and the Mary Ward sisters [*Englische Fräulein*] in the nearby St. Pölten) offered their own boarding schools for girls. Not until the 1840s was a more professional female teacher training founded, when the Ursuline nuns were permitted to offer a nine-month long preparation course for female teachers. The response to the offer was very strong, by 1851, 400 candidates had completed the course according to Gunda Barth-Scalmani.<sup>33</sup>

The idea that school owners were single women who had simply not found the right husband and had therefore dedicated themselves out of necessity to education hardly matched the reality of many headmistresses in the Habsburg territories.<sup>34</sup> Women who petitioned for permission to open a school were often married. They used the experience gained raising their own children as an argument to advertise their schools. In some cases, women supplemented their husband's income, in others their business undertaking supported the whole family. The skills those women had to develop in order to run a school went far beyond education.<sup>35</sup> Management and accounting skills were necessary as well as the ability to advertise a business. Furthermore, in later decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the ability to network among their peers was critical to the development and advancement of their institutes, as the example of the Fröhlich sisters and their travels have shown.

The private school sector was unstable and unpredictable. When only a small number of girls attended a school, losing even a single student could jeopardise the venture. Another threat to the businesses were family members. While women had to underline constantly their role as moral examples to their pupils, the reputation

of a husband was particularly important to the success of a school. Through their own compartment, male family members could help or hinder the school project of their female relatives. On the other hand, men could actively support the school projects of women in their roles as intercessors with school authorities, as teachers, or as joint school directors.

An example of such an active support was the educational institute of Marie van Demerghel, nee Wirth in Vienna. Marie had taken the institute over from her sister Elise von Phillisdorf in 1851; it was located in the district Erdberg, first at the Erdberger Hauptstraße Nr. 106, then closer to the city borders. Emanuel, the husband of Marie, was Professor for French language at the prestigious *Theresianum*, a private boarding school for boys founded under Empress Maria Theresa. Emanuel taught French in the institute of his wife with a special focus on conversation, since the colloquial language at the institute was French. Marie van Demerghel decided to restrict admission to pupils receiving full or half-board, out of “several pedagogic considerations.”<sup>36</sup> She tried to attract pupils from distant places in the monarchy. Her advertisements, which usually featured a prominent mention of her husband’s occupation as a French teacher, claimed, that besides the use of French as a colloquial language, the mother tongue of each child would receive special attention. An advertisement in the *Laibacher Zeitung* of 1856 states that her educational program would be available in bookstores in Laibach/Ljubljana, Klagenfurt, Villach and Görz/Gorizia.<sup>37</sup>

The social and geographical origin of the girls attending educational institutes in Vienna is difficult to determine, as there are no pupil lists preserved. Single life stories suggest that institutes catered to members of the *Bildungsbürgertum*, well earning civil servants, medical practitioners, lawyers or business-men. Girls living in close proximity to an institute attended a school usually as day pupils. The case of Theresia Mellini’s institute gives a sense of how far parents were willing to send their daughters to receive an education. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of September 1815 Theresia Mellini advertised her school situated at the Graben in central Vienna for the first time. In particular, her advertisement emphasised the “important purpose” of educating girls for their future “female sphere of activity”.<sup>38</sup> Theresia’s advertisement was similar to many similar ones at the time. However, the same advertisement with two added final notes was published half a year later, in February 1816, in the *Lemberger Zeitung*; it included the following addition aimed at parents in the provinces of Lower Austria, Carniola and Galicia:

“In order to reassure parents that the children entrusted to this institute will receive loving care and a real education the parents can direct an enquiry to the commercial premises of Mister Franz Bogner in Vienna and Mr. L. A.

Rudolph in Laybach [Ljubljana]. In Galicia one can contact the wholesaler Mister Johann Jakob Bauer in Lemberg [Lviv/Lwów] for more information.”<sup>39</sup>

Newspaper advertisements suggest that Theresia’s school was flourishing despite the difficult economic circumstances in Vienna in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars. As part of an effort to limit teaching the French language in Vienna, the Police Court Chancellery prohibited the teaching of the language in Theresia Mellini’s institute in 1817, with the argument that she did not hold an official licence to do so. The school owner petitioned subsequently for permission and argued that not offering education in the French language would be a threat to her business; she could not afford to lose pupils as she had to provide a living for two families. The Imperial Commission on Education decided to grant permission for the extension of her licence since most of the children in her institute were daughters of merchants. The advertisement also shows that her connections to merchants in Ljubljana and Lviv held potential to attract children from cities of considerable travel-distances from Vienna.<sup>40</sup>

Theresia Mellini had advertised her institute assuring readers that girls would learn everything necessary for the “female sphere of activity” [*weiblicher Wirkungskreis*]. Similar to private girls’ schools in other European territories, the curriculum for girls was adapted to the ideal feminine needs. These needs were seen as very limited in comparison to what boys should be offered in secondary schools; the female sphere of activity was conceptualised as naturally located in the home.<sup>41</sup> An example for this is the absence of Latin and the classics from girls’ curricula throughout the decades. Instead a strong concentration on teaching needlework and other skills were deemed useful for life as a married woman. Although subjects like astronomy, physics or *Naturlehre* [science of nature] appear occasionally in curricula, they were adapted and abridged for the female mind.<sup>42</sup> There was no uniform curriculum in girls’ educational institutes, besides compulsory subjects (reading, writing, arithmetic), religious education and the obligatory lessons in French, which, as the above example has shown, was crucial for an institute to offer. Usually certain social studies subjects like geography, history and/or *Vaterlandskennntnis* [knowledge of the fatherland] were included in the curriculum. Activities like drawing, music education or dancing were offered, although sometimes parents who wanted those subjects for their daughters had to pay an extra fee. In contrast to France, where school owners’ fees were strictly regulated, in Austria there was no state regulation. School fees varied depending on the location of the institute and the respective audience. In 1838 the annual fee for educational institutes ranged between 200 to 450 Gulden.<sup>43</sup> The writer Eduard von Bauernfeld earned at this time around 800 Gulden per year as a low ranked public servant [*Konzipist*] working for the state lottery with an additional 150 Gulden billet compensation.<sup>44</sup> A clerk in his position would have paid around a quarter to a third of

his salary to send a daughter to an educational institute. This suggests that only high ranking civil servants were able to afford these schools.

The private field of girls' education was highly competitive, therefore, publicity was important for institutes. First and foremost, newspapers helped to convey messages to the public and announce the opening of institutes, the beginning of the school year, the holding of biannual public exams and the announcement of other events. As the century progressed, musical evenings, theatrical shows and popular lectures hosted in private girls' institutes connected the seemingly private educational space to the public.

Female institute owners constantly had to manage their perceived inability to fit the binary constructions of public and private, and of model male and female roles. This demanded argumentative diplomacy to justify the particular role of a female educator and administrator. The balancing act women performed was an act of simultaneity. Women underlined their role as care givers, who "emphasized the domesticity of their arrangements", as Christina de Bellaigue has pointed out, "playing down the degree to which school-keeping was a business."<sup>45</sup> This same simultaneity was also reflected in the location of an institute. In many cases women adapted their apartment or house for the purpose. In cases where the institute owner was married or a widow with children or other dependant relatives, the living space accommodated both functions: a family home which increasingly was perceived as the female private sphere throughout the century, and a school which was conceptually a more public space, with school inspections, twice yearly exams held in the school to which "the public" was invited, and girls in a group whose parents paid for their education. To integrate these ambiguities, institutes adapted a familial language to the setting: the institute owner was the "loving mother", girls were encouraged to understand each other as sisters.<sup>46</sup> The idea of motherhood, biological or spiritual, played an important role in deciding who could educate girls. In Austria, where during the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century many school owners were married, the argument that biological motherhood created a natural inclination to education was underlined. Members of the Catholic clergy in their role as school monitoring authority particularly supported married women and widows with children who sought to open girls' schools; biological motherhood seemed to offer proof of a natural talent for education. The case of Katharina Gabriel, who petitioned in 1860 to open a girls' school but who had difficulties finding boarding pupils, offers an instructive example. The church authorities supported Katharina Gabriel's request when she petitioned in 1862 for permission to take on day pupils. In reference to her initial application in 1860 the authority concluded:

“Concerning the personality of Kath. Gabriel the Archiepiscopal Consistory would not have supported the opening of a new school as there are enough female educational institutes, if she had not been described by a very reliable source as a good mother and a tidy-minded, domestic woman /: which is confirmed :/; a quality which is so necessary for the education of girls but missing in some institutes.”<sup>47</sup>

Katharina Gabriel’s request was granted without further discussion. Given this background it was not surprising that a certain pressure evolved to legitimise the life of an unmarried woman in terms of her dedication to teaching. Betty and Marie Fröhlich pointed in their travel report to the manifold duties of a married school owner. The headmistresses of French institutes would be too occupied with receiving visitors in their salon, with the financial affairs of their institutes and “because they are mostly married and *Familienmütter* [mothers of families] they are often predominantly occupied with their domestic responsibilities.”<sup>48</sup> In the introduction of their school brochure the sisters emphasised that they were determined “*alles aufzubieten*” [to give everything]<sup>49</sup> to their vocation. This justification was later termed *Geistige Mütterlichkeit* [spiritual motherhood] based on the concept that the mother would be in the centre of a child’s education, an idea which was strongly promoted by Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi and Friedrich Fröbel.<sup>50</sup> From the late 1860s onwards the question of whether a female teacher/educator should be allowed to marry or not became a subject for heated discussions under the keyword *Lehrerinnenzölibat* [celibacy for teachers].<sup>51</sup> Once the state began to train and employ female teachers, in Austria starting with the passing of the Primary School Law 1869, it was more convenient if the teachers were unmarried. In previous decades the preference for women as institute leaders, who already had children, can be seen as less threatening to their biological motherhood and underlined that their contribution to society was, ideologically and literally, only extended to the realm of the family home.

## The Fröhlich Institute – a family business

In this section I will examine the lives of Betty and Marie Fröhlich and their institute by establishing spatial links, connecting family ties and searching for traces of the institute itself. Only fragments are preserved about the women’s lives. There are no ego-documents to enrich the knowledge we have from newspaper advertisements and short articles, files of school authorities, and the brochure Betty and Marie published themselves. Parish records help to weave a picture of a network of relationships, which is still open to expansion.

Betty Fröhlich turned forty when she opened in 1849, with her thirteen years younger sister Marie, the Fröhlich Institute at Franziskaner-Platz 911 [later number 1].<sup>52</sup> This address was the home address of Betty and Marie's father Johann, a retired medical practitioner, who died a year later in October 1850.<sup>53</sup> The Fröhlich's were until the 1830s based in Sauerbrunn near Rohitsch in Lower Styria, today a part of Slovenia, where Johann Fröhlich was a physician in a sanatorium. After this assignment the family moved to Vienna. The completion of medical studies of Betty and Marie's brother Ernst was possibly the motivation for Johann Fröhlich and his wife Barbara to move to the capital.<sup>54</sup> At the time, the oldest sister of the Fröhlich siblings, Susanna, lived in Ljubljana, together with her husband Franz Xaver Possanner, a *k.k. Bezirks-Commissär* [imperial royal district commissioner], and their children. There is no evidence about Betty and Marie's activities during the 1840s and whether they had been based in Vienna. In 1845 a turn of events changed the family's future lastingly. Susanna's husband died suddenly at age fifty-two and left his wife with two boys, twenty-three and thirteen-years of age, and five girls of whom the youngest, Albertina, was only six years old. Susanna Possanner moved with her children to Vienna and settled in an apartment in the city centre around the corner from the institute and home of Betty and Marie, in Weihburggasse number 9. It can only be speculated whether these circumstances were part of the motivation for Betty and Marie Fröhlich to open an educational institute, certainly their nieces and nephews played a central role in their lives as they appear in staff lists of the institute already from its beginnings.

The employment of husbands, siblings or other family members was not unusual for girls' institutes. When an application to take the teacher training test on the basis of personal studies and/or professional experience was granted, it was at the time reasonably easy to gain permission to work as a teacher. Betty and Marie's brother Ernst for example, was for many years responsible for teaching classes in scientific subjects, and he served as the school physician. From the opening of the institute onwards several nieces and nephews of Betty, Marie and Ernst taught at the institute as well. The oldest nephew Benjamin Possanner, who had completed the teacher training course in Ljubljana in 1839, functioned as *Oberlehrer* [senior teacher]<sup>55</sup> additionally to his job as a civil servant. In this function he was responsible for the curriculum in consultation with his aunts Betty and Marie. The nieces Auguste, Camilla and Maria were teaching French and German language (Auguste), music and needlework (Camilla) and needlework (Maria).<sup>56</sup> Soon also Ernst Possanner, then in his early twenties, began to teach the subjects of stenography, history and geography.<sup>57</sup> In the school year 1853/1854, when Amalia joined her siblings to teach speech and recitation, all the nieces and nephews taught at the institute.<sup>58</sup> By the time the Fröhlich Institute entered its fourth year, twenty-seven teachers were

working at the school, nine of whom were family members, including Betty and Marie themselves. In 1854/1855, when Benjamin Possanner was appointed to work in Ofen, Hungary, in his day job as civil servant, he stopped working at the institute<sup>59</sup> while his siblings continued their work as teachers.<sup>60</sup>

The number of pupils attending the institute had steadily increased since its opening, making the school with thirty boarding pupils age six to sixteen the best attended boarding institute in Vienna and its suburbs. Additionally, fifty-eight day pupils received education at the institute in 1853/1854. The yearly earnings per boarding pupil amounted to 330 Gulden; the school fee for day pupils was seven Gulden per month.<sup>61</sup>

The number of classes offered by educational institutes varied. Betty and Marie decided to offer five classes. The curriculum was steadily broadened, in the afternoons activities like playing the piano, drawing, etc., were offered:

<b>Curriculum 1853</b> , Educational institute of Betty and Marie Fröhlich											
<b>First Class</b> (1 year/2 terms). Weekly 18 hours in the morning.											
Religion 2h	Reading 4h	Writing 2h	Arithmetic 2h	Natural History 2h	French language 6h						
<b>Second Class</b> (2 years/4 terms). Weekly 18 hours in the morning.											
Religion 2h	Reading 2h	Writing 2h	Arithmetic 2h	German Grammar 1h	Spelling 2h	Natural History 2h	French Language 5h				
<b>Third Class</b> (3 years/6 terms). Weekly 18 hours in the morning.											
Religion 2h	Reading 1h	Writing 3h	Arithmetic 2h	German Grammar 2h	Spelling 2h	Geography 1h	Natural History 1h	French Language 3h			
<b>Fourth Class</b> (2 years/4 terms). Weekly 19h in the morning and 5h in the afternoon.											
Religion 2h	Writing 2h	Arithmetic 2h	German Grammar and Style 2h	Recitation, Poetry and Literature 4h	Spelling 2h	History 2h	Geography 2h	Natural History 2h	French Language 4h		
<b>Fifth Class</b> (2 years/4 terms). Weekly 19h in the morning and 7h in the afternoon.											
Religion 2h	Writing 2h	Arithmetic 2h	German Grammar and Style 2h	Recitation, Poetry and Literature 4h	Spelling 1h	Psychology 1h	Physics 1h	History 3h	Geography 3h	Natural History 2h	French Language 3h

Figure 1. Curriculum created on the basis of Fröhlich, *Erziehungsanstalt*, 32–39.

It is not the place to discuss the subjects in detail, but one subject should be mentioned because of its distinctiveness. Education in “psychology” entailed knowledge in the “basic characters of man, the body, the soul; explanations of the psychological phenomena and activities of the soul; the psychological individual; key prin-

ciples of pedagogy.”<sup>62</sup> Betty and Marie Fröhlich’s pedagogic principles were based on the teachings of Pestalozzi.<sup>63</sup> On the one hand girls were to be educated according to Catholic principles dominant in Austria that emphasised *Selbstverleugnung* [self-denial].<sup>64</sup> At the same time a couple of pages earlier in the brochure the sisters emphasised the importance of self-respect. Following Pestalozzi’s principle of each child deserving an education which develops all aspects of a person, Betty and Marie Fröhlich understood their role as educators as helping their pupils experience “that the greatest joy lies in the [skills] acquired by themselves through their own diligence and their own reflection.”<sup>65</sup> This pattern of nurturing both the ideal of self-denial and at the same time self-determination is also to be found in the institute’s practise, by letting the pupils vote amongst themselves once a year for the one whom they deemed most remarkable for her piety, tolerance, compliance, gentleness and strict fulfilment of all her duties. The act of voting, with a *Wahlurne* [ballot box], permitted the girls to exercise an act of self-determination in choosing every year the one who adhered most to the feminine ideal.<sup>66</sup> With their five-class program, which was extended to six classes in 1870 and finally to eight classes in 1871 the institute provided a substantial program for girls. In 1853 the Fröhlich sisters decided to acquire a villa in Baden, Karlsgasse number 166, which functioned as a summer residence for the institute in the following decades.<sup>67</sup>

The picture gives the impression of a studious and communicative environment. One of the girls is walking engrossed in a book to the left, the two figures in the centre-right could be a teacher with her student walking towards the house. The



Figure 2. Fröhlich Institute in Baden. In: Otto Wolkerstorfer, *Walzerseligkeit und Alltag, Grasl, Baden bei Wien, Baden 1999, 130.*

pupils were described as having an intimate relationship with the Fröhlich sisters. An account of Betty and Marie's return from their summer holidays in 1874 published in the *Neue Freie Presse* gives a sense of the atmosphere between the sisters and their pupils, or more precisely about the way in which the sisters wanted this relationship to be seen by the public. According to the report the villa in Baden was lit up with candles on the evening of the 28<sup>th</sup> of August on occasion of the return of Betty and Marie from their bathing holiday. A girl was waiting on the balcony with a basket full of blossoms, which she started to scatter as soon as the institute owners arrived, exclaiming a "tief-gemüthlichen Segensspruch"<sup>68</sup> [deeply pleasant blessing]. Cheerful children's choirs resounded and the children were said to have improvised a theatre play in modern languages. The article concludes that this occasion would show the "pleasant spirit" of the Fröhlich Institute in its location in the centre of the imperial city as well as in the villa in the Helenental in Baden. That same year the institute celebrated its 25-year jubilee and the "motherly institute-leaders".<sup>69</sup> This example shows that the institute was present in contemporary media, with regular advertisements and reports. Its main medium from the beginning was the prestigious liberal *Neue Freie Presse*; additional advertisements were placed in the newspapers *Die Presse*, *Fremdenblatt* and the *Wiener Zeitung*.

In 1875, a few months after the sisters had returned from their bathing holiday to the institute's summer residence in Baden, Marie Fröhlich fell ill and died of *Lungenlähmung* [a lung disease] at age 56.<sup>70</sup> No advertisement or report after the event mentioned her death, the only sign was that Betty Fröhlich then appeared as the sole institute owner. Betty was possibly afraid that Marie's death would be perceived as causing instability for the institute. At the time of her sister's death she was nearly 70 years of age herself. Betty continued the institute together with her nieces Amalie, Auguste and Camilla for another thirteen years.<sup>71</sup> In February 1888 she died and left the institute to her nieces in her will. In a long obituary in the *Neue Freie Presse* the work and life of Betty Fröhlich was acknowledged.

"This occasion should be used to say a few words about this remarkable woman who was, not only in our metropolis, but also in the whole of the monarchy and in great parts abroad known and honoured."<sup>72</sup>

Describing her character, the author depicted Betty as a woman with a "masculine strong will, paired with her truly feminine soul [...]"<sup>73</sup> Several thousand students were educated in the institute, which had existed for nearly forty years by the time of Betty's death. Just as Betty and her sister Marie had themselves emphasised many years earlier, the author pointed in emotionally charged language to their choice to become educators out of a sense of vocation. The emotional language balanced the connection between women and money, which is emphasised in the author's use of

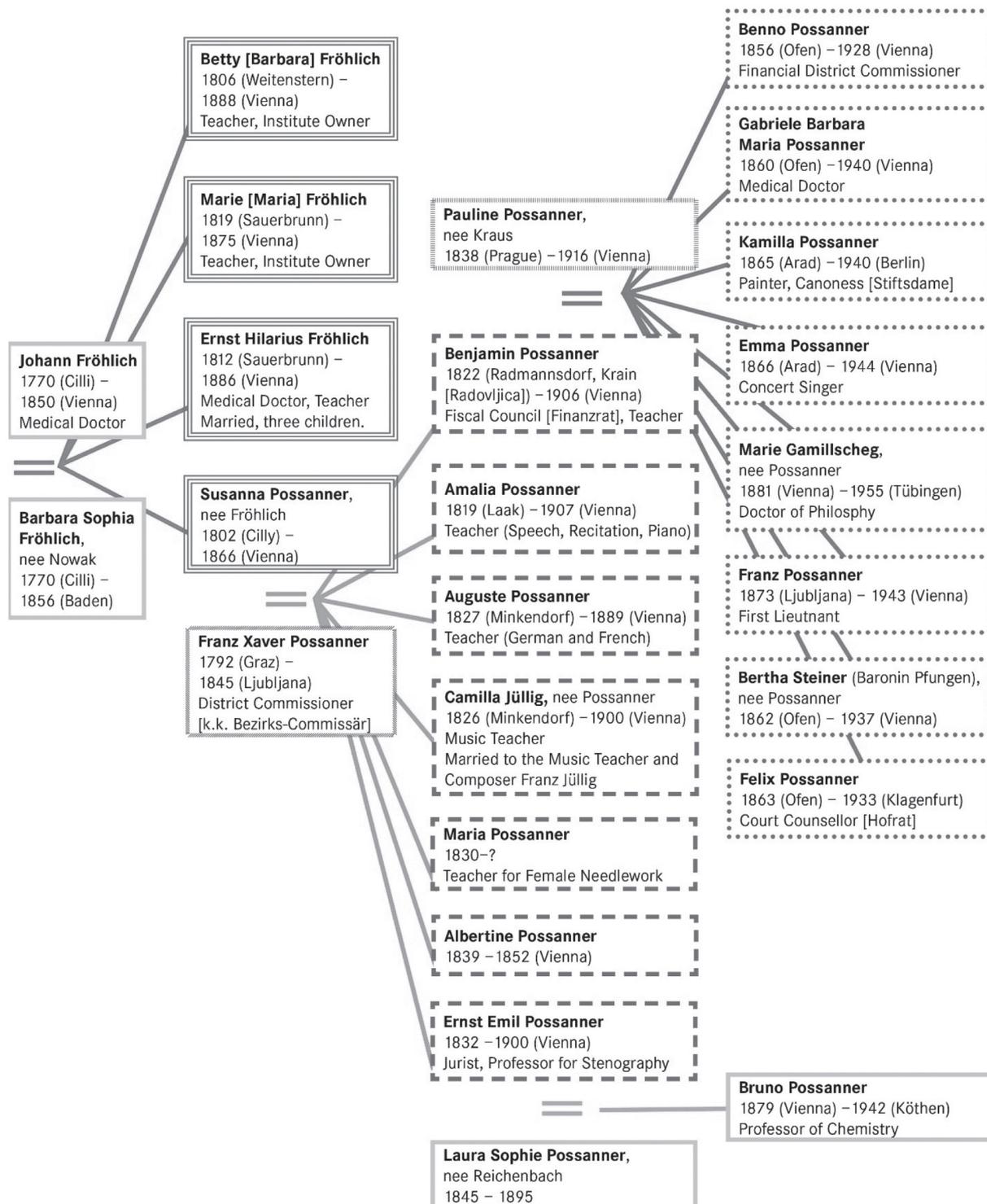


Figure 3. Family tree on the basis of death registry entries and Marcella Stern, Gabriele Possanner, 215–216.

this point to criticise in the obituary those who saw the teacher's and educator's profession purely as a source of income. The article concluded by announcing that the institute was continued by Betty Fröhlich's nieces who had worked there from its beginnings. The author of the obituary pointed out that no pupil had left the institute since Betty's death, since the parents would trust the new owners. Often the daughters of former pupils, and sometimes even the granddaughters, attended the institute. In the last sentence the author alluded to the last name of the deceased institute owner "Fröhlich", which in German means "cheerful": "All who know this institute, wish that it will prosper cheerfully under the new ownership."<sup>74</sup> The institute moved its location from Grünangergasse to Weihburggasse number 18<sup>75</sup>, but a year later Auguste Possanner died aged 61.<sup>76</sup> After her death the institute was presumably closed as no further evidence of its existence can be found. Figure 3 shows the family network, concentrating on one branch of relations.

## Family entanglements and the first female University of Vienna graduate

The family tree provides a more compact overview over the family relationships of Betty and Marie Fröhlich, focussing on the family branch developed through the marriage of Susanna Fröhlich with Franz Xaver Possanner. All nieces and nephews of Betty and Marie were at some point staff members of the Fröhlich institute; for the last section of this article the oldest nephew, Benjamin Possanner, is important. Benjamin had studied law at the University of Vienna and worked as a civil servant at the Treasury Department when his aunts opened their girls' institute in 1849. In addition to his day job as a civil servant he was for five years as a senior teacher at the Fröhlich institute. In 1855 he was appointed to Ofen in Hungary where he soon after married the fifteen years younger Pauline Kraus, daughter of a military surgeon major.<sup>77</sup> Over the course of the next twenty-five years the couple had eight children. After several moves the Possanner family returned in 1880 to Vienna, taking an apartment in Ballgasse 6, in walking distance to the Fröhlich Institute and three of Benjamin's siblings, Auguste, Amalie and Camilla (see fig. 4).

The oldest daughter of the couple, Gabriele, attended a teacher training course in walking distance to the institute. Three typical professions of the *Bildungsbürgertum* were prevalent in the Possanner family as figure 3 shows: working as civil servants or teachers, and practising medicine. As a woman, teacher training was the only available option for further education, however when Gabriele completed her education at the *Lehrerinnenbildungsanstalt* [Female Teacher Training Institute] in 1885 she did not start a career as primary school teacher. Instead she studied privately for the *Matura* [Higher School Certificate], enabled through the financial sup-

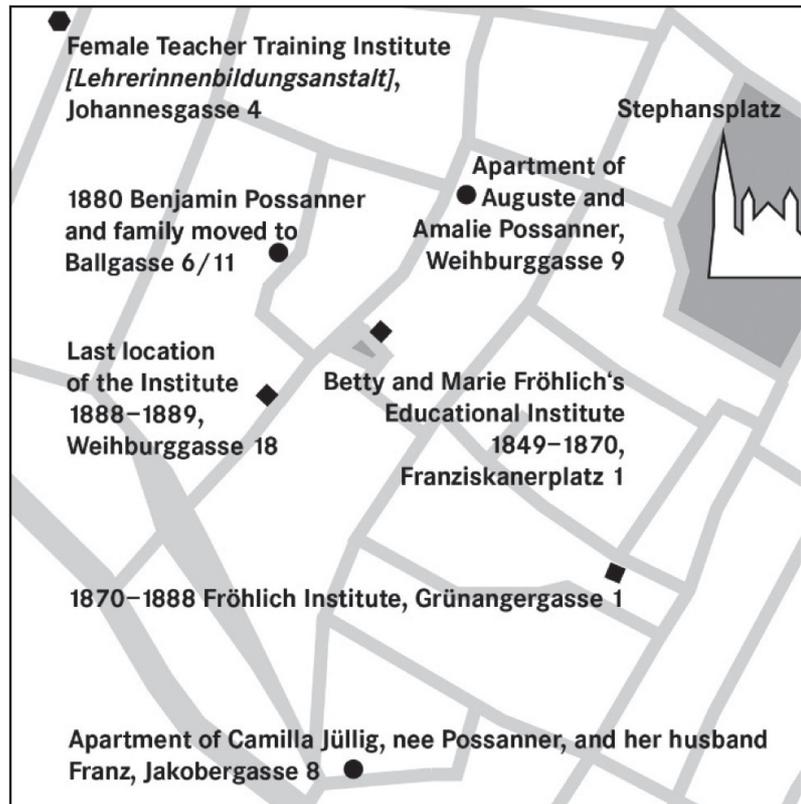


Figure 4. Map to illustrate the geographical closeness of the Fröhlich and Possanner family.

port of her parents, and took the exam as an external pupil at a *Gymnasium* [secondary school].<sup>78</sup> In Gabriele's family female education was valued to the extent that in 1888 Gabriele went on to study medicine for five years at the Universities of Geneva and Zurich in Switzerland, where medical studies were open to women.<sup>79</sup> In 1894 the medical student graduated but was not allowed to practise medicine in Vienna. Marcella Stern outlines in her detailed article on Gabriele Possanner's life and career the challenges she faced in obtaining recognition for her degree by the University of Vienna. After several attempts to gain permission to practise medicine in Vienna had failed, Gabriele decided to directly address the Emperor with her concerns.<sup>80</sup> The communication comprised of three items: a petition letter by Gabriele herself, an appeal by her father Benjamin and a letter by the *Verein für erweiterte Frauenbildung* [Association for extended Women's Education]. Gabriele Possanner's father Benjamin was aware of the capability of women through his aunts Betty and Marie, whose names his daughter Gabriele Barbara Maria carried in her own given name. In his appeal he expressed his support for his daughter towards the Emperor, stating the validity of his daughter's education, and Benjamin did not fail to underline the costliness of Gabriele's studies which he had financed. He suggested that a denial of her appeal could only be justified by motives which "science and all *Kulturstaaten* [countries of culture] already abandoned as useless ballast."<sup>81</sup>

The second document attached to the appeal added the encouragement of a female network to the family support. A letter by the Association for extended Women's Education gave Gabriele Possanner a job guarantee as a school doctor in the association's private girls' Gymnasium in Vienna.<sup>82</sup> A co-founder of this association, who supported Gabriele Possanner continually, was Marie Bosshardt, nee Demerghel<sup>83</sup>, whose mother was the girls' institute owner Marie van Demerghel mentioned earlier in this article. Another member of the Association for Extended Women's Education leads back to the Fröhlich Institute. Marianne Hainisch, a main figure of the first women's movement in Austria, worked since 1870 on the matter of equal higher education for women. She was a former pupil of the Fröhlich Institute at the time when all Possanner siblings were teaching at the school in the 1850s, thus the name Possanner was surely familiar to her. Gabriele's own letter, her father's support in his position as a high ranked civil servant and the job guarantee at the private girls' secondary school in Vienna were enough to persuade the Emperor, who granted the applicant's petition on condition that she would take all medical exams again in Vienna. In 1897, after in fact obtaining her degree for the second time, Gabriele graduated as the first female medical doctor from the University of Vienna.<sup>84</sup>

## Conclusion

The story of Betty and Marie Fröhlich's educational institute serves as a framework to understand manifold aspects of the education of girls from the *Bildungsbürgertum*. This term, which does not translate well, emphasises the social and cultural importance of obtaining a (formal) education to this developing class. The value of striving for knowledge eventually led middle class families not only to take care of the education of their sons, but also increasingly of their daughters who were sent to private educational institutes. These schools were predominantly run by women. Although the quality of the content of education is difficult to determine, the creativity with which such institutes were led is remarkable; a common feature of institute owners was their continual communication via brochures, newspaper articles and announcements to a public audience. Less common amongst institute owners however was the practice of travelling. Betty and Marie Fröhlich's travelling activities – in 1866 they completed their fourth journey to visit institutes outside the Habsburg territories – indicates on the one hand the financial stability they had inherited and the profit the institute was making. On the other hand, their travels are part of a wider context in which the act of travelling and reporting about the experience was deeply connected to *Bildungsidealen* [educational ideals] at the time. According to

those ideals and in combination with Catholic values in Austria, girls should be educated in preparation for their future life as mothers, self-denying and devoted. This feminine ideal is described by the Fröhlich sisters in their brochure, simultaneously the more general educational ideal of the *Bildungsbürgertum* was emphasised; the comprehensive education of individuals.

In pointing to this simultaneity it would be a mistake however to characterise private girls' institutes as projects with emancipatory intention. The example of the Fröhlich sisters and other institute owners shows that emancipatory potential lay in the figures of the school owners themselves. With their habitus, their convictions and knowledge, these women shaped the imagination of what women could accomplish. The networks of female school owners extended beyond their family members and particularly involved men, as several examples in this article have shown. Women had to navigate within rigid ideas about appropriate gender roles, carving out spaces to become visible with their businesses and outlasting or outstripping the competition. The communicative effort to legitimise the position as headmistress was intense. The focus was put on motherly qualities and caring intentions, while downplaying the idea that a school was also a business that provided a service for money. The above quoted obituary of Betty Fröhlich is a good example of the difficulties a woman with authority posed to contemporaries. The writer had to divide Betty into a woman with a "masculine strong will, paired with her truly feminine soul [...]"<sup>85</sup>

Starting in 1849, Betty and Marie Fröhlich dedicated all their energies to their institute, which was a family project from its beginnings. For their nieces and nephews, the Fröhlich sisters were a resource, especially for the first years of their professional lives in Vienna. The employment provided by the sisters was particularly crucial for the female family members, three of whom lived their lives without marrying.<sup>86</sup> The experience of having encountered the institute owners was long lasting, as an autobiographical account by Marianne Hainisch shows. At the age of 89 Hainisch referred to her education in a short four-page dictation about her life, only briefly mentioning the private tutoring she had received. However, more than seven decades after she was a pupil she emphasized her time at the Fröhlich Institute by recounting her former teacher Betty Fröhlich:

"Unforgettable is the principal Betty Fröhlich. She was a gifted idealist, ethicist and born teacher with a most beneficent influence on her pupils."<sup>87</sup>

One last quote illustrates the figure of the private girls' school owner and serves to close this article. Antonie Graf, nee Machold, of the same generation as Marianne Hainisch and later active in the Austrian women's movement, completed in summer 1863 the teacher training course offered by the Ursuline nuns in Vienna. She worked for several years as a governess and was dreaming about opening her own educatio-

nal institute. In a diary entry from Friday the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 1868 she described her fantasies about becoming a girls' school owner.

“What should I say about me? The passing thoughts were chased away by very serious ones. I see nothing other than enormous school black boards, school benches and my dignified striding forward as head of an educational institute: plans of practical furnishings, renewals, improvements are galloping in the Brain-classes [Hirn-Classen] up and down; inspection journeys I already make in my mind: well, I am curious!”<sup>88</sup>

Mentions of pupils or a curriculum are absent from the entry, Antonie pictures the habitus of her future self as an institute owner, who is “dignified striding forward.” The body of the institute owner is connected to the language of progress, signified by the words “forward”, “renewals”, “improvements” and Antonie’s expression of being “curious”. The reference to travelling for the purpose of inspecting and visiting other institutes connects the diary entry to the Fröhlich sisters, and closes the journey taken in this article.

## Notes

- 1 Erziehung-Anstalten für die weibliche Jugend, Neue Freie Presse, 25.04.1866, 16. I would like to thank Magdalena Augeneder, Aoife Gowran, Gabriella Hauch and Pieter Judson for their valuable comments on various versions of this paper.
- 2 James C. Albisetti, Female education in German-speaking Austria, Germany, and Switzerland, 1866–1914, in: Margarete Grandner/David F. Good/Mary Jo Maynes, eds., Austrian women in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: cross-disciplinary perspectives, Providence/Oxford 1996, 39–57.
- 3 Helmut Engelbrecht, Geschichte des österreichischen Bildungswesens. Erziehung und Unterricht auf dem Boden Österreichs. Von der frühen Aufklärung bis zum Vormärz, vol. 3, Vienna 1984, 291–292.
- 4 Margret Friedrich, „Ein Paradies ist uns verschlossen ...“ Zur Geschichte der schulischen Mädchenerziehung in Österreich im „langen“ 19. Jahrhundert, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Neuere Geschichte Österreichs 89, Vienna 1999; Margret Friedrich, „Dornröschen schlafe hundert Jahr...“ Zur Geschichte der Mädchenbildung in Österreich im 19. Jahrhundert, in: Margret Friedrich/Peter Urbanitsch, eds., Von Bürgern und ihren Frauen, Bürgertum in der Habsburgermonarchie 5, Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 1996, 181–196. The same is true for Renate Flich’s research. Flich discussed the Civil-Mädchenpensionat in detail, additionally to two private school projects in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: the girls’ educational institute established by Marie Hanke, later married Luithlen, in 1861 and the girls’ institute established by the Women’s Employment Association in 1871; the existence of other private girls’ schools is not mentioned. Renate Flich, „Die Erziehung des Weibes muß eine andere werden“ (Louise Otto-Peters). Mädchenschulalltag im Rahmen bürgerlicher Bildungsansprüche, in: Brigitte Mazohl-Wallnig, ed., Bürgerliche Frauenkultur im 19. Jahrhundert, Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 1995, 269–299.
- 5 Ilse Brehmer/Gertrud Simon, eds., Geschichte der Frauenbildung und Mädchenerziehung in Österreich. Ein Überblick, Graz 1997.
- 6 Betty und Marie Fröhlich, Die Lehr- und Erziehungsanstalt für Töchter, geleitet von Betty und Marie Fröhlich. Gedrängte Darstellung der Grundsätze, nach welchen sie vorgeht, und ihrer inneren Organisation und Wirksamkeit, nebst Notizen über die im Interesse der Bildung des weiblichen

- Geschlechtes unternommenen Rundreisen durch Deutschland, Belgien, Frankreich und die Schweiz, Vienna 1853, 49.
- 7 Lehr- und Erziehungs-Anstalt für Töchter, geleitet von Betty und Marie Fröhlich, Die Presse, 14.6.1849, 4.
  - 8 Further research on the subject is still necessary, as Sylvia Kesper-Biermann emphasises in her account on pedagogical journeys. Sylvia Kesper-Biermann, „Praktische Wahrheit“ und „anschauende Erkenntnis“. Pädagogische Reisen und Wissenstransfer im 19. Jahrhundert, in: Eckhardt Fuch/Sylvia Kesper-Biermann/Christian Ritzi, eds., *Regionen in der deutschen Staatenwelt. Bildungsräume und Transferprozesse im 19. Jahrhundert*, Bad Heilbrunn 2011, 251–272.
  - 9 Fröhlich, Erziehungsanstalt, 51.
  - 10 Fröhlich, Erziehungsanstalt, 53.
  - 11 Although Betty and Marie Fröhlich described the French girls' school ideal as strictly divided between boarding and day school pupils, French educational institutes often took on several day pupils.
  - 12 Mme Achet's school was one of three run by lay headmistresses which found approval from the Viennese visitors. Fröhlich, Erziehungsanstalt, 57.
  - 13 Christina De Bellaigue, *Educating women. Schooling and identity in England and France, 1800–1867*, Oxford 2007, 37.
  - 14 De Bellaigue, *Educating women*, 34.
  - 15 Rebecca Rogers, „Boarding Schools, Women Teachers, and Domesticity: Reforming Girls' Secondary Education in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century,“ in: *French Historical Studies* 19, no. 1 (1995), 153–181: 160.
  - 16 De Bellaigue, *Educating women*, 19–22.
  - 17 Jane McDermid, *The Schooling of Girls in Britain and Ireland, 1800–1900*, New York 2012, 74.
  - 18 McDermid, *The Schooling of Girls*, 73.
  - 19 Susan Skedd, *Women teachers and the expansion of girls' schooling in England, c.1760–1820*, in: Elaine Chalus/Hanna Barker, eds., *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England*, London 1997, 101–125: 103.
  - 20 Fröhlich, Erziehungsanstalt, 60.
  - 21 A detailed account on Josephine Stadlin's activities is provided in: Elisabeth Joris, *Liberal und eigen-sinnig. Die Pädagogin Josephine Stadlin. Die Homöopathin Emilie Paravicini-Blumer. Handlungsspielräume von Bildungsbürgerinnen im 19. Jahrhundert*, Zürich 2011.
  - 22 Fröhlich, Erziehungsanstalt, 62.
  - 23 Fröhlich, Erziehungsanstalt, 61–62.
  - 24 Elke Kleinau published extensively on female pedagogues and institute owners, as for example: Elke Kleinau, *Pädagoginnen der Aufklärung und ihre Bildungstheorien*, in: Ulrike Weckel/Claudia Opitz/Elke Kleinau, eds., *Tugend, Vernunft, und Gefühl. Geschlechterdiskurse der Aufklärung und weibliche Lebenswelten*, Münster 2000, 309–338.
  - 25 General characteristics about girls' educational institutes are analysed in: Elke Kleinau/Martina Käthner, *Höhere Töchterschulen um 1800*, in: Claudia Opitz/Elke Kleinau, eds., *Geschichte der Mädchen- und Frauenbildung. Band 1, Vom Mittelalter bis zur Aufklärung*, Frankfurt am Main/New York 1996, 393–408. Gudrun Wedel provides a thorough discussion of women teachers on the basis of autobiographical accounts. Gudrun Wedel, *Lehren zwischen Arbeit und Beruf. Einblicke in das Leben von Autobiographinnen aus dem 19. Jahrhundert*, Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 2000.
  - 26 The names “Weiß” and “Ryhiner” were provided without first names. Fröhlich, Erziehungsanstalt, 62.
  - 27 Edith Glaser, *Lehrerinnen als Unternehmerinnen*, in: Meike Sophia Baader/Helge Keller/Elke Kleinau, eds., *Bildungsgeschichten. Geschlecht, Religion und Pädagogik in der Moderne. Festschrift für Juliane Jacobi zum 60. Geburtstag*, Beiträge zur Historischen Bildungsforschung, Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 2006, 179–193, 182.
  - 28 Institut Fröhlich. *Höhere Lehr- und Erziehungsanstalt für Töchter*, Neues Fremden Blatt, 02.10.1866, 16.
  - 29 Anton Reichsritter v. Geusau, *Geschichte der Stiftungen, Erziehungs- und Unterrichtsanstalten in Wien*, Vienna 1803, 458–459.
  - 30 Meike Lauggas recounts in her discourse analysis of the term “Mädchen” [girls] the development of this institute, which was initially the private undertaking of a woman called Tèreze Luzac. Meike

- Lauggas, Mädchenbildung bildet Mädchen. Eine Geschichte des Begriffs und der Konstruktionen, Vienna 2000, 105–108.
- 31 In 1844 Lemberg/Lwów/Lviv for example counted ten private girls' institutes. Isabel Röska-Rydel, *Kultur an der Peripherie des Habsburger Reiches. Die Geschichte des Bildungswesens und der kulturellen Einrichtungen in Lemberg von 1772 bis 1848*, Wiesbaden 1993, 101.
  - 32 The case that lead to this ruling will be discussed in detail in my PhD project. ÖStA [Austrian State Archives], AVA, StHK 13B2 Niederösterreich/Wien, Mathias Swoboda.
  - 33 Gunda Barth-Scalmani, *Geschlecht: weiblich, Stand: ledig, Beruf: Lehrerin. Grundzüge der Professionalisierung des weiblichen Lehrberufs im Primarschulbereich in Österreich bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*, in: Brigitte Mazohl-Wallnig, ed., *Bürgerliche Frauenkultur im 19. Jahrhundert*, Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 1995, 343–402.
  - 34 Christina de Bellaigue discusses the stereotypes concerning female school owners in detail in chapter 3, "The Business of School-Keeping". De Bellaigue, *Educating women*, 74–100.
  - 35 Until the Primary School Law of 1869, female teachers were only permitted to teach languages and needlework, although exceptions can be found.
  - 36 In Marie van Demerghel's [...] Mädchen-Erziehungs-Anstalt hat der Unterricht am 1. October d. J. begonnen, *Wiener Zeitung*, 26.10.1851, 10.
  - 37 Mädchen-Lehr- und Erziehungs-Anstalt von Maria van Demerghel, geb. Würth, *Laibacher Zeitung*, 6.8.1856, 4. The birth of Emanuel and Marie van Demerghel's daughter Maria in April 1854 did not interrupt the institute's business, many examples of this kind can be found. *Matricula, NÖ Erzdiözese Wien, Pfarre St. Rochus, Taufbuch 01–37 (1854–1854)*, Folio 52, 17.4.1854, \*Maria Elisabeth Johanna, [www.matricula-online.eu](http://www.matricula-online.eu) (28.7.2016). Marie van Demerghel maintained her institute until her death in 1868, aged 52; her husband had died three years earlier in 1865. For a short period of time her sister Elise, the initial owner of the institute, took over, no evidence provides information on how long she continued.
  - 38 Mädchen Erziehungs- und Unterrichts-Anstalt, *Wiener Zeitung*, 9.9.1815, 515.
  - 39 Mädchen-Erziehungs- und Unterrichtsanstalt, *Lemberger Zeitung*, 9.2.1816, 81.
  - 40 ÖStA [Austrian State Archives], AVA, StHK, 13B2 Niederösterreich/Wien, Theresia Mellini.
  - 41 This is in accordance with Karen Hausen's theorised bourgeois Geschlechtscharaktere [gender characteristics]. Karin Hausen, *Die Polarisierung der „Geschlechtscharaktere“ – Eine Spiegelung der Dissoziation von Erwerbs- und Familienleben*, in: Werner Conze, ed., *Sozialgeschichte der Familie in der Neuzeit Europas*, Stuttgart 1976, 363–393. James Albisetti analysed for the school context the "German Ideal of Womanhood" in: James C. Albisetti, *Schooling German Girls and Women. Secondary and Higher Education in the Nineteenth Century*, Princeton 1988, 3–22. For educational ideals in the specific Austrian context see: Gertrud Simon, "Die tüchtige Hausfrau: gebildet aber nicht gelehrt". Das bürgerliche Frauenbild als Erziehungsziel im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert, in: Ilse Brehmer/Gertrud Simon *Geschichte der Frauenbildung und Mädchenerziehung in Österreich*, Graz 1997, 32–43.
  - 42 A popular proponent of science specifically prepared for women was Josef Fladung. J. A. F. Fladung, *Populäre Vorträge über Physik für Damen*, Vienna 1831; J. A. F. Fladung, *Versuch populärer Vorträge über Astronomie ohne Berechnungen*, Vienna 1845.
  - 43 Joseph Kaiser, „Chronologische und statistische Uebersicht der Volksschulen, der Privat- Lehr und Erziehungs-Anstalten, und der für Volksschulen und ähnliche Anstalten bestehenden Stiftungen in der Wiener Erzdiözese“, in: *Österreichisches paedagogisches Wochenblatt* 3, no. 3/4 (1844), 107–108: 117.
  - 44 Eduard von Bauernfeld, *Aus Alt- und Neu-Wien*, Vienna 1873, chapter 8.
  - 45 De Bellaigue, *Educating women*, 98.
  - 46 Betty and Marie Fröhlich took the approach of underlining that the headmistress of an institute had to attend the pupils with "motherly love" [Mutterliebe] and "fatherly care" [Vatersorge]. Fröhlich, *Erziehungsanstalt*, 16.
  - 47 DAW [Diocese Archives Vienna], *Schulamtsakten 233/2/1g*, *Ansuchen der Katharina Gabriel auch externe Mädchen aufnehmen zu dürfen*.
  - 48 Fröhlich, *Erziehungsanstalt*, 53.
  - 49 Fröhlich, *Erziehungsanstalt*, 4.

- 50 Bärbel Kuhn, Familienstand: ledig. Ehelose Frauen und Männer im Bürgertum (1850–1914), *L'homme* Schriften 5, Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 2000, 73–79.
- 51 Kuhn, Familienstand: ledig, 65–75.
- 52 Lehr- und Erziehungs-Anstalt für Töchter, geleitet von Betty und Marie Fröhlich, *Die Presse*, 14.6.1849, 4.
- 53 Matricula, NÖ Erzdiözese Wien, Pfarre St. Stephan, Sterbebuch 03-05 (1832–1853), Folio 105, †Fröhlich Johann, Dr. der Medicin, [www.matricula-online.eu](http://www.matricula-online.eu) (28.7.2016).
- 54 Ernst's dissertation about the healing qualities of the spring water in Rohitsch was published in 1838. Following his studies he practised medicine as a doctor for the poor in the Viennese suburb Reindorf, whilst Ernst's father Johann worked in the asylum in Mauerbach.
- 55 The three nieces Auguste, Camilla and Marie had completed their teacher's training in Ljubljana in 1842. Institut Fröhlich, in: Joseph Kaiser, ed., *Lehrer-Schema, oder Ausweis des sämmtlichen [...]* Lehr-Personales, Vienna 1852, 17–18.
- 56 Die Lehr- und Erziehungs-Anstalt [...] beginnt das nächste Schuljahr am 1. October 1850, *Die Presse*, 1.10.1850, 30.
- 57 Die Lehr- und Erziehungs-Anstalt [...] beginnt das nächste Schuljahr am 6. October 1852, *Die Presse*, 5.10.1852, 1.
- 58 The youngest sister Albertine had died in 1852 of typhus aged thirteen. Matricula, NÖ Erzdiözese Wien, Pfarre St. Stephan, Sterbebuch 03-44, Folio 271, †Albertine Possanner, [www.matricula-online.eu](http://www.matricula-online.eu) (28.7.2016).
- 59 Marcella Stern, Gabriele Possanner von Ehrenthal, die erste an der Universität Wien promovierte Frau, in: Marina Tichy/Waltraud Heindl, eds., *Durch Erkenntnis zu Freiheit und Glück – Frauen an der Universität Wien*, Vienna 1990, 189–219, 191.
- 60 Ernst, Amalie, Auguste and Camilla remained amongst the permanent staff. Maria Possanner's traces are sparse in the public records. After the 1850s she appears with her profession as teacher in the Lehmann address book in the early 1880s, then all traces disappear. Lehmann's *allgemeiner Wohnungs-Anzeiger*, Vienna 1882, <http://www.digital.wienbibliothek.at/wbrobv/periodical/pageview/44806> (22.7.2016).
- 61 DAW [Diocese Archives Vienna], Schulamtsakten 277/1/3a, Übersicht der mit hohem Regierungs-Dekrete bestehenden Erziehungs-Anstalten für das Schuljahr 1853/54.
- 62 Fröhlich, Erziehungsanstalt, 36.
- 63 In 1875 even a Pestalozzi celebration took place at the institute following a public exam. Institut Fröhlich. In diesem renommierten Institute fand [...] eine Pestalozzi-Feier statt, *Neue Freie Presse*, 14.2.1875, 6.
- 64 In line with their contemporaries, Betty and Marie Fröhlich underlined that for women the “highest and for life the most important virtue is self-denial.” Fröhlich, Erziehungsanstalt, 15.
- 65 Fröhlich, Erziehungsanstalt, 9.
- 66 Ebd., 47.
- 67 Barbara Sophia, the mother of Betty, Marie, Ernst and Susanna, lived in the Villa until her death in 1856. Matricula, NÖ Erzdiözese Wien, Pfarre St. Helena Baden, Sterbebuch 03–03 (1851–1876), Folio 42, †Barbara Sophia Fröhlich, Medicinal Doctors Witwe, geborene Nowak, gebt von Cilli in Steiermark, [www.matricula-online.eu](http://www.matricula-online.eu) (28.7.2016).
- 68 Institut Fröhlich. Aus Baden bei Wien schreibt man uns [...], *Neue Freie Presse*, 5.9.1874, 5.
- 69 Institut Fröhlich. Dieses Institut feierte am 15. d. die Jubelfeier seines 25jährigen Bestandes, *Neue Freie Presse*, 17.2.1874, 5.
- 70 Matricula, NÖ Erzdiözese Wien, Pfarre St. Stephan, Sterbebuch 03–46 (1869–1882), Folio 175, †Fröhlich Maria, Instituts-Vorsteherin, [www.matricula-online.eu](http://www.matricula-online.eu) (28.7.2016).
- 71 Amalie and Auguste had lived together within walking distance from the institute in Weihburggasse Nr. 9, Camilla moved to her sisters' house in 1886 when her husband Franz Jüllig died.
- 72 Betty Fröhlich, *Neue Freie Presse*, 19.2.1888, 5.
- 73 Ebd.
- 74 Original: „Alle, welche die Anstalt kennen, wünschen, sie möge unter der neuen Aegide in altgewohnter Weise fröhlich gedeihen.“ Betty Fröhlich, *Neue Freie Presse*, 19.2.1888, 5.
- 75 Das Institut Fröhlich. Achtclassiges Mädchen-Pensionat, halb Pension und Externat mit Fortbildungscursen und staatsgiltigen Zeugnissen, *Die Presse*, 15.9.1888, 12.

- 76 Danksagung. Auguste Possanner Edle von Ehrental [...] die tieftrauernden Geschwister, Die Presse, 5.3.1889, 8.
- 77 Stern, Possanner, 214.
- 78 The Gymnasium was at the time still a school form reserved for boys although girls were since 1872 allowed to take the Matura. Amalie Mayer/Hildegard Meissner/Henriette Siess, eds., Geschichte der österreichischen Mädchenmittelschule, Vienna 1952.
- 79 Decades earlier Marie and Betty Fröhlich had described the private character of female education with exception of parts of Switzerland. It is not surprising that Gabriele Possanner went to Zurich and Geneva for her studies, two cities in which public education for girls was provided ahead of other countries.
- 80 Stern, Possanner, 203–208. The practice of petitioning to the Emperor in case of a denied request was used by many women previous to Gabriele Possanner. Archival records show that many girls' school owners used this form of communication to create opportunities for themselves.
- 81 Stern, Possanner, 204.
- 82 The Gymnasium had been established in 1892 and was the second of its kind in the Habsburg Empire. Friedrich, Mädchenerziehung, 150–156. The strategy of granting a job guarantee at a girls' school was also used in the case of Georgine von Roth, who was a member of the Association for extended Women's Education. Georgine von Roth had obtained her matura in Vienna, studied in Bern and became after Rosa Kerschbaumer the second woman to practise medicine in Austria in the position as school doctor of the Offizierstöchter-Institut [Institute for daughters of military officers] in 1895, additionally to teaching subjects of the natural sciences. Marianne Nigg, Die Enterbten der Arbeit, Frauen-Werke. Österreichische Zeitschrift zur Förderung und Vertretung von Frauenbestrebungen, November 1895, 81–83.
- 83 This becomes evident in a later interview with Gabriele Possanner. Stern, Possanner, 202.
- 84 Stern, Possanner, 204–209.
- 85 Original: „Ihr männlich starker Wille, gepaart mit einem echt weiblichen Gemüth, [...].“ Nachruf Betty Fröhlich, Neue Freie Presse, 19.2.1888, 5.
- 86 Betty and Marie Fröhlich lived independently as unmarried women, as did their nieces Auguste and Amalie Possanner, who lived together in walking distance from the institute. Their nieces Gabriele, Kamilla and Emma also spent their lives unmarried.
- 87 Hainisch's focus on Betty Fröhlich's natural inclination to teaching is connected to 19<sup>th</sup> century views on motherhood and ideas about women's nature; the “born teacher” is a myth sustained until the present day. Marianne Hainisch, Gründerin des Bundes und Vorsitzende, in: 60 Jahre Bund Österreichischer Frauenvereine, Vienna 1962, 6–10, 7.
- 88 ÖNB [Austrian National Library], Autografen und Nachlässe Sammlung: Handschriften, Sign. Cod. Ser. n. 52753 Han, Graf, Antonie: Tagebuch 1868, 63.