

## WOMEN, MAN AND HISTORICAL CHANGE: CASE STUDIES IN THE IMPACT OF GENDER HISTORY

Andrzej Wyrobisz

### PATTERNS OF THE FAMILY AND WOMAN IN OLD POLAND

The vogue for treatises on women which flooded Germany during the Reformation with a plethora of polemical writings in prose and verse, in German and Latin, and which in France brought Brantome's *Les vies des dames illustres* and *Les vies des dames galantes* did not bypass Poland.

Two works on women, though not of Polish authorship but translated into Polish and addressed to the Polish reader, were published by Maciej Wirzbięta's printing house in Cracow within the space of but a few years. In 1566, Łukasz Górnicki dared to present reflections on women in a completely new Renaissance spirit in *The Polish Courtier*, an adaptation of Castiglione's original. In 1575, Wirzbięta published his own translation of the treatise *De nobilitate et praecellentia feminei sexus*, an apology of women by the German humanist Henry Cornelius Agrippa. At the same time (end of 1567 and the beginning of 1568) Wirzbięta brought out a Polish work, Mikołaj Rej's *The Mirror*, which also devoted much space to women. It was especially the Antitrinitarians who were interested in feminist subjects. In 1582, Marcin Czechowic's *The Mirror of Christian Girls Showing Them Their Christian Duties* appeared in Raków, and in 1589 Erazm Otwinowski brought out the second edition (the first is extinct) of *Cases or Stories of Illustrious Women, Garnered from the Holy Scriptures and Briefly Presented for Memory's Sake*. The same author also published (extinct) *All the Chaste and Impious Women of the Old and the New Testament*. Many anti-feminist satires appeared in the 16th and particular in the 17th century (Marcin Bielski's *Women's Parliament* in 1566, the anonymous *Parliament of the Fair Sex* before 1617, *The Gammer or an Old Inventory* in the late 17th century, *Prerogatives or Freedom for Married*

*Women in the 17th century, The Golden Joke Marriage after 1670, and many epigrams by Wacław Potocki).*

The woman's social position was linked with the institution of marriage, hence all treatises on the family and marriage also concerned women. Jan Mrowiński Płoczywłos' s brief treatise *The Married Couple*, brought out in Cracow in 1561, was an apotheosis of marriage. The author lived in 1514–1580 and was a burgher and councillor at Kazimierz near Cracow, but he used the title *nobilis et famatus* and his tombstone in St. Catherine's church in Kazimierz, erected in the style of noblemen's Renaissance tombstones, displays the Jelita coat-of-arms; he may therefore have been of noble birth. *The Married Couple* is not an original work but rather a primitive compilation of Biblical quotations and thoughts collected from various "righteous authors", as Mrowiński himself says on the title page. Nevertheless, this collection of opinions which are not necessarily the author's own is quite uniform and cohesive logically, and the selection of quotations, adages and thoughts reflects the opinions of both the author and the readers to whom the book was addressed. Mrowiński dedicated the book to the mayor and councillors of Kazimierz, but this is not a treatise confined to burghers' families; it is of a more universal character<sup>1</sup>.

Mrowiński regarded marriage as the foundation of social order. In accordance with Catholic ethics, he was for the permanence and indissolubility of marriage. In his opinion, the main aims of marriage were procreation and continuation of one's own family and humankind, as well as social and moral tasks ("salvation of the soul, for it makes it easier to avoid the sins of the flesh").

According to Mrowiński, children are a gift of God, but only if they are born in wedlock; bastards, naturally, do not enjoy the right of inheritance and many other rights to which the legitimate natis are entitled. Mrowiński points out that the adoption of these principles strengthens the institution of marriage. But he disagrees with the rigoristic Catholic doctrine that sexual relations, even between the spouses, are morally permissible only if they lead to procreation; in his opinion, "marriage has been established" not only for "the bearing and bringing up of children, but also for mutual corporal service, fulfillment of marital obligations, and for lessening mutual impetuosity" (p. 14). However, he strongly condemns fornication (p. 23) and consequently, does not recognize illegitimate children; he exalts the family and naturally — although he does not say this *expressis verbis* — denounces all extramarital relations, all deviations and homosexuality.

<sup>1</sup> Jan Mrowiński Płoczywłos, *Stadło matżeńskie, (Married Couple)*, ed. Z. Celi-chowski, Kraków 1890.

Mrowiński believes that it is the duty of every man to marry and establish a family. The persons who do not do this ignore God's and man's laws (p. 16, cf. also pp. 22 and 26). The duty of marriage is not binding only on those "who because of their weak condition are unsuitable for it, that is, frigid people, children, dwarfs, stupid, insane, impotent and lame people, and castrates", which shows that Mrowiński knew some principles of eugenics. Marriage is also not binding on such people "who inspired by the Holy Spirit or graced by God, have resolved to maintain chastity" (p. 16). "All others should get married and set up families, this being their duty as men and citizens" (pp. 26–27).

Mrowiński is for the model of a patriarchal family headed by the husband–father who is strict and thoughtful, but at the same time just and kind–hearted. In such a patriarchal family the wives should obey their husbands, they should remember that "they have been created to help their husbands and for their husbands" (p. 20). But Mrowiński assigns an important place in the family to the wife. He says: "it does not do any harm to listen to the wife's advice", although he warns at once that must be done in a way "that would make it impossible for the mistress to bridle (the husband) and start commanding, for on account of their quick temper, all divine and human laws forbid them to do this and have given preference to the husband as regards authority" (p. 20). Nevertheless, "when a wise wife sees that something is going wrong, it is fitting for her to prevent it, to help and advise", but "she should do this calmly, honestly, without placing herself over her husband" (p. 21). "A good wife should be called mistress of the house and mother of the servants" (p. 21).

Mrowiński prefers marriages based on love to those contracted for material benefits (pp. 17–18). He is for a free choice of partners and against marriages arranged by parents. Like Rej, Mrowiński recommends marriages between persons of equal status (p. 25).

We have devoted much space to Mrowiński's opinions, for his treatise on marriage is the oldest work on this subject to have been published in Poland; later authors, even if they were more prominent than Mrowiński, mostly repeated his views, only slightly changing or supplementing them.

In *The Life of an Honest Man*, the first part of *The Mirror* which was published in 1567/68, Mikołaj Rej eulogises marriage in a more independent way. He divides society into four parts: "the married state, the widowed state, the state of virginity and the free state. Of all these states none is more preferable to God and none is friendlier to a godly life and to other matters of this world than the married state".

Rej decidedly condemns the free state as “wilful” and “odious” (p. 120). As a Calvinist, he ignores celibacy, which Mrowiński took into account. Contrary to Mrowiński, Rej writes contemptuously about love in marriage (p. 115). But he did not think that marriage should be contracted only for the sake of money (p. 115). He advises men to look for a wife “of equal estate, sensible education and training, comely modest manners, and with whatever help (her dowry, property) she can give, for they say that beauty, manners and help are the choice morels of a good marriage” (p. 116). These were the opinions of a Calvinist nobleman.

This is how Krzysztof Kraiński, a Calvinist preacher, praised marriage in his sermon on the fifth Sunday after Christmas, that is, the height of carnival: “The married state established by God for the reproduction of humankind, for mutual help, for preventing debauchery and ensuring a calmer life and a better glorification of God is, as the Holy Scriptures show, respectable, blessed, holy, chaste, untainted, recommended by God and pleasing to Him; he who lives in this state and professes the true faith is pleasing to God and will be redeemed”. In another sermon he added: “maidenhood is good and holy... But marriage is more respectable and more useful to God’s Church and the Commonwealth than maidenhood... Marriage is a remedy against fornication and damnation”<sup>2</sup>.

Piotr Skarga’s ethical opinions, which also covered marriage and attitude to woman, were not original. His moral teachings in this respect were a repetition of the doctrine of the Catholic Church, but they did not differ essentially from the opinions pronounced by representatives of other religions. Skarga advocated a family with many children. He began the first of his sermons on the sacrament of marriage with the words: “God established marriage for the reproduction of His servants”, and he backed this by a quotation from the Book of Proverbs (14:28): “In the multitude of people is the king’s honour; but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince”<sup>3</sup>. Marriage has three aims according to Skarga: a joint family life, reproduction and the upbringing of children (Skarga lays stress on their Christian upbringing) and the safeguarding of man from the sin of incontinence and sexual intemperance<sup>4</sup>. According to Skarga, marriage should be contracted out of love and with the free will of both sides<sup>5</sup>. Skarga is aware of financial considerations, the importance of good looks and family con-

<sup>2</sup> K. Kraiński, *Postylla Kościoła Powszechnego Apostolskiego (Sermons of the Apostolic Church)*, Łaszczów 1611, f. 68<sup>v</sup>, 662<sup>v</sup>, 722; cf. f. 753<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> P. Skarga, *Kazania o siedmiu sakramentach (Sermons about the Seven Sacraments)*, Wilno 1737, p. 760. Skarga returns to this matter in the further part of this sermon, p. 762.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 762–763. Cf. the second and fourth sermons on marriage, pp. 764–765, 774.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 761; cf. p. 774.

nections, but he points out that “these reasons should not be the most important and the most prominent in contracting a marriage, but being inferior, they should be the last to be taken into consideration”<sup>6</sup>. In his opinion marriage is, of course, indissoluble (save for the cases foreseen by the Church); in accordance with the recommendations of the Council of Trent, he regards the consent of the young people’s parents as indispensable.

Krzysztof Opaliński recommended that marriage should be contracted between persons of the same estate and the same financial standing. In his satires he condemned fortune hunters and men who were running after girls from illustrious houses with good family connections in order to add splendour to themselves and their families; he also derided the arrangement of marriages between minors, between persons of unequal age, marriages between old men and young girls, and old widows and youngsters<sup>7</sup>. But he did not observe his own advice and matched his sister, Zofia, with the much older grand hetman and castellan of Cracow, Stanisław Koniecpolski, regarding this match as very advantageous to the Opaliński family because of his future brother-in-law’s fortune, prestige and family connections<sup>8</sup>.

Opaliński describes young Lithuanian wives who having old husbands, keep “consolers”, called *Jeburones* (i.e. fuckers); he says that the youths who marry old women take money to wife, not the woman, and soon “pluck the woman of her money, as a jackdaw is plucked of another bird’s feathers, and having plucked her tell her to go to hell”<sup>9</sup>. Jędrzej Kitowicz describes an authentic story of such a marriage; after an unfortunate marriage with a homosexualist, Janusz Aleksander Sanguszko, Konstancja Dönhoff married a would-be-Jesuit, Józef Rogaliński, when she was an aged woman. Rogaliński, “on becoming a lord, settled the female with little money in Warsaw, so that the millionaire sometimes did not have enough money to pay the tailor for his work. He himself, under the pretext of running the estate, took all the income, from it, revelled with his friends and kept young girls who relieved the old duchess of the wife’s duties; the duchess was wasting away in grief in Warsaw until she withered and died, warning ladies like her not to long for young beggars”<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 763.

<sup>7</sup> K. Opaliński, *Satyry (Satires)*, ed. L. Eustachiewicz, Wrocław 1953, Book I, 4th satire; Book I, 8th satire; Book V, 9th satire.

<sup>8</sup> *Listy Krzysztofa Opalińskiego do brata Łukasza 1641–1653 (Krzysztof Opaliński’s Letters to His Brother Łukasz 1641–1653)*, ed. R. Pollak and others, Wrocław 1957, pp. 288, 290, 292, 301, 307, 310, 312, 314.

<sup>9</sup> K. Opaliński, *Satyry*, pp. 30–32.

<sup>10</sup> J. Kitowicz, *Pamiętniki czyli Historia polska (Diary or Poland’s History)*, ed. P. Matuzewska, Z. Lewinówna, Warszawa 1971, p. 65.

The apotheosis of the family was combined with the glorification of the wife and mother. During the period of the Counter-Reformation this harmonized with the cult of the Virgin Mary as the Mother of God. But the main reasons were social. The parentage of the wife and mother was important, for in accordance with a law adopted in the 14th century, only a person whose both parents were of noble descent was regarded as a nobleman. The wife offered her husband the dowry and her family connections, which were very important for the social position, in political contests and in the formation of parties and factions in old Poland.

The ideal wife described by the already mentioned author of *The Married Couple* was mistress of the house, mother and housewife; she was obedient to her husband, but held her own opinions and knew how to advise her husband when “something was going wrong” and how to ward off disasters; she was a woman who shared troubles and worries with her husband and knew how to comfort him. She was to be an industrious home-bird, should not be garrulous, gossipy or lazy, and should not neglect her children and servants<sup>11</sup>.

Rej called a good wife God’s gift. He valued concord between the spouses most; his ideal was a good housewife who kept the house neat and in order, saw to it that the food on the table was good, was a good mother, a faithful, modest, sensible and restrained wife<sup>12</sup>.

Jan Kochanowski’s *Song of St. John’s Eve* and *Song XX* from Book II (written probably after 1575) were a paean to his wife. This greatest Polish Renaissance poet also eulogized good wives in his *Epigrams*<sup>13</sup>.

Rej and Kochanowski were the first to start constructing the pattern of the Sarmatian matron, wife or widow, and mother in old Polish literature, especially moralizing literature.

A late 16th century organ tabulature contains a song *Polish Kings* with a passage about Ryheza, wife of Mieszko II, who was blamed for having interfered in “improper matters”, that is, in government, instead of minding her household. The song reflects the social pattern of a queen in 16th century Poland; it probably alludes to the unpopular Queen Bona, but it also conveys the pattern of a good wife<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Jan Mrowiński *Płoczywłos*, *Stadto*, p. 20.

<sup>12</sup> M. Rej, *Żywot*, pp. 118, 119, 126.

<sup>13</sup> J. Kochanowski, *Pieśni (Songs)*, ed. L. Szczerbicka-Ślęk, Wrocław 1970, pp. 85 and 113; cf. *idem*, *Fraszki księgi wtóre (Second Book of Epigrams)*, 67, 68, 98, 103; *Fraszki księgi trzecie (Third Book of Epigrams)*, 66, 67.

<sup>14</sup> See Z. Gloger, *Encyklopedia staropolska (Old Polish Encyclopaedia)*, vol. IV, Warszawa 1903, p. 21.

In his commentary to *The Life of St. Catherine, Christ's Virgin and Martyr* Piotr Skarga wrote that "study does not agree with women; prayer and work are better for them", "silence, prayer, needle work and household occupations befit a woman more", but he allowed of women's education in "well-to-do homes in order to prevent idleness, not for the sake of vanity and mundane glory, but to multiply devotion and enlightenment in divine, salutary things"<sup>15</sup>. Skarga defined woman's position in the family with a quotation from St. Paul's Epistle (1 Tim. 2:12): "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence... she shall be saved in childbearing..."<sup>16</sup>. "Man is born a man, and woman a woman. He is born with more reason and a greater strength. And a woman is born with less reason and weaker strength, and therefore man being wiser, should govern the simpler being, he should defend and protect the weaker partner. And the woman, being simple, should let herself be governed by him who is wiser, and being weaker, should remain under the protection and awe of the stronger. This is the law of nature", wrote Skarga in his fourth sermon on the sacrament of marriage. "Finally", said Skarga, "supervision and maintenance of the household, and multiplication of domestic equipment strengthen conjugal love"<sup>17</sup>.

In a sermon on the 18th Sunday after the Holy Trinity, Krzysztof Kraiński, the already quoted Calvinist preacher, said: "a wise wife worships, respects and loves her husband, is obedient and warm-hearted to her husband, goes through thick and thin with him"<sup>18</sup>.

Erazm Otwinowski was an Antitrinitarian, and the Antitrinitarians, unlike the members of other churches, accorded women equal rights with men in collective life; hence the greater emancipation of Antitrinitarians. But in Otwinowski's poem *Description of a Pious and Staid Wife, a Good Housekeeper* (the second edition of which appeared in 1589) the pattern of woman was similar to that propagated in other works of that period. According to Otwinowski, an ideal wife is pious, faithful and completely subordinated to her husband, a good mother, a patroness of the poor and, above all, a provident housewife who helps her husband to multiply his wealth<sup>19</sup>. This does not differ at all from the Catholics' propo-

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<sup>15</sup> P. Skarga, *Żywoty świętych Staroego i Nowego Zakonu (The Life of Saints of the Old and the New Testament)*, vol. IV, Kraków 1936, pp. 325–326. Cf. S. Winda k i e w i c z, *Piotr Skarga*, Kraków 1925, p. 58.

<sup>16</sup> P. Skarga, *Kazania*, p. 765.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 776, 779.

<sup>18</sup> K. Kraiński, *Sermons of the Apostolic Church*, f. 458<sup>v</sup>–459.

<sup>19</sup> *Staropolska poezja ziemiańska. Antologia (Old Polish Landowners' Poetry. Anthology)*, ed. J. S. Gruchała, S. Grzeszczuk, Warszawa 1988, pp. 140–144.

sals, but it is difficult to say whether it was written under Mrowiński's influence.

Wacław Potocki, an ex-Antitrinitarian, in a lament over the death of his wife, Katarzyna, portrayed an ideal picture of his deceased spouse who throughout the sixty years of her life had never abandoned herself to amusements, dances and feasts, but had led a serious monastic life, dedicated herself to prayer and care of the poor and took care of the household, her serfs and servants<sup>20</sup>.

A good wife was to co-operate with her husband in multiplying their possessions. Patterns of a perfect gentlewoman, a good housewife, can therefore be found in old Polish handbooks for housewives and literature singing the praises of landowners' life. In the 12th epistle of his *Farming* (1588) Anzelm Gostomski enumerated in detail the tasks of a good housewife and her servants. They were expected to grow and desiccate herbs, distil liquors (i.e. medicines), spin and weave, make table-linen, cram poultry, make jams, store food, take care of kitchen utensils<sup>21</sup>.

We do not know which of Gostomski's instructions were addressed to the mistress of the house and which to the stewardess and the maid, that is, to the female servants in a prosperous manor-house. Stanisław Słupski of Rogów was more explicit in *A Good Landowner's Farming Occupations*, brought out by Jędrzejowczyk's printing house in Cracow in 1618; he portrayed an ideal wife as a home-bird, obedient to her husband, solicitous, but first of all a hard working and thrifty housekeeper<sup>22</sup>. This was also the pattern of a nobleman's (not a magnate's) family presented as a unit of economic organization in which the wife's presence was indispensable for its proper functioning.

Słupski's imitator (or even plagiarist), Władysław Stanisław Jeżowski (both imitated the poetry of Horace and Virgil, and, above all, Kochanowski), devoted a separate chapter *The Occupations of Landladies* to the pattern of a good housewife in *The Economy or Order of Landowners' Occupations* published twenty years later. Jeżowski's ideal was also a hard working thrifty wife. Like Słupski and many other authors of that time, Jeżowski valued piety in women and categorically condemned extravagance<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> W. Potocki, *Dziela (Works)*, vol. II, ed. L. Kukulski, Warszawa 1987, pp. 508–514.

<sup>21</sup> A. Gostomski, *Gospodarstwo (Farming)*, ed. S. Inglot, Wrocław 1951, pp. 94–97.

<sup>22</sup> Stanisława Słupskiego z Rogowa Zabawy orackie 1618 i Władysława Stanisława Jeżowskiego *Oekonomia 1638 (Farming Occupations by Stanisław Słupski of Rogów 1618 and Władysław Stanisław Jeżowski's Economy, 1638)*, ed. J. Rostański, Kraków 1891, pp. 19–20.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 66–65.



An example of a good wife and mistress of the house was also presented by Jakub Kazimierz Haur in *The Landowners' General Economy*. The advice for women was written in verse, for in Haur's opinion "this sex relishes the poetic vein". In addition to advice on housekeeping, Haur also gave moral instructions: "A good and sensible wife is God's gift", a wife who "modestly runs the house, knows her husband and can support and respect him", a wife who "listens to her husband in everything and does not oppose him in anything"; she should be modest and non-extravagant<sup>24</sup>.

Similarly, an anonymous poem written in Great Poland in the early 17th century outlined the picture of a good housewife, comparing her to a busy and provident bee and stressing her unanimity with her husband<sup>25</sup>.

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The model woman was presented in a slightly different way in tombstones and epitaphs<sup>26</sup>. As regards the latter, there was not enough space for prosaic matters connected with everyday life, so housework and preparation of tasty dishes for the husband are not mentioned there, but a great deal is said about noble virtues: piety, generosity, charity, conjugal fidelity, maternal feelings<sup>27</sup>.

Conjugal fidelity, harmonious conjugal life, the wife's submissiveness and obedience to the husband are stressed in various ways on funeral

<sup>24</sup> J. K. Haur, *Oekonomika ziemiańska generalna (The Landowners' General Economy)*, 2nd ed., Kraków 1679, pp. 91–94.

<sup>25</sup> *Staropolska poezja*, pp. 332–338.

<sup>26</sup> A small selection of epitaphs is accessible to researches thanks to Szymon Starowolski's *Monumenta Sarmatarum* and to *Corpus Inscriptionum Poloniae* (henceforward referred to as *CIP*), about a dozen issues of which have been published so far; there has also been a number of occasional publications, to say nothing of the possibility of personal inspection. The value of epitaphs as a source has only recently attracted the attention of Polish historians: W. Kowalski, *Via universae carnis w nowożytnych pomnikach nagrobnych (Via universae carnis in the Sepulchral Monuments of Modern Times)*, "Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce" vol. XXXIV, 1989; S. Grzybowski, *Skamienne zale. Staropolskie inskrypcje nagrobne (Petriified Grief. Old Polish Epitaphs)*, *ibidem* vol. XXXV, 1990. Sepulchral sculptures are better known, but only from the artistic point of view, and have not been fully catalogued either. For information on bibliography see H. Kozakiewiczowa, *Rzeźba XVI wieku w Polsce (16th Century Sculpture in Poland)*, Warszawa 1984; a review of artistic monuments can be found in the still incomplete *Katalog zabytków w Polsce (A Catalogue of Art Treasures in Poland)* (henceforward referred to as *KZab.*). Cf. also A. Wyrobisz, *Pomniki nagrobne mieszczan w Polsce w XVI–XVII wieku (Burghers' Sepulchral Monuments in Poland in the 16th and 17th Centuries)*, "Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej" vol. XXXVIII, 1990, No. 1–2, pp. 37–79; K. Cieślak, *Kościół-cmentarzem. Sztuka nagrobna w Gdańsku (XV–XVIII w.)*, "Długie trwanie" epitafium (*The Church as Cemetery. Sepulchral Art in Gdańsk (15th–18th centuries). The Long Duration of Epitaph*), Gdańsk 1992; J. Kolbuszewski, *Wiersze z cmentarza. O współczesnej epigrafice wierszowanej (Verses from the Cemetery. Contemporary Rhymed Epigraphy)*, Wrocław 1985; J. Rećko, *W kregu poezji nagrobkowej polskiego baroku (Polish rhymed epitaphs of the baroque age)*, Zielona Góra 1994.

<sup>27</sup> W. Kowalski, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

monuments. In the architectural–sculptural composition of family tombs dedicated to both spouses, the figure of the wife is always placed beneath the man. But many sepulchres present the spouses as equals, as figures of the same scale and on the same level, kneeling or standing on either side of the cross or adoring the Resurrected Christ, e.g. the sepulchres of Mikołaj and Elżbieta Firlej at Bejsce (about 1600), of Grzegorz and Katarzyna Branicki at Niepołomice (about 1600), or of Jan and Anna Krzecki at Skalmierz (about 1600)<sup>28</sup>. The inscriptions dedicated to the spouses are sometimes placed equivalently on two parts of a vertically divided slab, as e.g. the epitaph of Piotr Tęgoborski and his wife Eleonora Katarzyna at Kozłów (about 1600)<sup>29</sup>. The wife’s coat-of-arms was as a rule placed next to the husband’s simple or compound coat-of-arms. The wife’s parents were always mentioned as proof of her noble descent and parentage.

The rhymed epitaph of the Łuczyckis (early 17th century) in the parish church at Jędrzejów is in the part dedicated to the wife a paeon to conjugal fidelity<sup>30</sup>. An epitaph of 1643 commemorates Zofia Śliwska as “a mirror of virtues and obedience, of unchanged love in sacred marriage”<sup>31</sup>. Mikołaj Krasiński praised his wife Katarzyna, who died in 1700, as “a lady extremely agreeable in married life”<sup>32</sup>. Anna Trojanowska was “full of noble virtues, infallible in female faithfulness”<sup>33</sup>.

The inscriptions on tombstones and sepulchres often emphasize the duration of marriage and its harmony, being an indirect praise of conjugal fidelity. Stanisław and Krystyna Opacki had lived 35 years together<sup>34</sup>, Piotr and Elżbieta Oraczowski had been married for 33 years<sup>35</sup>, Rafał and Elżbieta Ważyński had lived 20 years together *sine quaerela*<sup>36</sup>, Mikołaj and Barbara Łajszczewski had been married for 24 years<sup>37</sup>, Maciej and Katarzyna Krosnowski for as many as 45 years<sup>38</sup>, Zofia Krasińska *née* Lanckorońska who died at the age of 36 had been married for 20 years<sup>39</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> *KZab.* I, p. 52, fig. 728; *KZab.* III, No. 9, p. 4, fig. 214; p. 86, fig. 215. Cf. W. Tatarkiewicz, *Nagrobki z figurami klęczącymi (Sepulchral Monuments with Kneeling Figures)*, “Studia Renesansowe” vol. I, 1956, p. 286.

<sup>29</sup> *KZab.* III, No. 3, p. 15; *CIP* I/2, No. 80 and 81.

<sup>30</sup> *KZab.* III, No. 3, p. 7; *CIP* I/2, No. 37.

<sup>31</sup> *KZab.* III, No. 4, p. 29; *CIP* I/1, No. 72.

<sup>32</sup> *KZab.* III, No. 1, p. 35; *CIP* I/3, No. 68.

<sup>33</sup> *KZab.* III, No. 3, p. 23; *CIP* I/2, No. 150.

<sup>34</sup> *KZab.* III, No. 3, p. 5; *CIP* I/2, No. 11 (1698).

<sup>35</sup> *KZab.* III, No. 3, p. 23; *CIP* I/2, No. 146.

<sup>36</sup> *KZab.* III, No. 3, p. 20; *CIP* I/2, No. 113.

<sup>37</sup> *KZab.* II, p. 130; *CIP* V/2, No. 26 (about 1645).

<sup>38</sup> *CIP* IV/1, No. 38 (after 1598).

<sup>39</sup> *KZab.* III, No. 1, p. 35; *CIP* I/3, No. 62.

It was a virtue to have many children and this was emphasized in epitaphs. Walerian Olszowski had 16 children by his second wife Zofia *née* Dunin, but only four sons signed the plaque in the parish church at Stolec in 1661<sup>40</sup>. Maciej Krosnowski had 12 sons and 4 daughters with Katarzyna Błędowska<sup>41</sup>. Krzysztof and Anna Kempicki had 5 sons and as many daughters, but in 1654 after the death of Anna, who survived her husband by 22 years, only six children put down their names on the tombstone<sup>42</sup>. Piotr and Elżbieta Oraczowski also had 5 sons and 5 daughters<sup>43</sup>. The plaque of Elżbieta Zebrzydowska, *née* Krzycka in the Kielce collegiate church is signed only by the founder, Andrzej Zebrzydowski, bishop of Cracow; non of the numerous surviving progeny (3 sons and 5 daughters) is mentioned<sup>44</sup>.

Of all surviving sepulchral sculptures, the sepulchre of the Cracow castellan, Wawrzyniec Spytko Jordan of Zakliczyn, erected in St. Catherine's church in Cracow about the year 1603, best reflects the old Polish patrilineal family and woman's position in such a family. This is a genuine family monument founded by Wawrzyniec Spytko *sibi, uxori suavissimae, parentibus, maioribus et liberis suis dulcissimis*, as the epitaph says. In addition to the central figure of the Cracow castellan, it presents the figures of his father, Mikołaj, and his grandfather, Jordan, and in four side niches, the figures of all the wives of these gentlemen: Anna Sieniawska, Wawrzyniec's wife, Anna Jarosławska, his mother and Mikołaj's second wife, Katarzyna Pielgrzymowska, Mikołaj's first wife, and Jadwiga Lanckorońska, Wawrzyniec's grandmother, the mother of Mikołaj and wife of Jordan<sup>45</sup>. These women accompany their husbands in after-life, belong to their family and symbolise its continuity and family connections. Their figures are models of the Sarmatian matron, formed in the 16th century and binding until at least the end of the 17th. In sepulchral sculptures this model was represented by the figure of the deceased woman dressed in modest clothes. The dominant element of her garment was a long linen shawl worn on the head; it flowed down to the feet and covered the dress, effectively masking ornaments and fashionable fragments of attire, giving the figure a stern appearance and making the garment look like a nun's frock<sup>46</sup>. The sepulchre

<sup>40</sup> *KZab.* II, p. 309; *CIP* II, No. 92.

<sup>41</sup> See fn. 37.

<sup>42</sup> *KZab.* III, No. 5, p. 16; *CIP* V/5, No. 34.

<sup>43</sup> See fn. 34.

<sup>44</sup> *KZab.* III, No. 4, p. 38, fig. 120; *CIP* V/1, No. 55. Cf. W. Łuszczkiewicz, *Nagrobek Elżbiety Zebrzydowskiej (The Tombstone of Elżbieta Zebrzydowska)*, "Sprawozdania Komisji Historii Sztuki" vol. IV, 1891, pp. LXV, XCIII.

<sup>45</sup> K. Sinko-Popielowa, *Tajemnica nagrobka Spytka Jordana (The Mystery of Spytko Jordan's Sepulchre)*, "Sprawozdania z posiedzeń Tow. Naukowego Warszawskiego", Wyzd. II, vol. XXX, 1937, No. 4–6, pp. 50–72.

of Zofia Oleśnicka, née Lubomirska, in the Oleśnicki chapel in the Benedictine abbey on the Holy Cross mountain (1620) which presents the deceased woman in a fashionable dress with a ruff and a culpack on her head, and the similar figures of Zofia Lasocka in a church at Brzeziny and Anna Szydłowiecka in the collegiate church at Opatów<sup>47</sup> were exceptions. The designers of sepulchres of unmarried girls, e.g. of Elżbieta Firlej at Bejsce (before 1589) were allowed more freedom<sup>48</sup>. The stern and rather schematic figures of Sarmatian matrons on tombs stood in contrast with the much more diversified figures of fashionably dressed Polish noblewomen and magnates' wives portrayed by painters. But the purpose of paintings was different, while sepulchral sculptures were to propagate the model of the sarmatian matron. Let us add that this was a Catholic model, for Polish 16th and 17th century sepulchral sculptures are almost exclusively Catholic.

Since piety was an element of this model, the women often have a rosary or a book (evidently a prayer book) in their hands. Women's piety and Christian virtues were also emphasized in epitaphs, as a rule in a general way. Katarzyna Mokronowska *verae erga deum pietatis professione in morbo primum lethali illustrata diuturnum errorem paenitentiae fervore, quantum potuit compensavit*<sup>49</sup>. The plaque to Jadwiga Sierakowska, née Modliszewska, installed by her daughter, Regina Szczawińska in the parish church at Lubotyń in 1640, calls the deceased woman *femina religiosissima*<sup>50</sup>. Charity, help given to the poor and the Church were often mentioned among the merits and virtues of the deceased women.

The epitaph of Marianna Wilczewska explains why the nuns of the order of St. Clare of Chęciny erected the tombstone:

By the alms she gave to the poor generously  
She did indeed help this convent enormously<sup>51</sup>.

Zofia Czechowska, wife of the starosta of Klecko, is described in the epitaph placed by her husband on her sepulchre in the Kielce collegiate church (about 1630) as "mother of the poor"<sup>52</sup>. Krystyna Opacka throughout her life *semper in charitate tam erga pauperes quam amicos floruit*<sup>53</sup>. Eleonora Katarzyna Tęgoborska shone with piety and charity and was called *mater*

<sup>46</sup> Cf. M. Gutkowska-Rychlewska, *Historia ubiorów (The History of Garments)*, Wrocław 1968, pp. 423–436, 529–541; H. Kozakiewiczowa, *op. cit.*, pp. 56–59, 112, 130, 132, 141–142, 159, 169–175.

<sup>47</sup> *KZab*, II, p. 8, fig. 546; *KZab*, III, No. 4, p. 65, fig. 119; *KZab*, III, No. 7, p. 45, fig. 120.

<sup>48</sup> *KZab*, III, No. 9, p. 2, fig. 212.

<sup>49</sup> *CIP* IV/1, No. 56 (about 1605).

<sup>50</sup> *CIP* IV/1, No. 94.

<sup>51</sup> *CIP* I/1, No. 37.

<sup>52</sup> *KZab*, III, No. 4, p. 29; *CIP* I/1, No. 64.

<sup>53</sup> *KZab*, III, No. 4, p. 5; *CIP* I/2, No. 11.

*pauperum*<sup>54</sup>. Zofia Jawornicka, deceased in 1660, *erga religiosos et pauperes Christi quasi ipsa aiebat fovebat liberalis benefactrix*<sup>55</sup>.

Some inscriptions present a full picture of the Sarmatian matron, enumerating all the characteristics of the pattern. In the parish church at Lisów one can see the sepulchre of Małgorzata Jawornicka of Morawica, widow of Dobrogost Jawornicki, erected after 1621. Jawornicka was an unknown untitled person, probably a common noblewoman. According to a panegyric epitaph, she was "steadfast in the holy Catholic faith, diligent and religious in the upbringing of her children, she was a woman of great piety, modesty, kindness, exceptional love for everybody, kindness to her servants, magnanimity to the poor and she also had other great virtues"<sup>56</sup>. Barbara Łajszczewska, *née* Dunin, deceased in 1645, wife of the castellan of Sochaczew, is described as follows on the epitaph in the collegiate church in Łowicz: *Quae in deum cultu, in amicos benevolentia, in maritum observantia, matronali prudentia, morum, comitate, insignis... consors maritum, mater liberos*<sup>57</sup>.

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The old Polish family pattern (a patrilineal, patriarchal conjugal family with many children and as a rule a nuclear family) and the pattern of woman in the family (pious, obedient to the husband, motherly, protectress of the poor, but also hardworking, thrifty and resourceful) elements of which have been presented above on the basis of moralizing literature, home guide-books and panegyric epitaphs, were formed at the time when the basic principles of a modern family were being shaped in Western Europe. The West European principles were formed under a strong pressure of reality, i.e. demographic growth, the economic changes taking place in those days and changing social structures, and also the ideological currents of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, especially the resolutions of the Council of Trent, which placed the institution of marriage under strict ecclesiastic control<sup>58</sup>. In 16th and especially 17th and 18th century Poland, where the central authority and the efficiency of the state were declining, a country with a heterogeneous population in which social ties were weak or were

<sup>54</sup> See fn. 28.

<sup>55</sup> *KZab.* III, No. 1, p. 35; *CIP* V/3, No. 64.

<sup>56</sup> J. Wiśniewski, *Historyczny opis kościołów, miast, zabytków i pamiątek w Stopnickiem (An Historical Description of Churches, Towns, Historical Treasures and Relics in the Stopnica Region)*, Mariówka 1929, p. 158; *CIP* V/3, No. 59.

<sup>57</sup> *KZab.* II, p. 130; *CIP* V/2, No. 26.

<sup>58</sup> J. Bossy, *The Counter-Reformation and the People of Catholic Europe*, "Past and Present" No. 47, 1970, pp. 51–70; J. Goody, *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe*, Cambridge 1983, pp. 148–149, 152, 157–182; M. Segalen, *Die Familie. Geschichte, Soziologie, Anthropologie*, Frankfurt/Main 1990, pp. 140–141.

disappearing, the role of the family as the basic social tie replacing, but also bursting, other forms of social ties, assumed an exceptionally great importance. A nobleman's or a magnate's family was not only performing its basic functions, that is, procreation, the upbringing of children, the continuation of the species, and economic functions (management of the family enterprise), but also had to replace, if it did not oust them, institutions of public life which did not exist or were inadequate; thus, it performed political functions, carried out social work, cultivated historical traditions, not only family traditions but also national ones. Hence the great importance of the patterns propagated in this field. It is significant that in their proposals moralizers cared little about love between the spouses, about the compatibility of their characters and predilections. Instead, they focused on the wife's obedience to the husband and her housekeeping talents. In a situation where illegitimate children were not recognized, marriage was treated instrumentally as the only desirable way of procreation and a means preventing fornication. The prevention of fornication was mentioned by all moralizers, also by Skarga, who was the only author not to regard marriage as an adequate guarantee of man's moral conduct.

These patterns were created almost exclusively by men and representatives of the Church; they were formulated in the interest of the Church and of the sterner sex and reflected their interests. All the old Polish works quoted above were written by men and it is men who, as a rule, edited and founded epitaphs. Even if a tombstone or a sepulchre was erected by a woman (e.g. by a daughter to her mother), the epitaph was in keeping with the binding convention. When a woman herself took the pen in her hand, as Anna Stanisławska did<sup>59</sup>, her life turned out to have been more dramatic and the idyllic picture of a nobleman's family was replaced by a woman's authentic tragedies and calamities.

Reality was different from the ideal patterns, and this is amply illustrated in old Polish diaries, chronicles, letters and law court records. The history of family patterns and model women does not belong to the sphere of reality but rather to ideology. Like every ideology, these patterns could exert an influence on everyday life and it is this aspect that should be examined<sup>60</sup>.

(Translated by Janina Dorosz)

<sup>59</sup> A. Stanisławska, *Transakcja albo Opisanie całego życia jednej sieroty przez żaloszne treny od teźże samej pisane roku 1685* (*Transaction or a Description of the Whole Life of an Orphan Written by Herself in Plaintive Laments in 1685*), ed. I. Kotowa, Kraków 1935.

<sup>60</sup> Maria Ossowska wrote of "propagated personal patterns" and "accepted patterns" (M. Ossowska, *Etos rycerski i jego odmiany* (*The Knightly Ethos and Its Variants*), Warszawa 1973, pp. 15–16. Cf. also J. Taźbir, *Wzorce osobowe szlachty* (*The Nobility's Personal Patterns*), in: *Szlaki kultury polskiej*, Warszawa 1986, p. 50.