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FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN

HUMBOLDT-UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN

Family and Individual Strategies of Husband and Wife in Rural Lithuania, 1864–1904

Vilana Pilinkaite-Sotirovic

This article deals with the specific family and individual member strategies in a household in the second half of nineteenth century Lithuania and shows that husband and wife marital relationships should be conceived not only as the result of ideology, but as a potential indicator of cultural, economic, and social factors. An investigation of the daily practices among emancipated peasants demonstrates that the economic needs of everyday life to a great extent shaped the common family strategies of sustenance and survival. The analysis suggests that both spouses typically viewed the outside world as a family unit. At the same time husband and wife had different and often contradictory attitudes towards each other and chose individual strategies in order to enhance their respective autonomy. This article argues that female strategies involved a complex linkage of accepting, evading and resenting husbands' dominance, while male strategies were always based on seeking control over women.

During the past three decades much discussion has focused on interpretations of modern romanticized husband-wife relationships within families, on the one hand,[1] and on economic or cultural issues of family strategies in history, on the other.[2] Firstly, historical research on the so-called "modern western" family has been seen to run the gamut of evolution to evolve from economic, interest-based family relationships to emotional, affective alliances. The rising ideals of the "modern" family in terms of emotional bonding, affective love and domesticity were inbuilt in research on the evolutionary change of society and myth of modernization.[3] This simplistic model of modernization has been adap-

1 A brief outline on a more important debates in the vast and contentious historical literature on love vgl. Linda-Anne Rebhun, The Heart is unknown country. Love in the Changing Economy of Northeast Brazil, Stanford 1999, 91–96.

2 A review on international historiography on family strategies vgl. Tamara K. Hareven, "The History of the Family and the Complexity of Social Change", in: American Historical Review, 96 (1991), 95–124.

3 For critical overview vgl. Jack Goody, The European Family. An Historico-Anthropological Essay, Oxford 2000, 148–155; David W. Sabean, Property, Production and Family in Neckerhousen, 1700–1870, Cambridge 1990, 7–36.

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ted by Lithuanian family historiography to investigate the change of the traditional family in nineteenth century Lithuania.[4]

Secondly the concept of a family strategy was used to show the active role of families in reframing external constraints and opportunities and thus directing social and economic change on a micro level.[5] American historian Tamara Hareven[6] has recently drawn attention to the interaction of economic exigencies and cultural values in order to reflect on the significance of cultural values both of the dominant culture and of family's own in guiding family strategies. These values, however, may sometimes be in conflict with the more direct economic needs of the family and social interests of the individuals. As Michiel Baud argues, the family is "social institution with tensions and contradictions. It brings together ... two kinship networks with different interests and potential conflicts".[7] This approach suggests investigating other perspectives in family strategy that will reveal individual choices and options.

An examination of the incidences of original conflicts between husband and wife before the Telsiai (Samogitian) Bishopric Catholic Consistory court[8] and civil courts[9] suggests that although individual choices of behaviour may have been limited and un-

4 The preoccupation of Lithuanian historiographers with development towards capitalism and become a modern nation in the nineteenth and beginning of twentieth century largely confined research on Lithuanian family (which is less numerous and less diverse compared to international family historiography) to the testing of conventional theories of modernisation and linearity, mutual exclusivity and uniformity of characteristics. For overview vgl. Dalia Marcinkevičienė, Vedusiųjų visuomenė: Santuoka ir skyrybos Lietuvoje XIX amžiuje – XX amžiaus pradžioje (Society of Married People: Marriage and Divorce in Lithuania in the Nineteenth and Beginning of the Twentieth Century), Vaga 1999, 27–132; Angelė Vyšniauskaitė u.a., Lietuviu šeima ir papročiai (Lithuanian Family and Customs), Mintis 1995, 105–119.

5 Vgl. Tamara Hareven, Family Time and Industrial Time: The Relationship between the Family and Work in a New England Industrial Community, New York 1982, 2–19.

6 Hareven, Family, wie Anm. 5, 123.

7 Michiel Baud, "Patriarchy and Changing Family Strategies: Class and Gender in the Dominican Republic", in: Journal of Family History 21, 4 (1997), 367–368.

8 The jurisdiction of the Catholic Church Consistory court in Lithuania was under the Telsiai (Samogitia) Bishopric. Catholic Church Consistory files on "Separation from common co-residence with a spouse" contain 564 cases on divorce and separation covering the period 1864–1904. The procedure of conflict investigation in the Consistory Court was very ponderous, and sometimes lawsuits lasted a decade or longer. Usually, the case started with the complaint of the plaintiff, a wife or a husband. Then the parish priest intervened into the conflict and call the couple trying to end the quarrels with a peace agreement. If this did not happen, the parish priest wrote a recommendation to the court for both spouses detailing their behaviour, morality and public opinion about them. The accused spouse had to explain the reasons for his/her misconduct. Both sides provided witnesses to give evidence under the oath to the ecclesiastic commission who provided their own conclusions about the spouses and define who was guilty in family disagreements. The Consistory's decision about the future of family was final. The files are preserved in the Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telsiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4 (1861–1905).

9 Few survived wives' complaints in the canton and district courts were against their husband's idleness, failure to sustain children and wasting, Kaunas District Archive in Kaunas, I–99, I–95 (1904–1913); Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Vilnius Court Palace, Appeal Court, F. 445 Ap. 2. (1882–1905); Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Vilnius United Civil and Criminal Court, F. 447. Ap. 2, 5, 7 (1867–1883).

attractive, through their expression, each marital partner reflected his or her personal identity and the strategic content of his or her actions. Though courts are concerned with the unusual and extraordinary situation in a family, the conflicts, linked together with fragments of disputes on marital relations among Lithuanian publicists and writers of the time, allow for a reconstruction of their everyday reality in Lithuania in the second half of the nineteenth century. Every recorded case in the Consistory court represents those conflicts that resisted a solution at household level and shows a longer history of marital problems. The composition analysis of the pattern of marital conflict provides insights into the motivation of a husband and wife, how they attempted to reach their goals, and in what terms they expressed these goals.

Forces and Institutions that Shaped Family Life in Lithuanian Countryside

The period from 1864 to 1904 is considered here as a period of slow and economic change after the Abolition of Serfdom in 1861, with relatively little internal and external turmoil in societal development. In this period, Lithuania was part of the geographical-administrative North Western region of the Russian Empire.[10] 73.4 % of the total population were peasants, lived in villages, cultivated middle-size plots and derived most of their support from agriculture.[11] In the period the family was the fundamental institution in rural Lithuania, fulfilling its welfare and social functions and providing all available support. The household lists illustrate that the majority of heads of households were married.[12] Petitions of villagers for a quick marriage or remarriage before the agricultural season indicate the difficulties in running a farm without a spouse.[13] Married couples formed individual households and lived separately from their parents (including parents in-law) and siblings (and in-laws), but continued to live in close proximity to their parents, adult married and

10 Officially Lithuania as political-administrative unit did not exist after the third partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1795. Territory of the present Lithuania was divided into provinces: Vilnius province, Augustavas province and Kaunas Province, which boundaries almost corresponded to the present-day Lithuania except 3 districts of Vilnius Province. Ethnically, Kaunas Province was mainly settled by Lithuanians, and together with three districts of Vilnius province is considered as present-day Lithuania in Lithuanian historiography. The article follows this historiographic tradition.

11 Vgl. Leonas Mulevičius, "Agrarinis klausimas Lietuvoje 1905 metų revoliucijos išvakarėse" (Agrarian Question in Lithuania before the 1905 Revolution), in: Lietuvos Istorijos Metrastis, 1975 metai 1976, 5–21.

12 Analysis of sample of 202 households of Kaunas Province in this work have provided evidence that 165 heads were married, 13 – single, 24 – widowed. Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Population Census, F. 768. Ap.1. B. 20, 21, 35, 38, 40, 43, 45 – my calculations.

13 Matrimonial materials of the population of Kaunas Province, 1864–1899. Petitions of the villagers to the bishop for permissions to marry without the church ceremonies. Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Bishops' Board of Samogitian Bishopric, F. 1671. Ap. 4. B. 263. L.182 (1867–1899); Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Bishops' Board of Samogitian Bishopric,. F. 1671. Ap. 4. B. 266. L. 12; 26, 125, 188; Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Bishops' Board of Samogitian Bishopric, F. 1671. Ap. 4. B. 265. L. 178, 287; Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Bishops' Board of Samogitian Bishopric, F. 1671. Ap. 4. B. 264. L. 281, 546; Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Bishops' Board of Samogitian Bishopric, F. 1671. Ap. 4. B. 268. L. 309.

unmarried children and constantly maintained ties with close kin beyond the household. One case, for example, illustrates that the wife's brother helped his sister and her family giving them a small plot of land in his estate so that they could cultivate it and survive. When the sister's husband neither worked nor maintained his family, but wasted all her property and constantly beat her, she left him and went to her mother who lived in a neighbouring village.[14] A frequent practice was that married women gave birth to children in their parental house, which was either in the same village or in a close neighbouring location.[15] Help and calculations were closely interwoven through various material and emotional exchanges between households.

The Catholic Church had a great impact on Lithuanian family life. Statistical data in the nineteenth century indicates that 76.6 percent of the total population in Lithuania were Catholics.[16] Catholic clergy preached Christian family ideals and regulated matrimonial and familial affairs of ordinary parishioners. The church administration of familial affairs among the majority of the population in rural Lithuania is revealed through sermons in the Lithuanian language. These surviving sermons provide evidence that people's minds were constructed in terms of social and gender hierarchies: the dominance of rich, man and master and the subordination of poor, women and servants.[17] In some sermons the priests clearly stated that if a woman did not recognise her husband as the head of the family and attempted to exercise power over other family members against her husband's orders, she should be considered as guilty.[18] In another sermon, for example, the priest expressed that hierarchical relationships between superior and inferior (husband-wife, parent-child and master-servant) meant benefits and prosperity for both of them. A master ruled, administered and managed his servants, their work and obligations in the same way that the parents did for their children and husbands for their wives. Servants, children and wives in return linked their fate, obeyed and respected their superiors.[19] As such this ideology symbolised the "moral economy" of the Lithuanian countryside, guar-

14 Vgl. Veronika Guzas v. Francas Guzas, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telsiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, LVIA. F. 669. Ap. 4. B. 1412. L. 1, 4 (1903).

15 Vgl. Juozas Milasevskis v. Aleksandra Milasevska, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telsiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4 F. 669. Ap. 4. B. 3496. L. 1 (1898–1899); Ona Malicka v. Jeronimas Malickis, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telsiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. B. 3248. L. 1 (1897–1898).

16 Vgl. Rimantas Vebra, Lietuviu visuomene XIX a. antrojoje puseje (Lithuanian Society in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century), Vilnius 1990, 60–61.

17 Vilnius University Library, Manuscript Department in Vilnius, Sermons in Lithuanian language F. 1. C. 218. Sermon 3 (1887–1893).

18 Vgl. Kiprijonas Lukauskas, Pamokslai (Sermons), compiled by Juozas Karaciejus, Vilnius, Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidykla 1996, 188.

19 This attitude is frequently repeated in the sermons in the period under study. Vilnius University Library, Manuscript Department in Vilnius , Sermons in Lithuanian language F. 1. C. 218. Sermon 3; Vilnius University Library, Manuscript Department in Vilnius , Sermons in Lithuanian language, F. 1. D.1243. L. 440–447; Vilnius University Library, Manuscript Department in Vilnius , Sermons in Lithuanian language, F. 1. D. 1245. L. 19–25.

anteed the material survival of families, and confirmed men's dominant position within peasant society. A woman by accepting male dominance demonstrated her respectability and thus acquired the right to act autonomously within her own domain, more specifically, the household.

These ideas generally created the framework for behaviour for ordinary people in a family and showed the model of a society in which functions were strictly delineated along gender lines. The mutual duties of husband and wife thoroughly described in the church sermons were presented as the basis of family order and order in the community. The dominant construction of behaviour, however, was not uncontested in daily practices by marital spouses, as shown below, and cultural subordination of individuals, particularly female, was mitigated by social opportunities.

Incidences of Marital Conflicts

Resolution of marital discords remained under the jurisdiction of the Catholic Church and Canon laws, and their ponderous application discouraged frequent appearance at the Consistory court.[20] The Church held "marriage as a sacrament established by God Himself from time immemorial" and could annul marriages for procedural or similar defects. Though Russian Imperial Authorities introduced civil laws on Marriage (1836) and Divorce for Orthodox and non-Orthodox population, these laws preserved the authority of the church to regulate the "spiritual domain", which included the family. Secular civil courts could dealt with any secular questions of a family, particularly the property division between the divorced.[21] This church policy ran counter to the dominant trends at this time in Western Europe and the United States, where secular authorities increased their control over divorce in which in most countries the grounds for divorce began steadily to expand.[22]

An analysis of divorce litigation reveals certain trends that can help to reconstruct the pattern of marital conflicts in rural Lithuania. The number of spouses obtaining divorce remained relatively small from 1864 to 1904, fluctuating between eleven and seventeen per year. The plaintiff in the majority of cases was a wife. The 564 cases under review provide evidence that wives (356) were ready to go to the court more than twice as often as husbands (164).[23] The timing of marital conflicts before the court demonstrates that cou-

20 Vgl. Marcinkevičienė, Vedusiųjų visuomenė, wie Anm. 4, 33–49.

21 Vgl. Marcinkevičienė, Vedusiųjų visuomenė, wie Anm. 4, 33–45, 134–135. Similarly, Orthodox Church preserved its jurisdiction over the subjects of the Russian Empire where majority population were Orthodox. For detail description on Orthodox Church regulation in Russia vgl. William Wagner, Marriage, Property and Law in Imperial Russia, Oxford 1994, 67–69.

22 Vgl. Roderick Phillips, Putting Asunder: A History of Divorce in Western Society, Cambridge 1988, 132–135, 154–160, 176–276; Wagner, marriage, wie Anm. 21, 69.

23 Vgl. Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telsiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. – my calculations. Among 564 total complaints, there are 44 cases when the parents or relatives of a spouse or in two cases even a priest applied to the court on behalf of plaintiff, typically the wife.

ples' first appearance before the court most frequently occurred within the first five years of their marriage.[24] Bearing in mind that marriage age tended to be 25-35 for men and 21-25 for women,[25] it is likely that young and physically strong women with or without small children more often relied on the courts to resolve their marital disagreements and to help them to seek various alternatives to survive, while, as divorce litigation and other sources show, women in their older years chose to cohabit with their adult children rather than seek formal separation. In one case, for example, a husband complained that his wife openly expressed that her married son took better care of her than her husband and therefore she refused to return to her husband's house.[26]

Husband and Wife's Expectations and Obligations in Rural Environment

Demands for divorce and separation indicate a serious degree of marital conflict, and indicate whether or not the couple was willing to continue in their marriage. From a total of 564, there were 124 petitions for divorce, 349 for separation and 91 fixing the conflict without a request to dissolve the marriage.[27] Though these demands for divorce or separation provide evidence of formal breach of Canon law,[28] it is also possible to analyze specific charges between men and women that reveal how their duties and roles were delineated along gender and social lines. Table 1 shows the distribution of specific demands between spouses and indicates what they expected of each other.

Table 1 shows the different concerns of spouses in daily routines and suggests that obligations were expected to be fulfilled. Men frequently requested their wives' return (34) or permission for remarriage (18), explaining this by their need for a wife-mistress for the farm, without whom they would suffer economically. In one case, for example, a husband requested to a condemnation of his wife for her abandonment of husband, children and household duties, because such behaviour brought poverty and misfortune to the family. He asked the court to remind the wife of her duties and convince her to live with him.[29]

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24 Vgl. Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telsiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4 – my calculations. The most frequently (188 cases) spouses appeared before the Consistory court between first and fifth year of their marriage

25 On late ages at marriage vgl. Marcinkevičienė, Vedusiųjų visuomenė, wie Anm. 4, 70–71.

26 Vgl. Elena Blesmanovic v. Juozas Blesmanovic, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telsiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. B. 3936. L. 8–9 (1903). For similar case vgl. Karolina Boreiko v. Petras Boreiko, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telsiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. B. 3233. L.1 (1897–1911).

27 Vgl. Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telsiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. – my calculations.

28 Vgl. Jonas Sideravičius, "Teisinis santuokos reguliavimas buržuazinėje Lietuvoje: Santuokos sudarymo absoliutinės materialinės sąlygos" (Legal Regulation of Marriage Institution in Lithuania: Absolute Material Conditions of Formation of Family), LTSR Mokslų Akademijos Darbai (Publications of Academy of Science), ser. A, vol. 2, 75 (1981), 47–48. Zakony o razvode provoslavnogo i nepravoslavnogo ispovedaniija (Laws on Divorce of Orthodox and Non-Orthodox Confessions), Moskva 1909, 167–168.

29 Vgl. Juozas Balciunas v. Franciska Balciunas, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of

Table 1. Specific Demands by Husbands and Wives in Marital Conflict

Demands	Husbands	Wives
For permission to remarry	18	17
For children's custody and sustenance	18	150
For return of a wife / husband	34	0
For condemnation of a wife / husband	39	3
For ejection of a wife / husband	1	17
For return of dot / dowry	17	80
For separate passport	0	63

Source: Lithuanian State Historical Archive, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telsiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric

The necessity of wife, without whom everyday life routines in agricultural surroundings could hardly be carried out, was also mentioned in matrimonial documents for permission to marry without banns in the church.[30] Women were much less concerned about remarriage (17) or condemnation (3) and did not request their husbands to return (0). The wording of wives' concerns was formulated to show their husbands' abuse and abandonment of duties to the family. Women often described their husbands as troublemakers, incompetent to support family and dangerous for a wife and children. Women's specific demands illustrate different concerns about their future resources and sustenance for themselves and their children (150), and justified their claims for autonomous actions (63 requests for separate passport). Passports obtained for free residence would grant women a considerable degree of independence.

Generally when spouses argued about duties, labour and resources the court cases provide evidence of what was considered the normal practice, when husbands and wives agreed on their strategies and acted, so to say, as one. In one couple, for example, spouses consulted each other about when to go to the market, what products to sell, and what goods to buy for the children.[31] In another case, both spouses emphasized that their principal purpose was raising the children, accumulating property and deciding on economic issues and behaviour in their village.[32] A man always talked as the master of the family and a wife rendered obedience and respect to her husband showing the "pro-

Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telsiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. B. 435. L. 2–3 (1866–1867).

30 Petitions to the bishop of Telsiai bishopric. Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Bishops' Board of Samogitian Bishopric, F. 1671. Ap. 4. B. 264. L.18 (1871); B. 265. L. 238, L. 628 (1876), B. 266. L. 125. L. 305 (1877) B. 268. L. 309. L. 506–508 (1883–1884).

31 Vgl. Juozas Balciunas v. Franciska Balciunas, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telšiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. B. 435. L.1 (1866–1867). This case described the family ideal situation several years immediately after marriage.

32 Vgl. Beata Liodzinska v. Pranas Liodzinski, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telšiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. B. 1106. L. 4 (1872–1876).

per conduct of the family" towards their children, servants and the whole village community.[33] Though these cases indicate complaints about husbands' misconduct, despotism or violence towards their wives, all of these examples tend to suggest that a family could secure its livelihood when both marital spouses carried out their labour tasks and accepted their respective roles in the family.

Analysis of specific demands suggests a more complex picture of hierarchical principles of the family in daily practices. The farm basically was under a man's control. The important role of a wife in the household and her work in the agricultural surroundings determined the specific demands of the husbands, suggesting that women were solely responsible for the housework, upbringing of the children and performing a great deal of work in domestic production.[34] And a man sought to control his wife and her "autonomous" activities in order to fulfill his obligations as the head and restrict possible disobedience to his authority.[35] In marital relations, husbands' expectation that their wives would obey them was fulfilled so long as the husband completed his obligation to maintain the family.

Women's Individual Choices in the Family

Data in divorce litigation indicate the formulation of individual women's strategies as they were interwoven into a reciprocal understanding of responsibility and respectability. When a husband failed to carry out his obligation of family maintenance, women chose ways to complete these obligations independently. They requested separate passports for free residence that provided women with the possibility for earning an income for everyday needs.[36] One wife, for example, complained that her drunkard husband's beatings would ruin her physical strength and the future of the family, and requested a separation in order to earn money independently.[37] Presenting their harsh situations in the family, when

33 Žemaitė (pseud.), Gera galva, in: Raštai, 3, Vilnius: Valstybine grozines literaturos leidykla, 1948, 108–120.

34 Vgl. Anele Bogdanoviceva v. Motiejus Bogdanovic, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telšiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. B. 438. L. 6–7 (1866–1867); Juzefa Rimkeviceva v. Marijonas Rimkevic. Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telšiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. B. 1021. L. 2–3 (1871–1879).

35 In one case, for example, the husband, Boleslov Gonen, accused his wife Vanda for ignoring his advice in upbringing children, but the wife defended herself saying that the upbringing and education of children is her exclusive duty, and the husband had to give enough resources for that purpose. Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telšiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. B. 3850. L .6–7 (1902–1905).

36 According to Imperial legal regulations, a wife did not have her separate passport and was included in her husband's document. She could not live, work or migrate to any other districit, parish or province without her husband's permission. Otherwise, she was considered living illegally. Marcinkevičienė, Vedusiųjų visuomenė, wie Anm. 4, 149.

37 Vgl. Adele Kovalska v. Liudvikas Kovalskis, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telšiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. B. 578. L.1–2 (1867).

husbands squandered income in drinks, women always showed that they would rather spend money or other resources for their children's needs. A wife, for example, resented her husband's accusations of stealing and explained that she took a piece of bread without her husband's permission only for their children's consumption.[38] Clean, healthy and properly dressed children were to a great degree indicative of their parents' reputation. The nineteenth century literature illustrates cases in which women might choose their own road because her obligation for child care was interwoven into the respectability of her family. In one novel, for example, the wife sold rye and wheat without her husband's knowledge in order to buy new shoes and clothes for the children. She offered as a motive the attempt to stop criticism of her stingy husband's improper management of domestic affairs and reduce gossip in the village community about her husband's inability to provide resources for the family's needs.[39] These instances suggest that female individual choices may have been imposed by hegemonic patriarchal ideology, but partly they were transformed into an instrument of personal decisions.

Types and distribution of the specific demands between husbands and wives in divorce litigation and various options for their behaviour in everyday life suggest different understandings of hierarchical relationships between spouses. Wives expected their husbands to carry out their duties and to provide sustenance, but when husbands drank and wasted family resources, this obligation to women was most likely undermined. Thus women sought alternative resources for survival. Evidence shows that frequently they returned to their parental house and worked on their farms, or received parental support in their search for employment.[40] One wife, for instance, requested a passport because her husband was an idle and dissolute man, while her father found her a position as a servant in another district, thus, enabling her to secure her future without her husband.[41] Many married women sought support or protection in the parental house against misbehavior of their husbands. In one case, a wife left for her parental house to escape her husband's cruelties and violence.[42] Brothers, sisters, uncles and even in-laws supported

38 Vgl. Aloyzas Krukovskis v. Barbora Krukovska, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telšiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. AP. 4. B. 445. L. 10 (1866). For similar examples vgl. Julijona Vanagel v. Stanislovas Vanagel, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telšiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. B. 2130. L. 1 (1888–1903); Ona Juvdiseris v. Juozas Judviseris, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telšiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. AP. 4. B. 3658. L. 7–8 (1900–1902).

39 Žemaitė, Gera galva, wie Anm. 33, 102–138.

40 Vgl. In 110 cases of 564 wives escaped from their husbands and returned to their parents, brothers or other close relatives. Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telšiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. – my calculations. In civil litigation similar cases are also mentioned vgl. Jokubas Lvovas v. Marija Lvovas, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telšiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 447. Ap. 13. B. 2869. L.1–3 (1878).

41 Vgl. Tekle Skrebalovic v. Vincas Skrebalovic, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telšiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. B. 1339. L. 1–3 (1875–1878).

42 Vgl. Apolonija Sluto v. Kazimieras Sluto, Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telšiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. B. 3742. L.1 (1901).

married women against the violence of drunkard husbands.[43] In cases of heavy drinking and damage to family prosperity, the church and civil courts might also support women.[44] When a wife's parents, relatives or formal institutions spoke on behalf of women, this considerably diminished the husband's authority. Women would normally resort to an alternative patriarchal network that allowed them, though within certain limits, to act individually.

The article suggests a high degree of complexity in the relationships between husband and wife, in which they were both partners and rivals when negotiating their rights and duties, and expressing their expectations and sentiments. In examining marital relationships the focus of most historians' attention has remained on the issues of how patriarchal order worked and whether love and devotion softened and modified men's patriarchal authority over women in nineteenth century villages. In rural Lithuania through the second half of the nineteenth century, the alliance formed between husband and wife demonstrates that spouses' relationships were hierarchically structured on the one hand, but complementary, on the other. Though the dominant culture legitimized inequality and subordination in husband-wife bonds and prescribed reciprocal behaviour in terms of exchanging obedience in return for protection and welfare, there was some space for women to evade or counter patriarchal dominance. Women could hardly escape the repressive control of a husband by choosing any other way than placing themselves under the control of other men, typically their fathers or brothers. While husbands sought control and authority, particularly over the wife, women could maintain their own economic networks by earning independently and by relying on their blood male kin for support that even though this might negatively effect their husband's authority. The findings with regard to mitigating power relationships may suggest new analytical emphasis on the merging of individual's economic, emotional and social interests.

43 In 75 cases married women received support from their parents, in 22 cases – from their brothers, 3 times – from sisters and brothers-in law, 8 times – from uncles, and twice from parents-in law. In contrast, husbands behaved violently and cruelly against their wife and her relatives, and in very few cases left to their parents or other relatives (in one case he left to the sister). Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius, Collection of Ecclesiastic Consistory Court of Telšiai (Samogitian) Roman Catholic Bishopric, F. 669. Ap. 4. – my calculations.

44 Vgl. Rita Strazdūnaitė, "Valstiečių kasos ir teismai Lietuvoje XIX a. pirmoje pusėj" (Peasant Fisc and Courts in Lithuania in the Nineteenth Century), LTSR Mokslų Akademijos Darba (Publications of Academy of Science), ser. A, vol. 1 (1959), 5–9.