

**MARRIAGE, INHERITANCE, AND  
FAMILY DISCORD:  
FRENCH ELITE AND THE TRANSFORMATION  
OF THE POLISH SZLACHTA**

by  
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[M. Damon to M. Wisdom] As to philosophy, you should know that our present age is one of enlightenment. Along with English frock coats, philosophy has come into vogue. In the boudoirs of the most fashionable ladies, right next to embroidery hoops and face powder you will find volumes of M. Rousseau, the philosophical works of Voltaire, and other writings of that sort.<sup>1</sup>

—Ignacy Krasicki (1776)

Several important themes permeate Monsieur Damon's instructions to his aristocratic pupil. Most significant is not that Poland was a part of the general European Enlightenment, but that Polish enlightened thought resided primarily within "fashionable" elite circles and was ultimately based on the writings of the French *philosophes*. The wholesale acceptance of French culture brought a clear and conscious change to the *szlachta*'s traditionally *Sarmatian* character, while at the same time the *szlachta* family was unconsciously transformed by the more subtle Western notions of kinship and affective individualism, a process that culminated with the reign of the last *enlightened despot*—Napoleon Bonaparte.<sup>2</sup> The *mentalité* of the Polish nobility was recast in the eighteenth century as its membership embraced selectively certain aspects of both the Enlightenment and *ancien régime* France. The piecemeal acceptance of these ideas by the traditionally *Sarmatian* nobility led to the evolution of an ideology resembling *Enlightened Sarmatianism*—one that embraced formal education, individualism, and Western appearance, which coexisted with agrarianism, anti-urbanism, and devotion to the Church.<sup>3</sup>

Once again the *szlachta* displayed its paradoxical nature by

choosing to pursue the advantageous portions of Western culture while retaining many aspects of their Polish heritage. Within elite Polish society, Enlightenment learning thus became merely a vehicle for the transmission of *ancien régime* culture into aristocratic Polish society. The eighteenth-century intellectual conduit between France and Poland fostered a stratification of elite society through increasingly selective marriage and inheritance patterns.<sup>4</sup> Surprisingly, these conservative social arrangements, which were typically associated with the structured early modern nobility, were later reinforced as enlightened Habsburg governors moved to catalogue the partitioned Galician nobility using means more closely resembling *ancien régime* France than the reformed Habsburg Empire.

Ironically, the *szlachta's* assimilation of traditional French high culture, even through its Enlightenment filter, also introduced the modern notions of affective individualism and the community oriented nuclear family into elite Polish society. The *szlachta* was therefore caught in the conflict between the conventional familial structures of early modern Poland and the developing patterns of modern Europe. Historically, the successful joining of two elite houses through marriage had been very important and often meant the future prosperity of an entire noble line. With this in mind, *szlachta* children typically “served their families by surviving, marrying well, bearing children, and increasing family honor and wealth.”<sup>5</sup> In the eighteenth century, however, traditional bonds of the patriarchal kin-group deteriorated as Polish elites assimilated the Western concept of individualism. Loosely defined, affective individualism changed family life by putting more emphasis on the emotional desires of individual family members and by binding families together with emotional concerns rather than the customary parental discipline.<sup>6</sup> Lawrence Stone has revealed that a new system of familial values emerged in late-seventeenth and eighteenth century Western Europe, specifically in England. In the newly evolved structure “marriage ceased to be mainly an artificial but necessary constraint placed upon man’s otherwise unbridled lust, and became instead a prime source of personal pleasure, both emotional and sexual.”<sup>7</sup> The Enlightenment transmission of individualism to Eastern Europe led to the decline of established familial patterns as an ever increasing number of aristocratic divorces

plagued eighteenth century Poland.<sup>8</sup>

Initially, the close cultural bond between Poland and France was further cemented in the early-eighteenth century by the marriage of Princess Maria Leszczyńska and King Louis XV of France.<sup>9</sup> This union, coupled with the expulsion of Poland's King Stanisław Leszczyński, provided an opportunity for the enlightened education of large numbers of Polish courtiers serving in France. The exiled court of King Leszczyński at Lunéville managed to act as an early conduit for the dissemination of French ideas among elite Polish society.<sup>10</sup> The *szlachta* thus began its transformation in the early-eighteenth century as the traditions of the elite kin group waned under the influence of both French culture and enlightenment thought.

The anti-intellectual and anti-Western elements of *Sarmatianism* were the first casualties of the Polish Enlightenment. A new and progressive view of education and the West emerged at the highest levels of the Polish aristocracy and slowly trickled down into the lower levels of the *szlachta*. Ironically, the rural eastern territories of *Lubelszczyzna* produced two of the most dynamic advocates of early reform—Prince Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski and Ordynat Andrzej Zamoyski. The two families ultimately made common cause in the reform effort by actively encouraging the education of noble children, to which the Zamoyski family contributed directly by supporting the progressive Zamoyski Academy for the education of noble children. These early efforts by regional magnates helped clear the way for later changes in elite society and made Western culture fashionable for the *szlachta* family. By the mid-eighteenth century, both families had begun the westernization of their estates by abandoning the traditional costumes associated with *Sarmatism* (the *Kontusz*) and opening their homes to non-Polish ideas.<sup>11</sup> A subsequent inventory of the Czartoryski's palace in Puławy revealed rooms filled with fine French and English furnishings as well as walls covered with the elegant portraits of Henri IV, Louis XIII, and Mary Stuart to only name a few.<sup>12</sup>

Recent research has shown that by the end of the eighteenth century the vast majority of Polish aristocrats had similarly rejected the *Kontusz* and “the mustachioed *Sarmatian* style had assumed a derisive provincial connotation.”<sup>13</sup> Julian Malinowski of Wieniawa,

a landowner from the Lublin region, serves as an excellent example of enlightenment-influenced elite. A *post-mortum* inventory of his estate in 1800 reveals an appropriately furnished home, some eight *Kontusz*, references to farm implements and livestock, and a rather large collection of books and pamphlets. At first glance the estate's contents appear to be nothing more than a reflection of the persistence of traditional noble values; however, the subject matter of Malinowski's library reveals his interest in Western culture. True, the bulk of his collection centered on various political histories of eighteenth-century Poland (e.g. the partitions, constitutionalism, and the peasant question), but he also held volumes on the general political history of Europe, a Polish-German dictionary, and a German grammar book. The existence of eight *Kontusz* also suggests the owner's lingering fascination with past traditions; however, given the widespread rejection of the *Kontusz* and the fact that only one of the eight outfits inventoried remained in good repair, it is likely that Malinowski had long since moved most of these symbols of *Sarmatianism* to the back of his closet.<sup>14</sup> Julian Malinowski serves as a model of the apparent dualism within the reformed Polish noble; he maintained his rural agrarianism and a proper relationship with the Church (the Black Madonna of Czêstochowa was the only painting catalogued by the estate), but also looked past his xenophobic and anti-intellectual *Sarmatian* roots to read about other cultures.<sup>15</sup>

The estate of Julian Malinowski was just one example of widespread change; ultimately enlightenment ideas and values permeated throughout much of the elite society of *Lubelszczyzna*. The respectable village estate of Adam Moœcicki left his heirs a tidy sum in 1799, but only one threadbare *Kontusz*, two books of law, and the customary painting of the Virgin Mary of Czêstochowa.<sup>16</sup> By comparison the home of Ignacy Hryniewiecki stands in sharp contrast with those of the above mentioned elites. Oddly enough, the wealthy Hryniewiecki's detailed final testament in 1803 mentions no *Kontusz*, no books, and no ties with Roman Catholicism. His last will however, does serve as confirmation of his infatuation with the West because his home was filled with Western curiosities (e.g. Spanish and Saxon paintings, French and Spanish pistols, Western clothing and household objects). The complete absence of the *Kontusz* and religious objects, coupled

with the presence of numerous Western goods and the appearance of French language phrases within the testament itself serve notice of the dramatic shift within the aristocratic *mentalité* of the Department Lubelski.<sup>17</sup>

The noticeably French influence on noble thought had almost completely transformed aristocratic Polish society before the arrival of Napoleon. Well before the arrival of French troops in the Department Lubelski in 1809, all *szlachta* of significant standing spoke and wrote in the French language. The personal notebooks and albums of the Breza family, for example, indicate a real appreciation of the French Enlightenment, since the pages of their late-eighteenth century journals are almost completely filled with transcriptions of the works of Rousseau, Voltaire, and Montesquieu, among others. Under the Duchy of Warsaw French elite culture flourished still further as virtually all Polish aristocrats began to write poetry, take personal notes, and read political treatises in French rather than their native Polish.<sup>18</sup>

French culture, especially the imperial variety, soon spread even into the lower ranks of the *szlachta*. On the eve of Austria's defeat in 1809 Rudolph Nowicki, an aristocrat of only average means, submitted for the Austrian *récherches* a very unique and obviously French-style rendering of his family's noble crest. The Nowicki family's coat of arms was placed on a grassy landscape with a Napoleonic background that featured six blue, white, and red flags, two pair of crossed cannons, two stacks of cannonballs, two drums, and a prominently placed pair of French cavalry sabers.<sup>19</sup> Clearly, Nowicki and other members of the lower nobility sought the approval of their social superiors; thus they accepted the cultural leadership of the upper nobility by reacting favorably to the spread of French culture and seeking to identify themselves with it.

The acceptance of these Western concepts at the same time served to reinforce the traditional rituals of local aristocratic families. The heads of noble households typically worked quickly after the birth of a child to authenticate its noble status, usually choosing the infant's christening record to confirm noble birth. Some seventy-five aristocratic baptismal certificates surveyed between the years 1797 and 1810 confirm that the vast majority of regional christening records

indicate the nobility of the parents, often the elite status of the child's godparents, and occasionally even the inheritable properties of the child's family.<sup>20</sup> In this manner the *szlachta* of the Department Lubelski clung to their aristocratic roots and used the implicit authority of the Roman Catholic Church to establish officially the noble credentials of their sons and daughters. This practice gained strength and added meaning over the course of the eighteenth century, as the theoretical equality of all *Sarmatian* nobles collapsed before the trend toward a well defined and hierarchical elite estate along Western European lines. This method of confirming a family's noble status also served to strengthen further the developing social barriers of the eighteenth century, both within elite Polish society and between the noble community and non-noble populace.

The stratification of the *szlachta* was intensified in the late-eighteenth century, as the aristocracy of the Department Lubelski defined itself in response to the *recherches* of the Habsburg Empire. The Austrian inquiries (*metryki*) prompted local aristocrats to defend their noble status by presenting an elaborate series of genealogies, patents of nobility, noble registries, and even the above mentioned birth certificates. The end result was a well-defined and closed hierarchical class within Polish society, an elite community that was reinforced by most of the statutes passed by the legislature of the Duchy of Warsaw. As nobles rushed to embrace the sections of the French constitution that most benefited their social order (i.e. the aristocratic composition of the government, the affirmation of the *szlachta's* ownership of traditional serf lands, and the emancipation of the Polish peasantry) they quickly regained the lost vitality of the oligarchic *Republic of Nobles*. The revolutionary ideas of *liberté, égalité, fraternité* may have assisted in creating a bourgeoisie state in France and even opened avenues for the wealthy middle class to enter the nobility, but in the Polish lands the Napoleonic period restricted access to the upper echelons of Polish society.

The Klemensowski family, a regional dynasty of notable wealth and power are a good example of the process of ossification in action. They defended their noble status before the Austrian regime through an impressive collection of genealogies and ancestral heraldry.<sup>21</sup> In 1782, the Habsburg authorities confirmed the family's nobility by

issuing a patent of nobility (*Dyplom Szlachecki*) and placing the Klemensowscy family on page 177 of volume 13 in the official Austrian book of Galician nobility.<sup>22</sup> Later, under the Napoleonic regime, these mechanisms of ennoblement became still more important as Polish aristocrats were singled out for special privileges by the Constitution of the Duchy of Warsaw. In this way the Klemensowski family found it necessary to resurrect their proofs once again and present them to Napoleonic officials in defense of their claims to elite status. These inquiries into the backgrounds of families continued well into the nineteenth century, and every major family began keeping detailed genealogies.<sup>23</sup> This pattern prevailed throughout the noble order, with even the lower rungs of the noble ladder struggling to prepare more modest and fragmentary genealogies.<sup>24</sup> Ironically, the elite circles of *Lubelszczyzna* thus became even more restricted and clearly defined as a result of their need to give an account of themselves to the enlightenment-influenced administrations of the Habsburg Empire and the Duchy of Warsaw.

The transitional and sometimes chaotic eighteenth century also witnessed the local *szlachta*, particularly wealthy magnate families, actively participating in the destruction of *Sarmatianism's* brotherhood of equal nobles by establishing very restrictive matrimonial practices. Through the increased use of selective marriage strategies leading regional dynasties preserved their social rank and lands, and thereby ultimately underscored further the growing barriers within the *szlachta*. Bogna Lorence-Kot points out the calculating nature of these elite strategies in her work on the eighteenth-century *szlachta* family:

The *szlachta* family organization compelled each member to strive for family welfare under the direction of the patriarch. Indeed, the primary duty of all individuals was to advance the family. Useful marriages as well as profitable alliances were predicated upon this goal.<sup>25</sup>

It typically became the pattern that the leading families of the Department Lubelski chose spouses almost exclusively from among their peers, thus perpetuating their traditional political, social, and economic dominance well into the nineteenth century. The two dominant families in the area, the Czartoryski and Zamoyski show

this emerging tendency very well. They began their enlightened association with the first marriage of Princess Konstancja Czartoryski to Ordynat Klemens Zamoyski in 1763. After the death of Klemens in 1767, the princess wasted little time before renewing the ties between the two great houses by marrying her former husband's uncle Ordynat Andrzej Zamoyski in 1768. The continuing alliance between the Czartoryski and Zamoyski families was then carried into the next century by Ordynat Stanisław Kostka Zamoyski marrying the sister of Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, Princess Zofia Czartoryski in 1798.<sup>26</sup> This alignment of reform-minded houses moreover allows an excellent opportunity to examine the Polish manifestation of Enlightenment thought—*Enlightened Sarmatianism*. In the eighteenth century these families openly promoted an innovative system of noble education, the opening of Polish homes to Western goods, and an enlightened answer to serfdom; however, by the turn of the century they also embraced a more traditional position of increasing noble education and Western luxury goods through the expansion of feudal dues.<sup>27</sup>

Between 1767 and 1822, these two families married exclusively within upper elite circles. Thirteen members of the Czartoryski family were married between 1763 and 1872, three of whom were married twice, to the leading families of Poland and Europe. Out of a total of sixteen unions, Czartoryski sons or daughters were married seven times to princes or princesses, three times to heads of the Zamoyski family, and the remaining six marriages included the leading families of Poland (i.e. Lubomirski, Potocki, and Rzyszczewski). The Zamoyski family likewise saw twelve marriages twelve times during the period and exclusively to long established wealthy, Polish noble houses (i.e. Czartoryski, Mniszech, Sapieha, Poniatowski, Wielhorski, and Potocki).<sup>28</sup>

While the Czartoryski and Zamoyski families clearly represented the two largest interests in the Department Lubelski, other wealthy noble families from outside the region maintained significant holdings within the area. The senior and junior branches of the Rulikowski family combined for a total of twenty-six marriages between 1761 and 1850; all their spouses were members of the upper aristocracy. The most noteworthy of the twenty-six unions included four second



marriages, two into the Szlubowski family, two to the Leszczyński, two with Węgleński and two between the upper and lower branches of the Rulikowski family itself. The remaining marriages were only singular occurrences and members of the Rulikowski family did not join with these houses more than once during the period surveyed.<sup>29</sup> The proprietor of Kurów, Ignacy Potocki, likewise reflected the trend toward exclusivity when he married the Princess Elżbieta Lubomirska in 1773.

This long-established trend of marrying solely within the same social echelon is also confirmed by the matrimonial records of other regional landowners such as, the Lubomirski, Sanguszko, Jab<sup>3</sup>onowski, Ma<sup>3</sup>achowski, and Breza families.<sup>30</sup> Through meticulous regulation of marriages the upper stratum of Polish elite society managed to maintain their control of the land, and thus their social prominence, well into the nineteenth century.

Since the upper reaches of aristocratic society thus remained closed to outsiders, the lower *szlachta* were forced to preserve their position through equally restrictive marriage strategies. In order to perpetuate their meager family holdings and their social status, the *drobna szlachta* often wed within their own ranks or even within their own family. Much like the magnates and upper nobility, the lesser elites increasingly frequently married solely for the advancement of the family and hence more and more rarely chose spouses beneath their social rank. This tendency is reflected in the 1811-1812 petitions to the Bishop of the Lublin Diocese, J.W.J.X. Skarszewski, which request special dispensations from the Roman Catholic Church allowing marriage between blood relations. In the case of the arranged relationship between Pawe<sup>3</sup> ieleznicki and Anna Zaleski in 1811, for example, they were first cousins seeking the approval of the Church for marriage. The blessing of the family was explicit in this case, because it was sought by all parents and a more distant relation, Jan Biernacki of Łosice parish, wrote to the Bishop of Lublin in support of the marriage. Such a union was not common, but this case indicates its appearance among the lower *szlachta* and indicates the lengths to which lower noble families were now prepared to go for the greater good of the dynasty, as the practice allowed the kin-group to preserve their limited holdings and social position.<sup>31</sup>

Perversely, such dogged pursuit of dynastic survival at the expense of the individual produced a countervailing reaction on a personal level, stimulated by the greater emphasis on affective relationships promoted by Enlightenment writers. Between 1796 and 1810, Filip Obniski, a noted advocate to Lublin's Noble Court (*Forum Nobilium*), participated in ten divorce, annulment, or separation cases.<sup>32</sup> In the past, the strength of the family patriarch coupled with the dynastic drive for wealth and power to preclude divorce as an option for young elite couples. The ever increasing numbers of divorce cases brought before the Lublin court suggest the cult of affective individualism was beginning to have a serious impact on Polish elite society. In each case the wife petitioned the court for a legal annulment because the condition of the marriage was simply unbearable or unsafe. Moreover, the tendency for the wife to seek legal separation from her abusive husband was part of a general European trend in the later eighteenth-century elite circles. Roderick Phillips, a prominent historian of divorce in Western Europe, notes that in eighteenth-century France the husband was almost exclusively the cause of divorce,

The grounds for judicial separation varied somewhat according to region and jurisdiction, but they always involved a matrimonial offense on the part of the husband. Describing the state of law in the middle of the eighteenth century, the *Encyclopédia* set out six broad grounds upon a *séparation de corps* might be obtained. These were the husband's violence or ill-treatment, but only when it was considerable; his falsely accusing his wife of adultery or other dishonorable acts; the conviction of the husband for attempting to murder his wife; his insanity, where there was reason to fear for his wife's life; and his conceiving a deadly hatred (*haine capitale*) of her.<sup>33</sup>

vThe case of Justyna z Szklinskie Olédzka of Che<sup>3</sup>m reveals the increasing correlation in attitude between Western and Eastern Europe, since she, like her Western counter-parts, petitioned the court for an immediate divorce from her husband Ignacy Olédzki because she feared for her life. Some thirty-one witnesses gave written testimony on her behalf to the following charges against her husband:

1. The state of the marriage was awful, because the husband always treated her with indifference and contempt.
2. The husband was not trustworthy and lied constantly.

3. In 1802, Ignacy attacked Justyna's family.
4. In 1804, Ignacy stabbed Justyna and beat her several times.
5. In November 1804, the husband stabbed Justyna, beat her, threw her around, and struck her in the head.
6. To escape the abuse Justyna was forced to hide in a neighbor's barn.
7. Ignacy often left home and didn't want his wife.
8. Ignacy could not control his drinking.
9. The husband drank daily.
10. Ignacy was worse when drunk, because he usually beat his wife and then threw her out of the house.
11. On the occasion of the last beating a serf felt compelled to hide Justyna.
12. Justyna Olêdzka's life was at risk while married to Ignacy.

Justyna's legal separation was eventually granted in May 1807, ending an abusive and potentially fatal marriage.<sup>34</sup> Most of the remaining cases were similarly concerned abusive relationships and all contained many of the elements cited in Justyna Olêdzka's case.<sup>35</sup>

The Olêdzka divorce is noteworthy for several reasons. First, it reveals the gathering impact of affective individualism, since Justyna managed successfully to challenge and eventually to overturn her parentally-arranged marriage. Second, the brutal physical attacks on Justyna suggest a weakening of the traditional bonds of kinship. In earlier times the mere presence of the brothers or father of the bride would have acted to ameliorate or prevent spousal abuse of their female relations. By 1800, such domestic protection was growing weaker as the noble family began its transition from an extended kin-group to a private nuclear family. Third, the decline of traditional kin-group support marked a rise in the influence of the surrounding community as a source of social moderation and comfort. Thus Justyna's wounds were tended by a local woman and she avoided abuse by hiding in both a neighbor's barn and a serf's home.<sup>36</sup> Fourth, the continuation of the marriage after a direct assault on Justyna's

family in 1802 reveals another important aspect of this familial discord—a willingness to compromise the extended family honor in order to sustain politically/economically advantageous marriages.<sup>37</sup> The various factors of all these divorce cases point out the striking changes brought about in the *szlachta* family by the importation of Western ideas and concepts.

While the separation of Justyna Olêdzka suggests a growing tension between the refusal to accept subordination and a desire for individual fulfillment and dynastic survival in Eastern Europe, the annulment proceedings of Kunegunda Kiczynska z Witemborska in 1803 clearly demonstrates that classic affective individualism was beginning to appear as a factor in some elite divorces. Kunegunda sought a separation based on only seven complaints—all of which reiterated the fact that she never wanted to speak to Jan Witemborski, much less marry him, and that she had never loved him. The complaint ends with the endorsement of the local Catholic Bishop, who concludes that annulment would be preferable to this unhappy union.<sup>38</sup> In this way, the once powerful devotion to the family good and the overriding concern for the advancement of the elite kin group declined in the face of the assertion of individualism in eighteenth century Poland as it had earlier in Western Europe.

The traditional duties of the noble family spanned an entire lifetime from the successful birth of heirs to a productive marriage arrangement and finally to the passing of the family estate to a designated successor. The last will and testament was the final expression of elite power; with this document noble houses tried to maintain the integrity of their family's wealth and status for future generations. The laws and customs of the former Commonwealth had, however, continually hindered elite inheritance strategy by fragmenting noble wealth through the practice of partible inheritance. Recent research has shown that the "best possible position" for a *szlachta* family was to be survived by only one, well married son, since "too many children scattered family resources."<sup>39</sup> In light of this historic problem, eighteenth-century Polish elites developed the technique of favoring one heir over another to diffuse the potentially devastating effects of partible inheritance. Thus, prior to the arrival of Napoleonic law, the *szlachta* gained invaluable experience in the manipulation of the

traditional rules of partible inheritance.

In the area of inheritance laws the *Code Napoléon* remained true to its revolutionary roots, legally prohibiting any new entails or the use of primogeniture within the boundaries of the Duchy of Warsaw. Napoleon's attempt at reform, however, ultimately failed miserably wherever it was applied in Poland, because French reforms were actually quite conservative for an area that traditionally practiced partible inheritance. The French Civil Code of 1804 had only affirmed equal inheritance in intestate cases. Thus, the Polish custom of completely partible inheritance was swept away by the new laws which allowed testators to assign the bulk of their estate to any chosen heir through the written distribution of their *portion disponible*. Under Napoleonic law the *portion disponible* was an "equal share in the succession" that could be given to any heir.<sup>40</sup> Margaret Darrow maintains that in France the *Code*,

corresponded quite well to their [the nobility's] belief that it was a father's duty to establish each of his children within his class while transmitting the patrimony to a favored successor. Almost all elite testators continued to favor one heir over the others, doubly endowing him or her with the *portion disponible*.<sup>41</sup>

Additionally, Napoleon's law obviously supported the interests of magnates and sustained, *de facto*, the traditions of the former Commonwealth by maintaining existing entails as legally binding. Thus, the large Zamoyski patrimony (*Ordynacja Zamoyski*) remained legally valid throughout the nineteenth century. Napoleonic inheritance reform failed among Polish elites because it ultimately produced inheritance practices more akin to *ancien régime* Europe than those egalitarian conventions envisioned by the French Revolutionary leaders.

Traditionally, in a Polish noble family the head of the house was registered as the legal heir to the family's properties. This person was then responsible for drawing up a testament naming the next heir to the family estate. Prior to the creation of the Duchy of Warsaw, at the death of the head of a family all possessions were legally passed to the surviving spouse in usufruct, and at the death of the spouse the children became the legal successors. Under the customs of partible inheritance, all children received shares of the estate. In the eighteenth

century, however, this practice deteriorated as elites began passing the lion's share of the patrimony to one male heir and any other sons received only small pieces of the estate or money, while daughters were almost always given money in the form of dowries to exclude them from a claim on the landed property. Such a strategy was particularly useful for large landowners seeking to maintain the integrity of the patrimony. Thus, the widowed Ignacy Rulikowski of Che<sup>3</sup>m named his three surviving sons as heirs to the family property in 1801, but the eldest son received the vast family holdings in Ukraine while the two younger brothers were forced to split the meager possessions within the Che<sup>3</sup>m district.<sup>42</sup> Similarly, the widowed Bart<sup>3</sup>omiej Ha<sup>3</sup>ubowicz passed on the bulk of his estate to his eldest son in 1803, but only left small scattered properties to his second son.<sup>43</sup> Napoleonic laws should have ended this procedure by opening up family inheritance practices and splitting up large estates between the various heirs; however, some seventy-five testaments surveyed from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries reveal no significant change in the inheritance patterns of the Department Lubelski.<sup>44</sup> Even in 1816, in the immediate aftermath of Napoleonic reform, noble practice remained the same. Hence Floryan <sup>̄</sup>drodowski, for example, passed his entire landed estate to his surviving son, but only managed cash dowries for his two surviving daughters.<sup>45</sup>

Some seventy-five elite wills indicate that in thirty-two cases there was a surviving spouse and in thirty-one of these instances the surviving widow received the estate in usufruct. In only one case in 1802 did one Wincenty Bychawski of Lublin pass over his living wife to name his brother the heir to his estate.<sup>46</sup> In the remaining forty-two testaments there were no surviving spouses, and of these bequests twenty estates went directly to the first born son, with only three of these assigning property to second and third sons. Thus, of seventy-five testaments over two-thirds (fifty-two) went directly to surviving spouses or eldest sons. The remaining twenty-three wills assigned property to a variety of persons, but these were bequests of last resort since the testator had neither surviving spouse nor male heirs. On two of these occasions daughters were named as principle heirs, in order to preserve the family property for the testators' grandsons—typically, with no immediate family property passed to

brothers, sisters, and in the case of noble clergy the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>47</sup> Thus, Napoleonic social legislation conspicuously failed to alter significantly aristocratic inheritance patterns and the *szlachta* were thereby enabled to maintain their influence, power and property within Polish society.

In the long run, the traditional structure and workings of the *szlachta* family were significantly altered by the spread of eighteenth-century French culture, but they were scarcely affected at all by the program of social reforms theoretically brought in by the Duchy of Warsaw. The *mentalité* of the Polish *szlachta* was ultimately recast as its membership selectively embraced certain aspects of both the Enlightenment and *ancien régime* France. Following the partitions, enlightened Habsburg political reforms prompted further local families to defend their noble status through an elaborate series of genealogies, patents of nobility, noble registries, and even birth certificates. The end result of Austrian reforms produced a surprisingly well-defined and closed hierarchical society within Polish society, an elite community that was only strengthened by the Duchy of Warsaw. The disturbances of the Napoleonic Era also witnessed the maintenance and extension of conventional elite marriages. Polish nobles found it necessary to protect both their family's social status and economic position through very restrictive and beneficial marriage patterns. Ironically, the enlightenment concepts that strengthened the *szlachta* family also served to transmit the damaging notions of affective individualism into the traditional Polish kin group. Napoleonic law also tried to alter Polish society by introducing new rules of inheritance, forbidding new entails and primogeniture. These regulations were, however, in almost all cases evaded and eighteenth-century inheritance practices remained in effect as late as 1907.<sup>48</sup> As the ideas of revolutionary France placed power in the hands of non-nobles across Europe and Napoleonic pragmatism created a new French Imperial nobility based on ability rather than breeding, Polish aristocratic society turned its back on these concepts and used the opportunity presented by the creation of the Duchy of Warsaw to restrict further virtually all upward mobility both within elite society and the general population.

1. Ignacy Krasicki, *The Adventures of Mr. Nicholas Wisdom*, trans. Thomas

H. Hoisington (Illinois, 1992), 32.

2. Recent historiography suggests that the Polish Enlightenment spanned the period between the 1720s and 1815, but was most active in the second half of the eighteenth century. See Barbara Grochulska, "The Place of the Enlightenment in Polish social history," in *A Republic of Nobles: Studies in Polish History to 1864* (Cambridge, 1982), 245-246.

3. "In the course of the [seventeenth] century a specific cultural formation developed that impregnated the political philosophy and the mentality of the szlachta as well as its life-style. The term Sarmatism referred to alleged ancestors, the Sarmatians; the concept itself served as an ideology integrating the multi-ethnic szlachta and put a specific stamp on it. Sarmatism was more than a conservative landowner's outlook, anti-urban and anti-intellectual, characterized by superficial religiosity, a tendency toward economic waste and ostentatious luxury as well as arrogance of caste. Such traits were common to many nobleman of seventeenth-century Europe. Sarmatism involved a view of Poland as a granary of Europe and a shield of Christendom against Turks and Tatars, but above all as the realization of a superior form of government inspired by the Roman republic and based on the golden freedom. There was nothing the Poles could learn from the West, and the oriental dress they adopted from their Muslim foes was underlining their distinct and original identity." See Piotr Wandycz, *The Price of Freedom: A History of East Central Europe from the Middle Ages to the Present* (London, 1992), 89.

4. In the early part of the [seventeenth-]century some seventy percent of magnates married outside their social circle, but in the late century the total dropped to around forty percent and by the early eighteenth-century only some eighteen percent of magnates wed outside their social group—a trend that intensified over the course of the century. See Orest Subtelny, *Domination of Eastern Europe: Native Nobilities and Foreign Absolutism, 1500-1715* (Montreal, 1986), 20-22 (13n).

5. Bogna Lorence-Kot, *Child-Rearing and Reform: A Study of the Nobility in Eighteenth-Century Poland* (Connecticut, 1985), 22.

6. Beatrice Gottlieb, *The Family in the Western World from the Black Death to the Industrial Age* (Oxford, 1993), 199-200; Jeremy Black, *Eighteenth Century Europe 1700-1789* (New York, 1990), 91.

7. Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800* (London, 1977), 165.

8. Lorence-Kot, 49.

9. Urszula Kozierowska and Stanislaw Kocik, *Polska więzy odleg<sup>3</sup>e i bliskie Francja* (Warszawa, 1978), 24-26.

10. Wandycz, *The Price of Freedom*, 115.

11. The Kontusz was the brightly colored long coat with split sleeves, traditionally associated with the szlachta's conservative mentality.

12. Biblioteka Czartoryskich (Kraków) 3035 III. XIXw., "Catalogue historique



et detaille des reunis a la Maison Gothique a Pu<sup>3</sup>awy..., 1809,” s. 506.

13. Lorence-Kot, 111.

14. Ibid.

15. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Akta Adw. S'du Szlacheckiego w Lublinie 408, 19-36.

16. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Akta Adw. S'du Szlacheckiego w Lublinie 420 & 464.

17. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Akta Adw. S'du Szlacheckiego w Lublinie 371, 2-10.

18. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Archiwum Brezów z Siekierzyniec IV, 2 e/5.

19. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Księga Ziemska Lubelska 9: 511.

20. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Księga Ziemska Lubelska 5-10; Archiwum Lubomirskich 108, “Leszczyńscy—metryki chrztu, 1787-1809; Archiwum Klemensowskich z Celejowa 49-63, “Metryki urodzenia, celuba, oemierci, 1766-1889.”

21. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Archiwum Klemensowskich z Celejowa 47, “Różne notaki genealogiczne rodziny Klemensowskich, XIX i XX w.”

22. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Archiwum Klemensowskich z Celejowa 48, “Legitymacanie szlachectwa rodziny Klemensowskich, 1826-1899.”

23. The great noble families and magnates typically claimed to belong to the “immemorial nobility” (*szlachta odwieczna*), traced their noble claims to biblical origins, or declared their descent from the 145 mythical Roman colonists who traveled from Rome to create the great Roman-Lithuanian state. See Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland* (New York, 1982), 1: 207; Lorence-Kot, 12.

24. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Księga Ziemska Lubelska 5-6; Archiwum Lubomirskich 56, “Testamenty Wolskich i notaki genealogiczne, 1651-1782”; Archiwum Lubomirskich 107, “Tablice genealogiczne Leszczyńskich oraz notaki dot. genealogii, 1775-1798”; Archiwum Rulikowskich 69, “Notaki i wykresy genealogiczne Rulikowskich, Szlubowskich, Leszczyńskich, pierw. poł XIX w.”; Archiwum Klemensowskich z Celejowa 47, “Różne notaki genealogiczne rodziny Klemensowskich, 1826-1899”; Archiwum Brezów z Siekierzyniec 68, “Tablice genealogiczne—notaki heraldyczne do Archiwum rodzin Brezów, 1806-1897”; Archiwum Woronieckich z Huszlewa 350, “Genealogia Woronieckich”; Archiwum Dóbr Zamojskich w W<sup>3</sup>odawy 85/XIV/1c, “Genealogii Zamoyskiej i Zamościa herbu Jelita, 1898”.

25. Lorence-Kot, 12.

26. W<sup>3</sup>odzimierz Dworzaczek, red., *Genealogia tablica* (Warszawa, 1959).

27. Biblioteka Czartoryskich (Kraków), 3034 III, “Katalog domku gotyckiego w Pu<sup>3</sup>awach, o.k. r. 1810.”

28. Jerzy Skowronek, *Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, 1770-1861* (Warszawa, 1994), 12-14, 155; Maria Derna<sup>3</sup>owicz, *Portret Familii* (Warszawa, 1974); Dworzaczek.

29. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Archiwum Rulikowskich 69, "Notaki i wykresy genealogiczne Rulikowskich, Szlubowskich, Leszczyńskich, pierw. po<sup>3</sup>. XIX w.," 39-42.

30. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Archiwum Brezów IV, 1/1; Dworzaczek.

31. Archiwum Archidiecezjalnego w Lublinie, Rep. 60-VIIb-1, "Indulty i dyspensy duchowne r<sup>3</sup>nego rodzaju, 1797-1867."

32. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Akta Adw. S<sup>1</sup>du Szlacheckiego w Lublinie, 1796-1810.

33. Roderick Phillips, *Putting Asunder: A History of Divorce in Western Society* (Cambridge, 1988), 159-160.

34. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Akta Adw. S<sup>1</sup>du Szlacheckiego w Lublinie 601, "Acta Justinae de Szklinskie Ol<sup>3</sup>édzka contra Ig. Ol<sup>3</sup>édzki z Kamienia, cyr. che<sup>3</sup>mski—separacja, 1797-1807."

35. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Akta Adw. S<sup>1</sup>du Szlacheckiego w Lublinie 598, "Acta Anastasiae Astanowna contra Michaellem Kampomari—uniewaznienie ma<sup>3</sup>ęenstwa, 1796-1806"; Akta Adw. S<sup>1</sup>du Szlacheckiego w Lublinie 599, "A. z Trembinkich Chociszewska przeciwko Józefowi Chociszewskiemu—o uniewaznienie ma<sup>3</sup>ęenstwa, 1800-1801"; Akta Adw. S<sup>1</sup>du Szlacheckiego w Lublinie 600, "Majer Herszkowicz—rozwodowe, 1803"; Akta Adw. S<sup>1</sup>du Szlacheckiego w Lublinie 602, "Acta Cunegundis Witemborska contra Joannem Witemborski—rozwodowe, 1799-1804"; Akta Adw. S<sup>1</sup>du Szlacheckiego w Lublinie 603, "Franciscus Zaborowski—Tekla z K<sup>3</sup>opockich Zaborowska—rozwodowe, 1801-1809."

36. Roderick Phillips, *Family Breakdown in Late Eighteenth Century France: Divorces in Rouen, 1792-1803* (Oxford, 1980), 112-113. Phillips goes on to suggest that in late eighteenth-century France kinship ties were not particularly strong, "and indeed...the bonds between married people and their neighbors and other acquaintances were significantly stronger." See Phillips, *Family Breakdown*, 202.

37. Lorence-Kot, 47.

38. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Akta Adw. S<sup>1</sup>du Szlacheckiego w Lublinie 602, "Acta Cunegundis Witemborska contra Joannem Witemborski—rozwodowe, 1799-1804."

39. Lorence-Kot, 30.

40. Margaret H. Darrow, *Revolution in the House: Family, Class, and Inheritance in Southern France, 1775-1825* (New Jersey, 1989), 9.

41. Ibid., 128.

42. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Archiwum Rulikowskich 2: 27-30.

43. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Księga Ziemska Lubelska 8: 342.

44. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Akta Adw. S'du Szlacheckiego w Lublinie 371, 378, 381, 385, 408, 417, 420, 427, 430, 466; Księga Ziemska Lubelska 5: 595, 641, 777, 828; Księga Ziemska Lubelska 6: 59, 138, 232, 292, 494, 605, 661, 836, 839, 888, 923, 1043, 1064; Księga Ziemska Lubelska 7: 359, 364, 427, 508, 532, 604, 607, 609, 655; Księga Ziemska Lubelska 8: 51, 98, 270, 287, 342, 343, 353, 374, 438, Księga Ziemska Lubelska 9: 8, 61, 156, 171, 204; Archiwum Rulikowskich 2: 1-30; Archiwum Lubomirskich 11, 52; Archiwum Szlubowskich 57-59; Archiwum Klemensowskich z Celejowa 47a; Archiwum Brezów z Siekierzyniec 4; Archiwum Ęwieżawskich z dóbr Palikije I Mi<sup>3</sup>ociu 32; Archiwum Woronieckich z Huszlewa 131, 149, 197, 228, 229, 232.

45. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Archiwum Woronieckich z Huszlewa 232.

46. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Księga Ziemska Lubelska 7: 655.

47. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Księga Ziemska Lubelska 5-10; Akta Adw. S'du Szlacheckiego w Lublinie 371, 378, 381, 385, 408, 417, 420, 427, 430, 466; Archiwum Rulikowskich 2: 1-30; Archiwum Lubomirskich 11, 52; Archiwum Szlubowskich 57-58; Archiwum Klemensowskich z Celejowa 9, 47a; Archiwum Brezów z Siekierzyniec 4; Archiwum Woronieckich z Huszlewa 131, 149, 197, 228, 229, 232; Archiwum Ęwieżawskich z dóbr Palikije i Mi<sup>3</sup>ocin 32.

48. Archiwum Państwowe (Lublin), Archiwum Klemensowskich z Celejowa 47a, "Róźne notaki genealogiczne rodziny Klemesowskich, XIX i XX w."