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DEVELOPMENT BEFORE DEVELOPMENT POLICY: THE RURAL HOUSEHOLD AS A MICRO-INSTITUTION OF CHANGE IN JÓZEF LEGOWICZ'S DUTIES OF RURAL HOUSEHOLDERS (1779)

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ABSTRACT

This article examines Józef Legowicz's *Duties of Rural Householders* (*Powinności gospodarzów wiejskich*, 1779) as a historically specific programme of rural change organised around the household. It asks how a parish handbook assigned to the household functions now associated analytically with development: capability formation, livelihood security, labour governance, preventive health, risk reduction, stewardship, and knowledge circulation. The study applies source-critical qualitative content analysis to the Vilnius University Library copy of the 1779 print. Institutional, livelihoods, capability, household-bargaining, commons, and religion-and-development approaches are used as sensitising concepts rather than attributed to Legowicz. The analysis shows that the household is represented not merely as a residence or productive unit but as a micro-institution: a durable site of authority, obligation, resource allocation, learning, care, and enforcement. Parish authority supplies norms and practical knowledge; the householder converts them into repeated routines; and these routines are expected to affect both domestic and community welfare. The integrated programme links schooling, work planning, reserves, diversification, punctual wages, contractual reliability, restraint of violence, sanitation, care during infectious illness, fire prevention, roads, and forests. Its capacity-building elements, however, remain bounded by paternalism, patriarchy, confessional hierarchy, unequal domestic power, and silence about serfdom and property relations. Legowicz should therefore not be presented as a precursor of contemporary development policy. His handbook instead reveals an earlier grammar of improvement in which rural change was pursued through morally regulated households in a thin public-service environment.

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INTRODUCTION

Development is usually narrated through the emergence of modern states, expert agencies, statistical populations, policy programmes, and international organisations. Such a genealogy is indispensable, but it can make earlier forms of organised improvement difficult to see. Long before "development" became a specialised field of policy, historical actors addressed problems that development scholarship would later group under education, livelihood security, public health, labour relations, vulnerability, infrastructure, and collective welfare. They did so in other languages of obligation and legitimacy, through institutions whose purposes were not primarily economic and whose interventions were not called development. The analytical difficulty is therefore double. If development is defined only by the specialised organisations and vocabularies consolidated in the twentieth century, earlier attempts to improve material and social life disappear from view. If every historical project of "improvement" is retrospectively

labelled development, however, the category loses precision and distinct moral worlds are made to look prematurely modern. A productive historical-development analysis must keep both propositions in view: similar practical problems can be organised through radically different concepts, authorities, and scales of action. Functional comparison is possible without asserting direct conceptual descent. A comparable methodological strategy places post-Tridentine moral theology in dialogue with contemporary institutional and communication theory through structural and functional analogy rather than a claim of direct doctrinal continuity (Piotrowski, 2026). This problem is especially important for rural societies in which households, parishes, estates, neighbourhoods, and customary relationships performed tasks later differentiated among public agencies. In such settings the household cannot be reduced to a statistical container for income and consumption. It is simultaneously a productive association, a distributive arrangement, a place of social reproduction, a regime of authority, and an interface with institutions

outside the home. Development research has repeatedly used household data while warning against the assumption that the household is a unitary actor with a single preference ordering. Livelihood research treats it as a site where assets, labour, risk, and diversification are combined (Chambers & Conway, 1992; Ellis, 1998; Scoones, 1998), whereas gender and collective-action research reveals bargaining, unequal voice, and possible failures of cooperation within it (Agarwal, 1997; Doss & Meinzen-Dick, 2015; Kabeer, 1999). These insights create a precise question for historical enquiry: what kind of institution did an eighteenth-century author imagine the rural household to be? This article investigates one such configuration in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In 1779 Józef Legowicz (1743–1812), a Catholic parish priest in Korkożyski (present-day Karkažiškė, Lithuania), published a forty-seven-page Polish handbook entitled *Powinności gospodarzów wiejskich w krótkości* – here translated as *Duties of Rural Householders*. The work opens with the claim that “all the happiness of rural people, spiritual and temporal” depends in particular on good household government “with respect to God and temporal matters” (Legowicz, 1779, fol. [2v], author’s translation). Its five parts move from Christian duties to household management, cleanliness, causes of disease and protection from infection, and a concluding form of daily devotion. The result is neither an agronomic treatise nor a conventional catechism. It is a compact attempt to regulate the material, relational, and spiritual conditions of rural everyday life. The date and location matter. The handbook appeared in Vilnius seven years after the First Partition of the Commonwealth and within a reform environment in which questions of education, clerical competence, useful knowledge, civic responsibility, and material welfare were increasingly connected. This was not a simple secularisation of pastoral work. Catholic Enlightenment programmes often sought to make post-Tridentine religious formation more effective by enlarging the practical competence of clergy and adapting instruction to local social conditions (Ślusarska, 2012; Witecki, 2017, 2022, 2025). In Legowicz’s case, the parish became a point at which religious authority, printed instruction, schooling, welfare practices, and household governance could meet.

Legowicz wrote within the Catholic Enlightenment of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, where pastoral reform increasingly connected religious formation with education, health, useful knowledge, and the material well-being of parishioners. Recent research has shown that reform-minded bishops and clergy expanded the expected competence of the parish priest while retaining post-Tridentine objectives (Ślusarska, 2012; Witecki, 2022, 2025). Studies of late eighteenth-century preaching similarly demonstrate a turn towards accessible moral instruction adapted to parish conditions rather than a simple replacement of religion by secular reason (Mačiulytė, 2006; Witecki, 2017). Legowicz’s biography makes this setting concrete. He studied in Vilnius, became parish priest at Korkożyski, helped rebuild the local church, and financed a parish school, its teacher, fuel, and lighting (Girininkaitė, 2017). His handbook therefore belonged to a broader pastoral practice, not only to literary production. His choice of *powinności* in the title is equally significant. The Polish term carries the sense of something owed or due and historically covered religious, moral, familial, civic, occupational, and legal obligations (Puzynina, 2015). It does more than collect useful advice. A recommendation can be declined; a duty identifies an accountable subject, a person or good to whom something is owed, and a standard by which omission may be judged. Legowicz consequently converts apparently minor practices – preparing tools, airing a room, paying a servant, sending a child to school, preserving grain, or repairing a road – into elements of an ordered responsibility. This deontic structure supplies coherence to the handbook’s unusually wide range. Scholarship has reconstructed Legowicz’s life and writings, situated Lithuanian Catholic reform, and identified the later circulation of his text. In particular, a substantial part of *Duties of Rural Householders* – pages 1–38 – was translated or adapted into Lithuanian in a manuscript sermon compiled by Kiprijonas Lukauskas in 1797 (Pajėdienė, 2022). This discovery shows that the handbook’s practical programme was portable across linguistic and parochial settings.

Existing studies, however, have not asked what becomes visible when the household is treated as the organising institution of that programme and the work is brought into a carefully controlled dialogue with development studies. That gap is more than terminological. If the text is divided into conventional subjects – catechesis, agriculture, family morality, medicine, or preaching – its institutional design becomes difficult to recognise. Legowicz repeatedly assigns responsibility for different problems to the same actor, connects them through the same domestic resources, and anticipates consequences beyond the walls of one dwelling. The loss of a day’s work affects reserves; misuse of alcohol affects violence, health, and dependants; unpaid wages affect trust and future labour; dirty food affects illness; a neglected flame affects neighbours; and literacy affects the circulation of knowledge. The analytical object is therefore not a catalogue of advice but a system of linked decisions.

The article addresses two questions. First, which functions of rural change does Legowicz allocate to the household, and through what behavioural mechanisms are they expected to operate? Second, what does this arrangement reveal – and conceal – when viewed through contemporary institutional, livelihoods, capability, social-capital, commons, and religion-and-development approaches? The central argument is that Legowicz presents the rural household as a micro-institution of change: a durable, rule-governed site in which authority, labour, resources, knowledge, care, and sanctions are coordinated, and through which effects are expected to travel from domestic routines to the wider community.

The argument has four components. First, the household is multifunctional: it joins production, education, distribution, discipline, care, worship, and risk management. Second, it is connected to a parish-based knowledge infrastructure: the priest selects and authorises information, while print, school, reading, prayer, and conversation make it repeatable. Third, change is incremental and reproductive rather than programmatic in the modern administrative sense. It occurs when instructions become habits and are transmitted across persons, days, and households. Fourth, the same architecture that permits local action also restricts it. The household’s ability to provide security depends on unequal authority, unremunerated care, available assets, and structures that the handbook neither analyses nor reforms. “Micro-institution” is used here in an analytical, not genealogical, sense. Institutions may be understood as patterned constraints and rules that structure interaction (North, 1990), but the historical household was also a lived association of unequal persons. Calling it an institution highlights its governance functions without treating it as harmonious or internally homogeneous. The concept is narrower than “social institution” and more specific than “household unit”: it directs attention to recurrent rules, role allocation, enforcement, knowledge transmission, and external effects at a small social scale. It also prevents the household from disappearing behind either the individual peasant or the village community.

Six criteria operationalise the term. A micro-institution must contain recurrent rather than one-off practices; allocate responsibilities among recognisable roles; control or distribute material and temporal resources; possess means of enforcement or norm internalisation; reproduce knowledge or conduct over time; and generate consequences for persons beyond the immediate decision-maker. Legowicz’s household satisfies each criterion in the prescriptive design of the text, although the source cannot show whether actual households did so in practice. “Micro” identifies the scale of direct coordination, not the importance of the outcomes. The title “development before development policy” consequently does not claim that Legowicz anticipated contemporary development theory, the Sustainable Development Goals, or a modern welfare state. Such precursorism would collapse distinct historical languages into a single progressive sequence. Rather, the formulation identifies a family resemblance among problems and functions while preserving the difference between them. Legowicz’s operative vocabulary was that of duty, sin, prudence, mercy, usefulness, good order, and spiritual and temporal welfare. Modern development categories are used to formulate questions about this vocabulary, not to replace it.

This distinction also separates the article from a celebratory search for origins. The relevant issue is not whether an eighteenth-century priest was “ahead of his time.” It is how a particular configuration of pastoral authority, household power, moral obligation, and practical observation made certain changes thinkable while excluding others. The historical distance is analytically productive: it exposes the extent to which development functions can exist without the administrative apparatus, rights language, statistics, and professional differentiation now associated with policy.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Primary source and historical context: The primary source is the first edition of Józef Legowicz’s *Powinności gospodarzów wiejskich w krótkości zebrane przez X. Legowicza, plebana korkozyskiego, i dla wygody swoich parafianów do druku podane*, printed in Vilnius in 1779 by the press of His Royal Majesty at the Academy. The analysis follows the digitised Vilnius University Library copy, shelf mark IV 21652, comprising four unnumbered pages, forty-seven numbered pages, and one unnumbered contents page (Legowicz, 1779). Original pagination is used throughout. The physical and rhetorical economy of the print is part of the evidence. After the approbation and preface, the numbered text is organised into five sections: Christian duties (pp. 1–13), household duties (pp. 13–23), cleanliness or *ochędźstwo* (pp. 24–28), causes of illness among rural people and measures of care (pp. 28–39), and a compact daily devotion (pp. 40–47). The sequence moves from the sources of obligation, through household authority and production, to bodily conditions and finally to a repeatable devotional instrument. It therefore connects doctrine, practice, and reproduction within one small handbook.

The projected direct reader is the literate rural householder, but the intended audience is wider. Instructions repeatedly concern spouses, children, servants, hired labourers, travellers, poor people, neighbours, and the sick. Legowicz also tells readers to communicate useful information in conversation (Legowicz, 1779, p. 39). The analytical unit is consequently the prescriptive household network: the persons governed by the reader, the resources placed under his authority, and the external relationships affected by his conduct. The source is prescriptive. It records what Legowicz wanted rural householders to know and do, not what they actually did. It cannot by itself establish compliance, prevalence of the practices criticised, or measurable social outcomes. The biographical and institutional setting is reconstructed from historical research on Legowicz, the Vilnius diocese, Catholic Enlightenment, parish preaching, and healthcare (Girininkaitė, 2017; Mačiulytė, 2006; Ślusarska, 2012; Witecki, 2017, 2022, 2025). Pajėdienė’s (2022) textual comparison is used only to establish later Lithuanian adaptation, not to infer mass reception. Three types of statement are distinguished throughout. A textual statement identifies what the source explicitly commands, prohibits, or predicts. A contextual statement situates that instruction using historical scholarship. An analytical statement redescribes a relationship through a modern concept such as capability, resilience, externality, or bargaining power. Keeping these levels separate is essential because a prescriptive source can establish the architecture of an intended intervention but not its uptake or effectiveness.

Analytical procedure

The study applies source-critical qualitative content analysis. The basic unit of coding was a prescriptive sequence containing: (1) a named or implied problem; (2) an actor responsible for action; (3) an instructed or prohibited practice; (4) a justification or sanction; and (5), where present, an anticipated consequence. These sequences were coded across six analytical domains:

- Capability formation and education;
- Livelihood organisation and resilience;
- Labour relations, trust, and domestic authority;
- Health, sanitation, and care;
- Risk management, shared resources, and local public goods; and

- Knowledge circulation and behavioural reproduction.

Coding proceeded in three passes. The first pass followed the source’s own sequence and recorded actors, actions, objects of responsibility, causal claims, religious warrants, and page locations. The second grouped recurrent actions by function rather than by chapter - for example, all instructions bearing on labour security, all practices bearing on disease prevention, and all forms of information transfer. The third examined connections among domains and identified feedback loops, external effects, and silences. No numerical frequency is reported because repetition in a short prescriptive handbook does not provide a valid measure of historical importance or prevalence. Each candidate micro-institutional practice was tested against four questions. Does the instruction allocate a decision or duty to the householder? Does it require control over labour, time, goods, knowledge, or discipline? Does it become effective through recurrence rather than a single act? Does Legowicz connect it to consequences for other household members or the wider community? Practices satisfying only one of these conditions were treated as moral exhortations; practices satisfying several were interpreted as components of household governance. The coded material was then mapped relationally. Attention was given not only to topics but also to the proposed chain of transmission: parish priest and print; reading or oral explanation; householder; repeated domestic practice; and household or community consequence. This approach makes it possible to distinguish an isolated moral injunction from an institutional mechanism. A command such as “do not drink” becomes institutionally significant when the text connects intoxication with loss of grain, delayed work, quarrels, violence, illness, and household poverty, assigns responsibility to the householder, and embeds restraint in daily supervision.

Negative and limiting evidence was coded alongside positive instructions. Particular attention was given to persons who receive protection without an articulated voice, problems translated into personal fault, collective goods without procedures of joint decision, and structural relations left outside the programme. This step prevents the language of “micro-institution” from converting hierarchy into cooperation or treating household resilience as an unqualified good. Several bodies of development scholarship supply sensitising concepts. Institutional analysis directs attention to rules, enforcement, credibility, and recurrent interaction (North, 1990). The capability approach asks whether education and health expand people’s effective possibilities, while also requiring scrutiny of agency and freedom (Sen, 1999). Sustainable-livelihoods research emphasises assets, vulnerability, diversification, and the capacity to cope with stress (Bebbington, 1999; Chambers & Conway, 1992). Social-capital scholarship highlights trust and the quality of relationships but warns that networks are shaped by power and institutional context (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). Commons research makes visible problems of resource stewardship and collective action (Ostrom, 1990). Finally, religion-and-development scholarship cautions against treating religion either as an irrelevant residue or as an automatically beneficial source of social capital (Clarke, 2006; Deneulin & Rakodi, 2011). The livelihood lens was refined through work on diversification and the institutional context of access (Ellis, 1998; Scoones, 1998). Analysis of the household as an arena rather than a unitary actor drew on Agarwal’s (1997) account of bargaining within and beyond the home, Kabeer’s (1999) distinction among resources, agency, and achievements, and Doss and Meinzen-Dick’s (2015) treatment of household cooperation as a collective-action problem. These studies concern modern development contexts and are not evidence about eighteenth-century behaviour. Their value lies in identifying questions that a purely unitary model of household welfare would suppress. These frameworks are heuristic. Following contextualist warnings against converting historical texts into answers to timeless questions (Skinner, 1969), the analysis uses two safeguards. First, modern terminology is not placed in Legowicz’s voice. Second, functional similarity is separated from conceptual identity: an instruction may contribute to livelihood resilience without expressing a theory of sustainable livelihoods; a duty may protect a servant without constituting an articulated labour right.

A third safeguard is asymmetry of interpretation. Modern concepts are allowed to disclose both capacities and exclusions. If schooling is analysed as capability formation, the prescribed social ends of schooling must also be examined. If reserves are treated as resilience, the unequal ability to accumulate them must be considered. If domestic care is read as welfare provision, the distribution of care work and decision-making power cannot be ignored. Comparison is therefore accepted only when it increases, rather than reduces, the visibility of historical power relations. The method has three further limitations. It studies one short normative text, not a representative sample of rural literature. It identifies an intended causal architecture rather than demonstrated impact. And its household focus cannot reconstruct the full political economy of late eighteenth-century rural life. These limits are integral to the conclusions: the handbook's silences about land tenure, serfdom, and enforceable rights are evidence about the boundaries of its programme, not gaps that modern theory may fill on its behalf. The absence of reception data also limits causal claims. The surviving Lithuanian adaptation demonstrates textual reuse, not behavioural compliance. Legowicz's support for a parish school demonstrates institutional commitment, not the effect of his printed recommendations on enrolment or learning. Accordingly, the article speaks of intended mechanisms, assigned functions, and projected consequences. It does not claim measured development outcomes.

RESULTS

Duty as the operating rule of household government: The first result concerns the form of Legowicz's programme. Its coherence does not derive from a specialised theory of agriculture, medicine, education, or political economy. It derives from *powinność* – duty – as a rule that joins an accountable actor, a sphere of responsibility, a required practice, and a sanction. The householder is not addressed chiefly as an owner pursuing preference satisfaction. He is addressed as a person who owes conduct to God, to his own moral and bodily welfare, to family and servants, and to neighbours. The source therefore begins from relational obligation rather than from autonomous choice. This reading is consistent with recent analysis of post-Tridentine moral theology in which obligation and authority are understood through differentiated roles, institutional competence, and accountability towards others rather than as expressions of private will alone (Piotrowski, 2026).

This grammar changes the meaning of practical advice. Legowicz does not merely state that prepared tools are efficient, clean utensils are pleasant, schooling may be useful, or punctual wages improve recruitment. He places such acts within an order in which negligence can be morally attributed. The householder is responsible not only for deliberate injury but also for preventable harm, foreseeable shortage, destructive example, and failures to communicate useful knowledge. Duty is prospective as well as retrospective: it asks what a person with authority and information ought to anticipate. The preface establishes the scope by connecting the “spiritual and temporal” welfare of rural people with proper household government (Legowicz, 1779, fol. [2v]). The first chapter then expands Christian duty beyond worship. The householder must know and teach religion, enable attendance at church, educate children, practise bodily and spiritual works of mercy, give hospitality, counsel others, console the afflicted, and contribute to roads and bridges (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 1–6). The movement is important. Religious obligation is not one sector beside economic and social sectors; it is the normative medium through which those sectors are organised.

Legowicz's sanctions are layered. Some commands are supported by Scripture and the prospect of divine judgement. Others are supported by natural or practical consequences: idleness produces disorder, dishonesty destroys reputation, poor storage spoils food, cold and dampness damage health, and imprudent fire use threatens settlements. Frequently both forms appear together. Withholding a servant's wages is a sin crying for justice and a practice that makes

trustworthy labour difficult to obtain (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 11–12). Moral prohibition and institutional incentive reinforce one another. This dual reasoning is central to the proposed micro-institution. A household rule can be enforced through the householder's command, internalised through conscience, and confirmed through visible consequences. The system does not depend on one mode of compliance. It combines hierarchical supervision, religious self-regulation, reputational feedback, and prudential calculation. For a short handbook written in a setting without specialised inspection or service agencies, this combination gives the programme operational density. At the same time, duty distributes voice unevenly. The householder is repeatedly instructed; children, servants, the sick, and poor people appear primarily as objects of his obligation. Their interests become morally visible, but their capacity to define the rule or demand compliance remains weak. Duty can limit power without democratising it. The normative architecture is protective and paternal at once.

Parish knowledge converted into household rules: Legowicz's full title states that the handbook was printed “for the convenience of his parishioners.” Its small format, compressed instructions, direct address, numbered lists, and causal warnings make it a tool for repeated use rather than a learned demonstration. The parish priest identifies problems, selects knowledge, gives it religious authority, and sends it into the household in portable form. Yet the intended mechanism does not end with private reading. Household rules are told to keep useful books, read them when agricultural duties allow, learn from them, and communicate useful knowledge to others in conversation (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 4, 39). The phrase “when agricultural duties allow” discloses an important design constraint. Legowicz does not assume a reader detached from manual work. The programme must fit seasonal labour, limited leisure, and uneven literacy. Its compactness and directness are therefore not merely stylistic. They adapt information to an audience whose time is governed by the farm and whose household may contain only one person capable of reading the text. The literate householder functions as a local relay rather than as the sole beneficiary. This creates a layered communication infrastructure. Print stabilises the message, literate householders interpret it, oral discussion extends it to non-readers, and domestic routines reproduce it. The householder is therefore neither a passive recipient nor an autonomous expert. He is an authorised intermediary between parish instruction and household practice. The later Lithuanian adaptation strengthens this interpretation. Lukauskas's manuscript did not reproduce a purely local curiosity; it transferred the main practical portion of the work into another linguistic setting (Pajėdienė, 2022). The evidence establishes portability and clerical reuse, although not the scale or effectiveness of diffusion. School and church occupy different positions in this infrastructure. The parish school builds the competences required for reading, counting, and accessing further instruction. Sermon, catechesis, and sacramental practice supply public occasions for norm communication. The printed handbook allows selected teaching to remain present when the priest is absent. Domestic reading and conversation then distribute it among persons who may never hold the book themselves. The parish does not replace the household; it equips and authorises a household agent.

Legowicz's own local activity gives material plausibility to this chain. Girininkaitė (2017) documents his support for a parish school, including its teacher, fuel, and light. That evidence does not prove that *Duties of Rural Household Rules* changed practice, but it shows that the book's educational instructions were consistent with institutional action by its author. Print, schooling, and pastoral office belonged to the same repertoire of intervention. Religious practice itself participates in this infrastructure. Morning and evening prayer, church attendance, catechesis, and examination of conduct place instruction in a repeated temporal frame (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 1–3, 40–47). The concluding daily devotion is not detached from the preceding practical chapters. It supplies a routine through which work, care, speech, and conflict can be recalled as matters of moral accountability. The handbook thus couples information with repetition and sanction.

The last chapter is particularly important for institutional reproduction. It provides prayers, the Creed, commandments, sacraments, conditions of penance, and acts of faith, hope, love, and contrition (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 40–47). These fixed and memorable forms can be repeated aloud by a domestic group. The chapter gives the householder a ready-made script, reducing the competence required to organise household devotion and making the text usable beyond a single reading. Its function resembles a low-cost implementation instrument: it translates an expectation into a repeatable procedure. Repetition also creates self-surveillance. The householder who recites commandments, declares love of neighbour, promises amendment, and offers daily actions to God is asked to evaluate his governance against norms that he himself voices. This does not provide external accountability, but it seeks to place authority under recurrent examination of conscience. Domestic piety therefore operates as a technology of norm internalisation as well as a devotional end.

Practical reasoning and the production of usable knowledge: The handbook's method of persuasion is itself part of the institutional design. Legowicz rarely relies on a single source of authority. Scriptural commands and examples establish moral obligation; Christian teaching defines duties; experience supplies familiar evidence; causal explanation connects actions with consequences; and references to medical opinion authorise selected health advice. Different warrants are combined according to the practice being discussed (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 1–39). The combination allows Legowicz to move between universality and locality. A command such as love of neighbour has universal religious scope, but its application to a damaged bridge, an unpaid servant, a sick person, or a traveller is concrete. Conversely, an observation about stale food or damp clothing begins in everyday experience but acquires wider normative force when care for life is treated as duty. The text continuously translates between general norm and local case. Four rhetorical forms recur: command, warning, explanation, and promise. Commands specify required conduct. Warnings dramatise foreseeable harm. Explanations show why a routine is useful or destructive. Promises associate good household order with peace, sufficiency, reputation, and divine blessing. This variation matters because recipients may respond to different motivations. A practice can be obeyed because it is right, adopted because it is intelligible, avoided because its cost is feared, or sustained because its benefit is desired. The source therefore seeks more than submission to isolated rules. It cultivates a practical style of reasoning. The reader is repeatedly asked to connect delay with harvest loss, poor maintenance with later expense, intoxication with conflict and poverty, dishonest payment with loss of labour, unclean food with illness, and careless fire with community disaster. Such reasoning creates what may be called causal literacy: the ability to recognise that small repeated acts generate effects at another time or scale. Causal literacy is particularly important where monitoring is domestic. A remote rule has limited reach if the householder cannot identify the relevant situation. By explaining mechanisms, Legowicz enables the reader to classify new cases: not every dangerous flame, spoiled product, violent outburst, or imprudent expense must be listed individually if the underlying relationship is understood. The rule becomes portable across circumstances.

The epistemic model remains hierarchical. Legowicz selects which observations count, reconciles them with doctrine, and addresses the reader as a learner. He does not invite householders to contest the moral framework or compare competing medical authorities. Nevertheless, he assumes that ordinary rural experience has evidential value. Experienced workers, remembered consequences, and visible household outcomes can confirm or correct routine. Knowledge is mediated from above but tested partly in everyday life. This helps explain the prominence of useful books and conversation (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 4, 39). Print stores information beyond individual memory, while conversation adapts it to local vocabulary and circumstances. A knowledgeable reader can combine textual instruction with observation and communicate a practical conclusion to others. The system resembles an informal extension network, although it lacks

specialised agents, experimental stations, standardised training, or outcome data. The limits of the model are clearest in the health chapter. Advice derived from observation and contemporary medical opinion varies in reliability. The same persuasive architecture can transmit a sound preventive routine or an ineffective remedy. Religious and clerical authority may increase compliance without increasing technical accuracy. Knowledge brokerage is therefore a capacity and a risk: the quality of household action depends on the quality of the information selected upstream. Nor does the handbook include an explicit feedback procedure for revising failed recommendations. Experience can demonstrate consequences informally, but no mechanism requires reports, compares households, or updates the printed rule. Legowicz's system learns through memory and conversation rather than through formal evaluation. Its knowledge infrastructure is socially embedded but methodologically thin. For development analysis, this result separates information provision from knowledge institutionalisation. A message becomes actionable when an authority translates it, connects it to reasons, places it in a repeatable medium, assigns an implementer, and makes consequences observable. Yet durable and accountable knowledge also requires ways to test accuracy, hear affected persons, and revise the rule. Legowicz supplies the first sequence more clearly than the second.

The household's integrated portfolio of functions: The programme allocates to the household a strikingly broad portfolio. Table 1 summarises the principal domains, their textual locations, the responsible practices, and the development functions made visible by the analytical framework.

The important finding is not that each topic appears separately, but that one governing site is made responsible for all of them. The same householder organises school attendance, work timing, wage payment, discipline, storage, sanitation, nursing, prayer, and relations with neighbours. Decisions in one domain alter conditions in another: drunkenness consumes resources and disrupts labour; withheld wages weaken trust and labour supply; dirty food and rooms increase illness; illness reduces productive capacity; failure to maintain roads impedes others; and poor example transmits destructive conduct to children. The household appears as an integrated system of social reproduction. The portfolio also displays three kinds of integration. Vertical integration links parish authority, household command, and the conduct of dependants. Horizontal integration connects activities performed within the same home - production, consumption, learning, care, and worship. Temporal integration links present decisions with future household conditions through schooling, reserves, maintenance, reputation, and intergenerational example. The micro-institutional character lies in the combination of these dimensions, not in the novelty of any isolated recommendation. Resource fungibility makes the integration practical. The same grain may feed household members, supply a reserve, support hospitality, be wasted in excessive consumption, or be lost through poor storage. The same hour may be invested in schooling, maintenance, agricultural work, prayer, or an avoidable repair. The same authority may protect a servant, organise a carer, or produce fear through violent punishment. Household governance is therefore the management of trade-offs among morally ranked uses of scarce resources. Legowicz does not present formal accounts or an explicit optimisation model. Yet his recurring attention to sequence, timing, waste, consequence, and future need produces a recognisable decision environment. Good order consists in making present conduct answerable to several time horizons and several persons. This is why a failure that appears private is repeatedly redescribed as a loss to the whole domestic group or local community.

Education as capability formation - and role formation: Legowicz instructs parents to send children to parish schools. The curriculum he lists joins religious knowledge and discipline with reading, writing, arithmetic, useful handicrafts, and whatever may be useful "for their whole life" (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 3–4). His argument is explicitly intertemporal. A child's immediate absence from work is set against future competence, assistance to the household, and service to church

Table 1. The rural household as a micro-institution in Legowicz's 1779 handbook

Domain	Key practices in the source	Primary-source location	Analytical development function
Education and formation	Parish schooling; reading, writing, counting, useful crafts; useful books; instruction by example	pp. 1–4, 9–13, 39	Human capability; intergenerational knowledge; behavioural formation
Livelihood organisation	Work discipline; timely tasks; prepared tools; care of land and animals; reserves; supplementary crafts; moderated consumption	pp. 13–23	Asset use; productivity; diversification; resilience to seasonal and household shocks
Labour and relational governance	Punctual wages; fulfilment of agreements; honesty; limits on anger and violent punishment; temperance	pp. 7–12	Credibility; reduced conflict and transaction costs; protection of dependent labour
Health and care	Personal and domestic cleanliness; safe food and water; infant care; nursing; ventilation and separation during infectious illness	pp. 24–39	Preventive health; social reproduction; household welfare; contagion risk reduction
Shared goods and risk	Hospitality; repair of roads and bridges; fire precautions; responsible use of forests; concern for neighbours	pp. 5–6, 14–16	Local public goods; positive externalities; common-risk and resource stewardship
Knowledge circulation	Repeated reading; household teaching; conversation; prayer and moral self-monitoring	pp. 3–4, 39–47	Diffusion; norm internalisation; replication of practice across households

Source: author's analysis of Legowicz (1779).

and country. Education is thus treated as an investment in durable practical capacity rather than ornament or status. The instruction begins within domestic governance. Parents decide whether a child's labour is used immediately or released for schooling; the school can supply knowledge only if the household reallocates time. Education is therefore not external to the livelihood system. It competes with current production while promising future returns. Legowicz addresses this trade-off by widening the horizon of household calculation: a child who learns may later manage work, accounts, correspondence, and religious obligations more effectively. The curriculum is deliberately composite. Reading opens access to religious and practical texts; writing extends communication; arithmetic assists calculation and exchange; craft competence provides another form of useful work. The combination matters more than any single subject. Legowicz imagines knowledge as usable across domestic, economic, ecclesial, and civic relationships. Schooling is valuable because it increases the household member's ability to act in several contexts. In capability terms, literacy and numeracy can expand the means by which rural people understand instructions, keep accounts, access printed knowledge, and make decisions. The handbook also connects literacy to diffusion: the person able to read acquires an obligation to teach through conversation (Legowicz, 1779, p. 39). Human capability becomes a network resource when it is shared.

This conversion from individual skill to network resource is not automatic. It depends on a norm of transmission. A literate person could monopolise knowledge, use it for private advantage, or allow it to remain inert. Legowicz makes usefulness socially accountable by instructing the reader to pass sound information to others. The competence acquired by one household member is expected to increase the informational capacity of the domestic and parochial environment. Education also alters the mechanism of compliance. A purely oral command depends on the presence and memory of an authority. A person able to read can revisit instructions, compare texts, and carry information across time. Legowicz does not advocate critical autonomy in the modern sense, but he does seek a reader who can understand reasons, observe consequences, and reproduce teaching. The desired rural subject is disciplined, yet not cognitively passive. The comparison nevertheless has strict limits. Legowicz does not define education as expansion of a child's freedom to choose a valued life. It forms good Christians, useful household members, and competent rural producers within inherited roles. The child is an object of parental duty more than an independent bearer of educational rights. Capability formation and role formation therefore coincide. The programme enlarges practical agency while directing that agency towards ends established by church, country, and patriarchal household authority. Kabeer's (1999) distinction among resources, agency, and achievements clarifies the limitation. Schooling may provide a human resource and generate useful achievements without giving the child power over strategic life choices. Similarly, the ability to read can increase effectiveness within an assigned role while leaving the structure of that role intact.

The handbook supports competence, not emancipation from domestic or estate hierarchy. The historical context sharpens this ambivalence. Girininkaitė (2017) found that Legowicz financed a local school where children learned reading, writing, arithmetic, and geography, while some parents resisted because they needed children's labour or feared that education would draw them away from the farm. The handbook's insistence on long-term usefulness can be read as a response to an immediate household constraint. It acknowledges the rational pressure behind non-attendance but seeks to alter the household's time horizon. The response is nevertheless moral rather than redistributive. Legowicz does not propose compensation for lost child labour or guaranteed support for poor pupils. He tries to change parental valuation through obligation, future benefit, and example. The school supplies an opportunity; the household bears the opportunity cost. This illustrates a recurrent feature of the entire programme: an institution outside the home creates a resource, but effective access depends on the household's capacity and decision structure. Intergenerational example extends education beyond school. The householder teaches not only by verbal instruction but by the visible quality of work, temperance, honesty, prayer, and treatment of dependants (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 1–4, 7–12). Children learn a repertoire of conduct embedded in routine. The household therefore produces capabilities and dispositions simultaneously. It trains persons in what to do and in which purposes should govern action. The development significance of this arrangement is consequently mixed. It recognises knowledge as a durable asset, treats rural children as educable, and creates a route from individual literacy to collective learning. At the same time, it makes educational access conditional on parental command and directs acquired capabilities towards a pre-established social order. The result is capacity-building without an equivalent redistribution of voice.

Household authority, allocation, and the problem of the unitary actor: Legowicz writes grammatically to "householders," usually presuming a male domestic head, but the actions he regulates are performed by many people. Children attend school and work; servants labour; women prepare food, clothe infants, maintain cleanliness, and nurse; travellers receive hospitality; and sick persons depend on designated carers. The apparent singularity of the addressee therefore sits above a plural field of labour and need. The householder controls several allocation points: who works and when, whether a child attends school, how grain and money are used, when wages are paid, how servants are disciplined, which goods are reserved, who cares for a patient, and whether household resources assist neighbours. These decisions reveal why the household is an institution rather than merely a group. Authority coordinates interdependent activities and distributes both benefits and burdens. A unitary reading would infer that advice improving the "household" benefits all members. The text itself does not justify that assumption. A reserve may secure food for dependants, but its creation may require additional labour from them. Schooling may benefit a child while reducing current household output. Isolation can protect the healthy while concentrating risk on a carer. Moderated feasting may

preserve stocks while changing the social obligations of the domestic group. Outcomes depend on who decides, who works, who receives protection, and whose preferences count. Doss and Meinzen-Dick (2015) describe modern households as sites of collective action in which cooperation cannot be presumed merely because members share a dwelling or livelihood. Applied as a sensitising question, this perspective reveals that Legowicz seeks to produce cooperation principally through moralised command. He does not establish bargaining procedures among household members. The institution is coordinated from the top, and its effectiveness depends on the prudence and conscience of the householder. The handbook nevertheless constrains the head's power in meaningful ways. Property and authority are treated as responsibilities, not absolute licences. The householder must enable religious practice, provide care, pay what is due, avoid rage, and consider the future welfare of the group (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 1–4, 9–14, 24–39). Dependents are not represented as disposable inputs. Their bodily and spiritual welfare enters the normative account of good governance.

Protection, however, remains vertical. Agarwal's (1997) bargaining perspective directs attention to the resources and external options that shape a person's ability to contest household decisions. Legowicz says little about such resources for women, children, or servants. The parish speaks to the head rather than providing an independent forum for dependants. The same authority expected to restrain violence is the authority authorised to correct and punish. This arrangement creates what may be called delegated paternal accountability. Parish teaching places the householder under moral judgement and delegates to him responsibility for others. It may reduce arbitrariness where the norm is internalised, but it leaves enforcement vulnerable where it is not. There is no routine inspection, complaint mechanism, collective household council, or stated exit right. The micro-institution has internal rules but little external accountability. The gendered distribution of implementation is especially important in the health sections. The text's explicit decision-maker is male, while many practices involving food, infants, clothing, cleanliness, and nursing would have relied heavily on women's knowledge and labour. Women's agency is operationally indispensable but normatively indirect. The handbook makes care visible as a household function while leaving the carer's voice, workload, and exposure largely unexamined. The household thus cannot be interpreted either as a harmonious community or as pure domination. It is a field in which coordination, dependence, affection, command, care, and coercion coexist. Legowicz's intervention tries to improve the moral quality of this field without changing its basic hierarchy. That combination explains both the programme's reach and its limits.

Livelihood organisation: timing, reserves, and diversification: The economic chapters do not offer a technical system of agronomy. They organise conduct. Legowicz emphasises diligence, forethought, timely work, prepared tools, care of draught animals, proper cultivation, storage, reserves, supplementary crafts, and moderation in costly celebrations (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 13–23). The common denominator is the conversion of available resources into a more reliable livelihood through planning. This distinction between technical agronomy and household organisation is essential. Legowicz provides no sustained analysis of soils, crop rotations, yields, prices, or estate accounts. He concentrates instead on the governable interfaces at which resources are lost or made effective: whether objects are stored securely, whether tools are ready before seasonal work begins, whether work is undertaken at the proper time, whether it is completed with care, whether animals remain capable of labour, and whether present consumption leaves provision for the future. His subject is managerial conduct under scarcity. The chapter begins with custody. A householder should know what has been entrusted to him, keep things in their proper places, inspect buildings, and prevent avoidable loss (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 13–16). Maintenance is developmentally significant because the useful life of an asset affects the service it can provide. A damaged roof, misplaced implement, exhausted animal, or unguarded store imposes replacement costs on a household with limited capacity to absorb them. Care is therefore a form of capital preservation, although

Legowicz expresses it as prudence and moral stewardship. Time is treated with similar seriousness. The agricultural calendar creates narrow windows in which delay can multiply loss. Tools repaired only after work should have started turn a small maintenance omission into lost labour and reduced output. Legowicz criticises improvised, careless completion - captured in the phrase "just to get it done, just to cobble it together" (Legowicz, 1779, p. 20, author's translation). Quality, timing, and preparation form one chain. The relevant resource is not labour in the abstract but labour coordinated with season, equipment, and task. This logic resembles central concerns of sustainable-livelihoods analysis. Rural viability depends not only on income but on the combination and transformation of assets, skills, relationships, and strategies under conditions of vulnerability (Bebbington, 1999; Chambers & Conway, 1992). Legowicz's householder is expected to preserve tools and buildings, maintain the productive condition of animals, use time according to the agricultural season, keep reserves against future shortage, and develop an additional craft. These prescriptions link physical, natural, human, and financial resources in a single management regime.

Scoones (1998) and Ellis (1998) emphasise that livelihood strategies combine assets through institutional conditions and often diversify activities to manage risk. Legowicz's recommendation that rural people acquire supplementary crafts is compatible at the functional level with this insight. A household possessing more than one useful competence can produce goods during periods when field work is limited, meet some needs internally, or obtain exchange value from non-agricultural labour (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 18–22). The text does not calculate returns or describe markets; it recognises the vulnerability of dependence on a narrow activity portfolio. Knowledge is part of this portfolio. The householder is told to learn from experienced persons and useful books rather than to rely only on habit (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 4, 17–22, 39). Innovation here is conservative in scale: better timing, improved care, a learned craft, or corrected routine. Legowicz does not imagine technological transformation led by a specialised extension service. He imagines incremental improvement produced when information is selected, observed, and incorporated into familiar work. Reserves are particularly significant. Storage shifts the household from reactive survival to anticipatory risk management. Prepared tools reduce the loss of scarce labour time during peak agricultural work. Supplementary craft activity reduces complete dependence on one productive stream. Moderated consumption protects stocks from socially prestigious but materially damaging expenditure. None of these practices removes exposure to harvest failure, illness, dues, or coercive estate relations, but each is designed to increase the household's capacity to absorb ordinary shocks. Legowicz's reserve logic is both material and temporal. Grain, fodder, food, sound buildings, usable implements, and healthy animals embody past work that can be carried into a period of need. Forethought transforms a temporary surplus into a buffer. This is not hoarding for indefinite accumulation; the moral purpose is continuity of household life and the ability to meet obligations. Prudence is measured by whether present abundance is governed by awareness of future scarcity. Consumption is therefore a governance issue. The text attacks excess in drinking and costly celebrations not simply as personal indulgence but as diversion of food, money, and time from household maintenance (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 7–9, 22–23). The analysis of feasting is socially perceptive: expenditure may be motivated by custom, reciprocity, or reputation, yet the household bears the material cost. Legowicz attempts to revise the status value of consumption by attaching honour to moderation and good order instead. The treatment of animals extends responsibility beyond human labour. Draught animals are productive assets whose condition determines what the household can cultivate and transport. Feeding, rest, and appropriate use protect future work capacity (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 20–22). Legowicz does not develop an animal ethic independent of utility, but he condemns negligent management that consumes productive capacity faster than it can be restored. Legowicz reinforces these directions through causal argument. He frequently connects conduct to foreseeable consequences: neglected tools create delay; delayed work reduces the harvest; excessive drinking

consumes grain and money; poor storage spoils food; lack of reserves produces dependence. The household is asked to become an observing and forecasting institution. Prudence is both a virtue and a practical technology of resilience. The repeated appeal to experience matters because it modifies the form of authority. Biblical citation establishes the moral value of labour and prudence, while observed consequence explains how a practice succeeds or fails. The householder is expected to see the connection and act intelligently, not merely to obey an unexplained order. The programme thus trains causal attention: work is evaluated by sequence, quality, and effects.

In contemporary resilience language, these measures mostly strengthen absorptive and adaptive capacity. Reserves absorb shortfalls; maintenance prevents avoidable shocks; diversification creates alternative options; knowledge supports adjustment; and moderation reduces self-generated exposure. The programme says little about transformative capacity - changing the institutions that produce unequal vulnerability. That distinction prevents a functional resemblance from becoming an exaggerated claim. What the text does not address is equally important. It does not analyse access to land, the distribution of rents and dues, peasant dependence, market power, or the legal structure of estate society. Livelihood insecurity is interpreted mainly as a problem of household conduct. This produces actionable advice but also moralises vulnerability: structural constraints recede while diligence and foresight bear an enlarged explanatory burden. Nor are households equally positioned to follow the advice. A family without surplus cannot create a substantial reserve; a household short of labour may be unable to release a child for school or a worker for maintenance; a poor dwelling may not permit effective separation during illness; a household lacking access to tools or draft animals cannot compensate through diligence alone. Legowicz's rules presume a minimum asset base that the text does not specify.

The livelihood programme therefore has a conditional logic. Where resources and authority exist, better organisation can preserve assets and reduce avoidable loss. Where insecurity arises from exactions, landlessness, severe illness, or collective disaster, domestic prudence has limited reach. The moral grammar makes each household responsible for using what it has well, but it does not create what it lacks. The closing promise of household blessing (Legowicz, 1779, p. 23) should be read within this tension. It joins material order, piety, and hope, but it does not amount to a guarantee that good conduct will overcome structural disadvantage. The text encourages responsibility under uncertainty; it cannot secure the outcome to which responsibility is directed.

Labour governance, credibility, and restraint of violence: The household includes servants and hired labourers living under the householder's authority. Legowicz insists that agreed wages (*jurgielt*) be paid punctually, characterising their retention as both extortion and a grave sin, and warning that an unreliable householder will find it difficult to recruit servants (Legowicz, 1779, p. 12). The instruction combines divine sanction with a reputational mechanism. Failure to pay is unjust to the worker and costly to the employer because it destroys credibility in a local labour network. This is one of the clearest examples of institutional reasoning in the handbook. An agreement creates an expectation; timely performance makes future cooperation possible; breach produces information that circulates among potential workers. The labour market envisioned is local and relational. Reputation substitutes partly for formal enforcement because workers' willingness to enter service depends on what they know about a household head. Legowicz makes moral credibility an economic asset. The emphasis on punctuality matters. The obligation is not satisfied by eventual payment; timing affects the dependent person's ability to meet needs and obligations. This is not a modern labour code, but it recognises that exchange depends on enforceable expectations. The surrounding catalogue condemns deceit, broken contracts, false promises, and manipulation (Legowicz, 1779, p. 11). Trust is treated as a productive condition rather than merely a private virtue. The worker's dependence gives the command additional weight. A servant may lack stocks, land, or bargaining power and may rely on the promised payment for immediate consumption or

future plans. Delay therefore redistributes risk from employer to worker. Legowicz does not formulate this in distributive terms, but his insistence on due time recognises that control of timing is part of economic power. The handbook also requires household heads to permit dependants to meet religious obligations and receive instruction (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 1–3, 9–12). Labour command is not absolute over time. Periods of worship, catechesis, and moral formation are treated as claims that the householder must respect. In practical terms this places a limit on extraction of labour, even though the limit is grounded in confessional duty rather than a secular entitlement to rest. The same relational logic informs the treatment of authority. Legowicz condemns uncontrolled anger, curses, cruelty, and punishment driven by rage, while permitting hierarchical correction directed towards improvement (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 10–12). His aim is not the abolition of domestic power but its moral limitation. Restraining violence protects bodies, reduces fear and conflict, and preserves cooperation within the household. Temperance works similarly. The discussion of drunkenness connects individual intoxication with resource loss, quarrels, neglect of work, theft, illness, and premature death (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 7–9). A supposedly personal vice is analysed through household externalities.

Legowicz distinguishes correction from rage by purpose and condition. Punishment should respond to wrongdoing and seek amendment; anger makes the superior lose self-command and transforms discipline into injury. The distinction is paternalist because the superior retains authority to define the fault and administer correction. It is nevertheless a real normative restriction: power exercised through humiliation, cursing, or cruelty fails the standard of good household government. The concern is not only humanitarian. Violence damages coordination. Fear may secure immediate obedience but weakens trust, communication, and willingness to remain in service. Anger also distorts judgement, making work allocation and punishment unpredictable. The restrained householder is therefore more capable of sustaining a stable labour organisation. Moral self-government becomes a precondition of governing others. The alcohol sequence demonstrates how Legowicz connects multiple institutional costs. Intoxication uses resources, impairs foresight, interrupts scheduled work, increases conflict, damages health, and transmits a behavioural model to younger members. The vice is located in an individual body but its consequences are distributed across the household. Temperance is thus simultaneously a health rule, a labour rule, a budget rule, and a rule against violence.

Honesty has a similarly extended field. The handbook condemns theft, deceit in exchange, failure to keep promises, and unjust appropriation (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 10–12). These offences matter because repeated exchange in a small community depends on expectations that cannot be recreated for every transaction. A credible householder reduces the uncertainty borne by workers and neighbours. Trust, in this limited sense, lowers the relational cost of cooperation. Social-capital language helps to identify the practical importance of credibility and cooperation, but it must not romanticise them. Trust within a hierarchy can support coordination while leaving power radically unequal. The servant receives protection through duties imposed on the master, not through a stated right, complaint procedure, or independent authority. The householder remains judge, disciplinarian, employer, and moral instructor. Legowicz's programme seeks trustworthy paternal rule, not equality between contracting parties. Woolcock and Narayan's (2000) warning that social relations operate within wider institutional environments is relevant here. Reputation can discourage some abuses, yet it works only where information circulates and workers possess alternatives. A servant unable to leave an abusive arrangement cannot convert adverse reputation into effective protection. Moral teaching may supplement weak enforcement; it does not remove the need for enforceable limits. The text also leaves the worker's voice largely unrecorded. We learn what the householder owes and what consequences he should fear, not how a servant might describe injustice, negotiate work, or seek remedy. The source is consequently valuable evidence for an attempted regulation of authority, but not for the lived quality of labour relations. Its asymmetry is part of the

result. From a development perspective, the labour programme contains three separable functions: it protects a minimum claim to agreed compensation; it supports repeated cooperation through credibility; and it seeks to reduce the bodily and organisational costs of violent command. None becomes an articulated labour right. The difference between a superior's duty and a subordinate's enforceable claim remains decisive.

The household as a health and care institution: Pages 24–39 assign the household extensive responsibility for cleanliness, food, clothing, ventilation, infant protection, illness, and contagion. Legowicz begins the section on *ochędóstwo* - cleanliness, neatness, and order - by grounding bodily care in human dignity. Even poor people possess rational and immortal souls; cleanliness of body, clothing, food, utensils, buildings, and surroundings is therefore not an elite luxury (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 24–28). The theological claim widens the social scope of hygiene.

This opening prevents cleanliness from being interpreted only as a marker of rank. Legowicz explicitly extends the obligation to persons described as the poorest and most socially humble (Legowicz, 1779, p. 24). The body is worthy of care because human worth precedes material status. In developmental terms, the argument universalises a basic welfare concern without employing the language of equal social rights. At the same time, *ochędóstwo* contains a disciplinary and representational dimension. Clean bodies, clothing, utensils, buildings, and surroundings signify order; dirt can be read as neglect. The category thus combines dignity, health, appearance, and moral judgement. It can protect poor bodies from the idea that hygiene is a luxury, but it can also turn material deprivation into a visible fault where water, clothing, space, or labour are insufficient.

Legowicz treats the domestic environment as an interconnected exposure system. Food can be contaminated by unclean vessels or spoiled storage; damp clothing and buildings increase bodily vulnerability; stagnant or smoky air affects those sleeping and working inside; waste and neglected surroundings return risk to the dwelling (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 24–35). Health does not reside only in the individual. It is produced through relations among bodies, objects, rooms, animals, food, water, temperature, and labour. The subsequent health chapter identifies preventable contributors to illness: spoiled food, contaminated or unsuitable water, dampness, cold, smoke, unventilated rooms, excessive alcohol and food, exhaustion, and improper care of infants and sick people (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 28–37). The proposed remedies operate mostly through domestic routines. Health protection is achieved by how household members cook, store, clean, clothe, heat, air, feed, and nurse. The causal form of this chapter is historically significant. Illness remains within a religious universe, but Legowicz does not explain it only as providence, punishment, or an inscrutable event. He identifies modifiable exposures and asks household members to act before a crisis develops. Prevention becomes a moral duty because some causes can be observed and some harms anticipated. Knowledge expands responsibility. Food management demonstrates the link between livelihood and health. Grain or other provisions preserved as reserves are valuable only if storage keeps them fit for consumption. Spoilage represents both loss of an economic asset and production of a health hazard. Moderation likewise protects stocks and bodies at once. The kitchen is therefore a site where resource governance becomes preventive care.

Work itself has a dual status. It is a moral and productive necessity, but excessive exertion, exposure to cold, wet clothing, and failure to rest can damage health (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 29–35). This qualification prevents the ethic of diligence from becoming unlimited extraction of bodily capacity. A productive household must preserve the worker, not only demand work. The same principle is applied to the care of draught animals, although human dignity supplies a different moral ground. The instructions concerning air are especially revealing. Opening, ventilating, or otherwise treating enclosed space locates health partly in environmental management rather than exclusively in the patient. In crowded domestic conditions, the

householder's control over heat, smoke, openings, bedding, and room use affects every member. Health governance is embedded in architecture and daily scheduling. Infants and young children appear as persons of heightened vulnerability. Legowicz discusses warmth, clothing, feeding, handling, and protection from harmful routines (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 33–36). An infant cannot perform the recommended conduct and therefore makes dependence explicit. Preventive health requires another person to perceive risk, allocate time, and provide continuous care. The household's capacity is measured partly by how it treats members who cannot reciprocate.

These passages also expose gendered invisibility. Maternal and domestic labour is indispensable to feeding, clothing, cleaning, and nursing, yet the normative address remains centred on the householder. Decisions and accountability are masculinised while implementation frequently relies on women. The text recognises care as socially necessary work without analysing its distribution, expertise, or cost to the carer. Care of an ordinary illness similarly joins observation and provision. The household must supply appropriate food and drink, warmth, clean bedding, attention, and protection against practices believed harmful (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 35–37). Such instructions make the home a first-line welfare institution. Illness interrupts productive reciprocity, yet the patient continues to possess a claim grounded in mercy and shared human worth.

The treatment of infectious illness makes the household's institutional role especially clear. Legowicz recommends separating the sick person and the objects used in care, ventilating and fumigating the room according to contemporary practice, limiting unnecessary contact, and designating a carer rather than abandoning the patient (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 37–39). Protection and mercy must be combined. The household simultaneously supplies isolation, nursing, food, supervision, and moral obligation. This creates a difficult allocation problem. Complete abandonment violates charity; unrestricted contact increases danger. Legowicz's solution differentiates roles and spaces: one or a limited number of persons provide care, objects are not freely shared, contact is reduced, and the room is managed as a distinct environment. The source therefore contains an elementary protocol that converts a general duty of mercy into coordinated practice. The protocol also reveals unequal exposure. Concentrating contact in a designated carer protects the wider household by transferring more risk to that person. The text presents this as necessary and charitable service but does not discuss consent, compensation, replacement, or the carer's own dependants. What appears as household resilience may rest on one member's intensified vulnerability. Separation presumes space. A dwelling with only one usable room cannot implement isolation in the same way as a larger household. Adequate food, clean linen, fuel, and a spare carer also depend on resources. The advice identifies sound practices without addressing the material threshold required to perform them. Preventive responsibility is universalised; preventive capacity is not. This arrangement reflects a setting in which professional medical provision was sparse. Research on the Catholic Enlightenment in the Commonwealth shows that clergy were expected to communicate health knowledge and reform practices considered harmful, although implementation was uneven (Witecki, 2022). Legowicz's programme turns that pastoral information into household health governance. The priest is a broker of knowledge; the householder is the local implementer; care work, much of it implicitly performed by women, is the operational foundation.

The parish-household chain differs from a modern clinical system in more than technical knowledge. There is no diagnosis by a licensed professional, standardised surveillance, publicly supplied isolation facility, or guaranteed material assistance. The intervention relies on persuasive authority and domestic means. Its strength is reach into everyday practice; its weakness is dependence on household resources and competence. The priest's role is nevertheless more than symbolic. By selecting medical advice, translating it into plain conduct, and placing it under religious obligation, he changes the social status of information. A recommendation about ventilation or contaminated food becomes a matter for conscience. Witecki's (2022)

account of Catholic Enlightenment healthcare helps locate this transformation within a broader attempt to enlarge pastoral usefulness while retaining religious ends. The advice should not be validated selectively by present-day medicine. Useful observations about cleanliness, ventilation, food, warmth, and separation coexist with assumptions and remedies specific to eighteenth-century medical culture. The historical result is not early biomedical policy but a shift towards preventable causes, observable consequences, and routine domestic intervention. Its development significance lies in the organisation of responsibility, not in retrospective certification of every remedy. This qualification matters methodologically. A present-day reader can easily praise advice that resembles current public health and disregard recommendations now judged ineffective. Doing so would reconstruct a false modern programme. Legowicz's health governance must be analysed as a whole: a historically mixed body of knowledge organised through observation, clerical mediation, household authority, and care obligations.

The health chapters therefore contribute five institutional functions. They define a domestic environment of risk; assign preventive duties; identify vulnerable persons; organise care during incapacity; and manage tension between contagion control and non-abandonment. Together they make bodily welfare central rather than incidental to good household government. They also demonstrate the programme's central contradiction: an enlarged concern for welfare is implemented through unequal and resource-dependent domestic labour.

Shared goods, common risks, and household externalities:

Legowicz repeatedly crosses the boundary between private property and community welfare. Christian duty includes hospitality, assistance to the sick and poor, and repair of roads and bridges (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 5–6). Household management includes fire precautions, careful placement and use of flame, maintenance of buildings, and restraint in using forest resources (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 14–16). These directions identify goods and risks whose effects extend beyond one dwelling. The placement of roads and bridges among works of mercy is revealing. Infrastructure maintenance is not represented as a remote administrative matter but as assistance to concrete travellers and neighbours. A passable route enables movement of persons, goods, news, and help. Neglect imposes delays and danger on people who may have no direct relationship with the negligent householder. Material infrastructure becomes an object of neighbour-love.

Hospitality operates at the threshold between private resources and public mobility. A household can provide shelter, food, information, and safety to a traveller in a context where specialised accommodation or emergency services are limited (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 5–6). This makes domestic surplus part of an informal welfare network. The institution is flexible and immediate, but access depends on the host's judgement rather than on an enforceable entitlement.

Roads and bridges are local public goods: one household's contribution benefits many users, while neglect shifts costs to travellers and neighbours. Fire is a common risk because one person's carelessness can destroy adjacent property. Forest use contains an intertemporal externality: immediate extraction can diminish a resource on which future household production and community security depend. Hospitality and care similarly convert domestic resources into a local safety net. Fire prevention supplies the clearest negative externality. Legowicz asks householders to inspect buildings, control flame, and avoid careless practices because a domestic error can destroy not only one property but neighbouring dwellings, settlements, forests, and economically important resources (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 14–16). Risk travels faster than responsibility organised around ownership. The instruction therefore expands the householder's duty to include foreseeable harm to persons who did not participate in his decision. The fire rules also join maintenance and collective security. A sound chimney, roof, hearth, or storage arrangement may appear to concern a single owner, yet the density and material construction of rural settlements can make each building part of a shared risk system. Preventive expenditure by one household produces benefits for others.

Conversely, a household that saves effort by neglecting precautions imposes risk externally. Forest use introduces a longer horizon. Legowicz warns against destructive or careless use whose consequences reach landowners, settlements, and future users (Legowicz, 1779, pp. 14–16). The argument does not establish an ecological doctrine or a local forestry association. It recognises that a resource can be depleted by present convenience and that ownership does not eliminate responsibility for future availability. Care for poor and sick persons represents a different kind of externality. Destitution and illness originate in individual circumstances but create claims on neighbours and parishioners. By treating assistance as a positive duty, Legowicz attempts to prevent exclusion from becoming abandonment. The resulting safety net is relational and discretionary: it may respond quickly, but coverage and adequacy depend on available generosity and local knowledge.

Ostrom's (1990) work helps to make collective-action and stewardship problems visible, but Legowicz does not describe self-governing associations that negotiate rules among equals. Rules descend from religious teaching and are executed by household heads. The text recognises interdependence without developing participatory governance. Its model of the common good is distributive through duty: each householder is morally required to internalise some of the costs that private action imposes on others. The distinction between a commons institution and a moral command is decisive. Ostrom's analysis directs attention to rule-making, monitoring, graduated sanctions, conflict-resolution mechanisms, and recognised participation. Legowicz provides normative rules and sanctions of conscience, reputation, and divine judgement, but little procedure for collective choice. The village is a field of mutual consequence more than an organised decision-making body. This means that compliance problems remain unresolved. Road maintenance may be underprovided if each household waits for others; forest restraint may fail if the prudent user bears costs while others extract; fire precautions may remain invisible until disaster. The handbook tries to overcome free-riding by making contribution a duty independent of immediate private return. It adds moral motivation, but not monitoring or coordinated allocation. The externality analysis also shows why the household is only "micro" in scale of governance. The effects of its decisions are not small. A flame, infectious disease, broken promise, neglected route, or transmitted practice can link domestic conduct to parish-wide outcomes. Legowicz's institutional strategy is to govern wide effects by multiplying responsible small units. The approach is attractive where central provision is weak because it mobilises knowledge, labour, and resources already embedded locally. It is also fragile. Households differ in capacity, interests, and interpretation; burdens may be duplicated or avoided; and goods requiring coordinated investment can exceed domestic means. The common good is acknowledged more fully than it is institutionally secured.

The intended mechanism of change: Across these domains, the handbook advances a recurrent four-stage mechanism. First, parish authority selects and legitimises a norm or item of knowledge. Second, print, reading, preaching, and conversation make the instruction available. Third, the householder incorporates it into repeated allocations of time, work, food, money, discipline, and care. Fourth, repetition is expected to produce cumulative outcomes: more competent children, reliable labour relations, preserved resources, fewer avoidable illnesses, lower fire risk, and more usable local infrastructure. The mechanism is not linear in practice. Consequences are expected to feed back into belief and reputation. A well-maintained household provides visible evidence for prudence; an honest employer attracts labour; a child's acquired competence validates schooling; preserved health confirms preventive routines; and disaster following negligence becomes a warning to others. Observation supplies local reinforcement for norms initially communicated through authority. The model also contains intergenerational transmission. Children observe how work, prayer, conflict, food, property, and servants are managed. Schooling gives some of them additional skills, while domestic example supplies the practical script into which those skills are inserted.

The household reproduces not only labour capacity but a moral and managerial style. Change becomes durable when a revised style is inherited as ordinary conduct. Three forms of enforcement hold this architecture together. Religious sanctions identify harmful conduct as sin and place it under divine judgement. Practical causal arguments connect behaviour with visible loss or benefit. Domestic authority permits the householder to organise others' time and conduct. The combination is powerful because it connects conviction, interest, and command. It is also dangerous because the same person who implements protective norms possesses disciplinary power over dependants. A fourth, weaker form of enforcement is reputation. The warning that an unjust employer will struggle to obtain servants shows that knowledge about conduct can alter future cooperation (Legowicz, 1779, p. 12). Reputation links households horizontally and converts private behaviour into a community signal. Its effectiveness depends, however, on information flow and meaningful alternatives for those choosing whether to cooperate. The mechanism therefore rests on four capacities: cognitive capacity to understand causal instruction; material capacity to allocate resources; authoritative capacity to coordinate persons; and normative capacity to make compliance meaningful. A household may possess one without the others. Literacy without surplus cannot create a reserve; authority without self-restraint can produce violence; goodwill without information may reproduce harmful care; and information without repetition may not become practice.

The mechanism therefore moves in two directions. It forms agency by teaching householders to read, plan, observe, anticipate, and communicate. At the same time, it intensifies discipline by making them responsible for supervising children, servants, patients, and family morality. Rural change is imagined not as an event but as the replication of ordered routines across households. The household is the hinge between the individual and the parish community. The scale transition can now be stated more precisely. Parish authority does not directly produce better harvest timing, clean utensils, paid wages, or safe hearths. It attempts to alter rules at the point where those outcomes are generated. A changed domestic rule affects repeated decisions; repeated decisions affect household stocks, skills, bodies, and relations; similar changes across households affect labour reputation, contagion, infrastructure, and shared risk. Macro-effects are hypothesised as the aggregation and interaction of micro-institutional routines. This theory of change is inexpensive in administrative terms because it uses existing roles and resources. It requires no permanent inspector or specialised office for each domain. Its cost is displaced into household labour, pastoral persuasion, and the moral burden placed on the head and carers. What appears administratively light can be socially demanding.

The programme also has no explicit measurement stage. Legowicz offers causal warnings and promised benefits, but no indicators, baseline, reporting cycle, or method of revising advice in response to outcomes. Learning is observational and informal. The difference from development policy is therefore not only vocabulary; it lies in the absence of a reflexive administrative system capable of monitoring implementation and redistributing support. The intended mechanism is best represented as a parish-household circuit rather than a simple top-down command. The parish creates and legitimises instruction; households implement and demonstrate it; conversation and reputation circulate local results; repeated worship and reading renew the norm. The circuit can adapt information to daily life, but it also filters every intervention through the authority, resources, and inequalities of the household.

DISCUSSION

What the micro-institution lens adds: Reading the household as a micro-institution changes the interpretation of *Duties of Rural Householders*. The text is not simply a miscellaneous set of religious, economic, and medical recommendations. It allocates several governance functions to one small-scale organisation. The household educates future members, organises production, stores resources,

contracts labour, enforces conduct, provides care, manages environmental risks, and contributes to shared goods. It also receives, translates, and transmits knowledge. These functions are mutually dependent and stabilised by recurrent roles. The lens explains why the handbook can be thematically heterogeneous yet institutionally coherent. A conventional subject classification separates religion, economy, education, medicine, and morality. Legowicz's intervention brings them together because the same stock of time, authority, labour, food, space, and information must serve them all. Household government is the mechanism through which doctrinal instruction is converted into allocations and routines. The chapters differ in object, not in implementing institution. This lens also clarifies scale. The individual is rarely Legowicz's final unit of intervention. Drunkenness, anger, hygiene, or reading matter because they alter relations and resources inside the home. Nor is the village the immediate implementing body. Community outcomes are expected to emerge from coordinated domestic conduct. The household is thus a meso-level hinge at micro scale: smaller than formal parish or estate institutions, but more organised and consequential than isolated individual choice.

North's (1990) broad distinction between organisations and the rules structuring interaction is useful but must be adapted here. The household is both a group of persons and an arena of rules. It controls assets, assigns tasks, and reproduces membership; it also embodies expectations about obedience, care, payment, example, and stewardship. The term micro-institution identifies this overlap. It does not imply formal legal personality or equality among participants. The analysis further reveals a nested arrangement. Household rules are embedded in parish norms, confessional discipline, estate society, and wider political authority. Legowicz seeks to alter the inner layer while treating much of the outer arrangement as given. This helps explain why the programme can be reformist in everyday practice and conservative in social structure. Institutional change at one scale need not challenge the hierarchy containing it. Institutional language must nevertheless remain relational. Historical households contained unequal access to resources, voice, mobility, and authority. "The household" does not act as a unified subject; the householder acts on behalf of and over others. Women's work sustains care and social reproduction while the male householder occupies the explicit normative centre. Children and servants receive benefits but rarely participate in determining the rules. Treating the household as an institution therefore reveals power that a unitary household model would conceal. This point has methodological implications for development research using households as units of observation. Aggregate household welfare can improve while burdens and benefits remain unequal. A reserve, cleaner dwelling, or diversified activity is not self-executing; someone contributes labour, forgoes consumption, assumes risk, and controls the resulting resource. Doss and Meinzen-Dick (2015) show why cooperation within households is itself a collective-action achievement. Legowicz's text offers a historical example of an attempt to secure such cooperation by moralising the authority of one member. The micro-institution lens therefore adds two forms of visibility. It reveals coordination that disappears when analysis stops at individual behaviour, and it reveals domination that disappears when the household is treated as a harmonious unit. Both are necessary. Without the first, the handbook looks like disconnected advice; without the second, paternal order looks like consensual resilience.

Development functions without development policy: The title's distinction between development and development policy can now be specified. Legowicz's programme performs functions that later policy systems would distribute among schools, labour regulation, public-health services, extension systems, welfare provision, fire regulation, and local infrastructure. Yet it lacks the defining architecture of modern development policy. There is no specialised administrative apparatus, quantified target population, budgeted intervention, monitoring system, rights-based entitlement, or empirical evaluation of outcomes. The programme is pastoral, normative, and household-centred.

Nor is there a separate economic objective against which other goals are instrumentalised. Legowicz's "spiritual and temporal happiness" places material security, moral conduct, bodily welfare, and salvation within a common order. Increased productivity is good because it supports obligations and household continuity, not because aggregate output is an autonomous measure of progress. Health is valuable as a dimension of human life and capacity for duty, not chiefly as a contribution to growth. The comparison is therefore functional rather than genealogical. Education expands useful competence; reserves and diversification reduce vulnerability; punctual wages sustain trust; hygiene and isolation reduce preventable risk; and road or forest duties address externalities. These are intelligible as development functions, but their historical justifications and institutional carriers differ. Legowicz does not theorise "human capital," "resilience," or "public goods." He connects conduct to spiritual and temporal welfare through duty, prudence, and charity.

Functional comparison is valuable precisely because it allows differences in institutional supply to be specified. A modern school system may define enrolment, curriculum, funding, qualifications, and accountability; Legowicz depends on parental duty and a parish school. Labour law may specify enforceable claims; Legowicz depends on sin, conscience, and reputation. Public health may supply surveillance, clinical expertise, and isolation resources; Legowicz relies on clerical advice and domestic care. Local government may levy resources for roads; Legowicz treats repair as neighbourly obligation. Similar problems are acted upon through dissimilar infrastructures. The formulation "before development policy" also draws attention to thin public-service environments. Where schools, medical practitioners, poor relief, and formal enforcement were limited, parish and household institutions could carry multiple functions. Religion was not an external cultural variable added to an otherwise secular economy. It provided personnel, communication channels, sanctions, routines, and a comprehensive account of why material conduct mattered. This supports the broader argument that development analysis should investigate religious institutions as historically embedded actors rather than treating faith as either private belief or automatically benevolent social capital (Clarke, 2006; Deneulin & Rakodi, 2011).

The parish-household configuration may be described as functionally dense and administratively thin. A small number of roles carries many tasks; instructions travel through existing religious and domestic routines; and implementation uses resources already present in the home. Such density can make intervention legible and culturally authoritative. It can also overload institutions designed for unequal and different purposes. A householder capable of organising seasonal work is not thereby competent to evaluate medical advice, protect every dependant, or maintain public infrastructure. At the same time, multifunctionality can shift burdens downward. The absence of public provision is answered by assigning more duties to the household, especially to its head and carers. A household's ability to perform these functions depends on resources, labour, literacy, and internal relations that the handbook cannot guarantee. The poorest households may be least able to keep reserves, release children for school, maintain buildings, or isolate a patient. Moral exhortation does not equal institutional capacity. This downward shift may be called householdisation of social risk: problems that exceed one household are managed by enlarging household responsibility. The term is not attributed to Legowicz; it describes the allocation produced by the text. Householdisation can mobilise local agency and reduce waiting for remote institutions. It can also obscure the need for pooled resources, redistribute risk towards women and dependants, and blame households that lack the means to comply. The historical case therefore complicates a simple opposition between local initiative and state policy. Legowicz's model is neither spontaneous community self-help nor public administration. It is a hybrid in which an organised religious authority seeks to govern through households. The parish provides norms, some educational infrastructure, and communication; the household supplies implementation. Development functions emerge from the connection between them.

Agency within paternalism: The text's strongest development potential lies in its recognition that rural people can learn, reason causally, plan, and improve practice. The householder is expected to compare present conduct with future consequences, acquire knowledge from books, make timely decisions, and teach others. Children are considered educable; servants are moral persons whose wages and religious participation matter; poor bodies deserve cleanliness and care. The programme does not treat rural life as fixed by custom. This is an important historical claim about competence. The intended reader is not addressed only through fear or ritual repetition. He is given causal explanations and expected to recognise patterns among waste, illness, trust, time, and future security. Practical rationality is distributed beyond scholarly and administrative elites. The village is represented as improvable through learning, not as a static domain of ignorance. Yet this is bounded agency. The priest determines the normative programme; the householder implements it; dependants are governed within it. Education enlarges competence but channels it towards prescribed roles. Protection arises as the superior's duty, not the dependant's enforceable right. Mercy assists the vulnerable without redistributing authority. In Sen's (1999) terms, the text may increase some substantive opportunities - literacy, health, security - while leaving the freedom to participate in defining social arrangements largely untouched.

Kabeer's (1999) framework sharpens the difference between effective action and strategic choice. A woman may possess crucial health knowledge and produce a cared-for household without controlling resources or deciding how her labour is allocated. A child may gain literacy without participating in the decision to attend school or in choosing the ends to which literacy is put. A servant may receive wages without power to enforce punctuality. Achievements cannot be read straightforwardly as evidence of equal agency. This tension cautions against celebrating local institutions simply because they are local. The household can generate care, trust, and resilience, but also domination, unpaid labour, violence, and exclusion. Legowicz recognises some of these dangers and tries to moralise power, particularly through punctual payment and restraint of anger. He does not create external accountability. The quality of protection continues to depend on the conscience of the person who governs. Agarwal's (1997) insistence that bargaining power is shaped within and beyond the household identifies the absent dimension. Legowicz addresses the head's conscience but not the alternatives available to dependants, their access to property, the legitimacy of their claims in external institutions, or their ability to leave harmful arrangements. He regulates the use of power without redistributing its bases. Paternalism in the text is therefore not a superficial tone that can be removed to reveal an otherwise modern programme. It is part of the mechanism. The householder can coordinate many domains quickly because authority is concentrated. The same concentration makes correction dependent on his moral formation and limits the agency of other members. Capacity and domination are institutionally entangled. The most accurate conclusion is neither that Legowicz emancipates rural people nor that his advice merely disciplines them. He attributes practical reason and responsibility to householders, seeks material and bodily improvements for dependants, and constrains certain abuses. Simultaneously, he reproduces confessional, gendered, and status hierarchy. Agency expands inside a prescribed order rather than through collective authorship of that order.

Structural silence and the moralisation of vulnerability: The handbook's micro-institutional strength is also its structural weakness. Problems are translated into actions a householder can undertake immediately: drink less, prepare tools, keep reserves, pay wages, clean rooms, care for children, repair roads. This practical focus can produce meaningful improvement. It also locates causality within conduct and leaves macro-structures comparatively unexamined. The translation of a problem into a duty changes what counts as an explanation. If shortage is answered by reserves and moderation, the analytical focus falls on foresight. If illness is answered by cleanliness and care, attention falls on routine. If labour conflict is answered by honesty and restraint, attention falls on

character. These factors may be causally important, but they can crowd out questions about asset distribution, coercion, service access, and enforceable protection. The text does not criticise serfdom, estate hierarchy, land distribution, compulsory obligations, or unequal political standing. It does not ask whether an extractive order prevents households from accumulating reserves or sending children to school. Nor does it propose public enforcement of contracts or provision for households unable to care for sick members. Vulnerability risks becoming a moral failure of foresight, diligence, or temperance even when it causes exceed household control. The silence must be interpreted cautiously. A forty-seven-page handbook written for practical pastoral use cannot be expected to contain a complete political economy. Absence is nonetheless relevant because the text presents a broad explanation of rural welfare and allocates responsibility extensively. Its reform horizon stops at improving conduct within the existing order. This boundary differentiates micro-reform from structural reform. Livelihoods scholarship is useful precisely because it connects household strategies to institutions and power beyond the household (Bebbington, 1999). Social-capital analysis likewise warns that trust and networks do not substitute for accountable public institutions (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). Applied historically, these insights show why Legowicz's programme can strengthen adaptive capacity without transforming the rules that distribute assets and authority. Ellis (1998) and Scoones (1998) also emphasise that livelihood strategies depend on access mediated by institutions. The ability to diversify is not created by exhortation alone; it requires skills, tools, time, demand, and permission. The ability to store depends on surplus and secure facilities. The ability to use a school depends on labour allocation and proximity. The household strategy is always conditioned by an opportunity structure beyond it.

The gendered silence is equally consequential. Women appear through maternal, domestic, and caring functions, but the programme's public voice belongs to the male householder. The health system envisioned in the text relies on care work without examining its distribution or the caregiver's authority and welfare. A micro-institutional reading therefore prevents "household resilience" from becoming a neutral label for the absorption of risk through subordinate labour. Care makes the asymmetry concrete. When illness occurs, productive work is interrupted, a patient consumes resources, and someone must supply attention. Legowicz rightly refuses abandonment, but the solution stays inside the household. The cost is absorbed through food, time, space, and exposure. No larger risk pool or replacement service appears. The moral success of care can coexist with an unequal concentration of its burden. The moralisation critique should not imply that moral norms are irrelevant to development. Punctual wages, non-violence, care, honesty, and restraint depend partly on normative commitments even in highly administered systems. The problem arises when moral commitment substitutes for resources and accountability rather than complementing them. Legowicz's case shows both the productive force of obligation and the insufficiency of obligation alone.

Religion as implementation infrastructure: Religion in the handbook performs at least five institutional roles. It identifies an authority able to select and communicate knowledge; supplies a vocabulary that links diverse practices; attaches sanctions to conduct not easily observed by outsiders; creates repeated occasions for learning and self-examination; and defines beneficiaries whose claims extend beyond immediate economic reciprocity. These functions help explain why practical instruction could be integrated into parish work. Clarke (2006) and Deneulin and Rakodi (2011) criticise development analysis that treats religion either as a residual belief system or as an automatically positive source of community cohesion. Legowicz's text confirms the need for a differentiated account. Religious authority can mobilise education, care, honesty, and stewardship. It can also legitimise hierarchy, prescribe roles, and place decisions beyond participation by those governed. The integration of spiritual and temporal welfare produces a powerful motivational architecture. Paying a servant is prudent and just before God; cleanliness protects health and honours human worth; work sustains the household and

fulfils vocation; hospitality assists a traveller and serves Christ; care during contagion preserves both mercy and life. Multiple reasons converge on the same act. Compliance does not depend on economic incentive alone. Ritual recurrence supplies implementation continuity. Rules about health or labour may be forgotten after a sermon, but prayer, confession, catechesis, and household reading periodically reactivate the moral frame. The concluding devotion turns the book from a one-time communication into a potential routine. Religion is therefore not simply the content of the first and last chapters; it is the reproduction system for the intervening rules. The same infrastructure has exclusionary boundaries. The programme presumes Catholic doctrine, clerical authority, patriarchal headship, and a moral community organised through parish belonging. It does not discuss religious plurality or the legitimacy of dissent from the prescribed ends. Its capacity to coordinate depends partly on a shared confessional order that modern development institutions cannot presume. The historical lesson is not that contemporary policy should reproduce pastoral government. It is that implementation always requires carriers of trust, meaning, repetition, and sanction. Modern programmes that treat values and local institutions as external "culture" may miss the mechanisms through which conduct becomes durable. Conversely, programmes that enlist religious institutions without examining hierarchy may reproduce exclusions in the name of reach.

Portability, replication, and historical significance: Pajėdienė's (2022) identification of the 1797 Lithuanian adaptation supplies evidence for one part of the proposed mechanism: the programme could be extracted from its original print setting and reused as pastoral instruction elsewhere. The translated material covered the main practical sequence through the health chapter. This supports the claim that the text functioned as a reproducible package of household rules. The change of medium is significant. A Polish printed handbook prepared for Legowicz's parish entered a Lithuanian manuscript sermon collection. Such transfer suggests that the programme's usefulness did not depend entirely on private possession by householders. Clergy could select, translate, and re-perform it orally. The parish knowledge infrastructure was capable of moving content across language and format. Replication is not the same as impact. We do not know how many copies circulated, who read them, how oral transmission altered them, or whether practices changed. Future research should therefore compare surviving copies, parish visitation records, household inventories, sermons, and related handbooks. A multilingual corpus could test whether the integration identified here was distinctive to Legowicz or part of a broader Catholic rural-improvement repertoire. Nor does textual adaptation imply unchanged meaning. A sermon positions listeners differently from a handbook addressed to a reader; translation can alter examples, authority, and accessibility; selection can privilege some functions over others. The Lithuanian evidence proves reproducibility of content but opens, rather than closes, the question of reception.

Four research directions follow. First, comparative study should examine how other eighteenth-century parish texts distributed responsibility among household, parish, estate, and state. Second, reception research should seek evidence of ownership, reading, translation, and oral reuse. Third, gender- and labour-centred analysis should reconstruct the experience of those governed by the householder. Fourth, historical-development research should compare the capacity and limits of religious micro-institutions across regions without assuming a single path from charity to welfare policy.

Implications for historical development research: The case supports a broader research agenda on development before specialised development administration. The object should not be a search for the earliest appearance of modern concepts. It should be the historical distribution of functions: who educated, protected health, managed risk, regulated labour, circulated useful knowledge, maintained shared goods, and justified those activities. Different societies may allocate comparable functions to estates, confraternities, guilds, households, religious institutions, municipalities, or patrons.

Such analysis can make institutional differentiation itself visible. In Legowicz's programme one household performs roles that a later administrative order might separate among employer, school, clinic, welfare service, sanitation authority, and local government. Differentiation can bring expertise, pooled resources, accountability, and rights. It can also fragment problems that are interdependent in everyday life. Historical comparison therefore illuminates both gains and losses in the movement from multifunctional local institutions to specialised policy systems. The concept of micro-institution should be used comparatively, not normatively. Some micro-institutions may be responsive, knowledge-rich, and capable of rapid coordination; others may be coercive, exclusionary, or under-resourced. Their small scale does not guarantee participation, and their embeddedness does not guarantee justice. Evaluation requires attention to capacity, internal distribution, external accountability, and the relation to institutions at larger scales.

Legowicz also demonstrates that an intended theory of change can be reconstructed from a text that lacks policy language. Actors, resources, routines, sanctions, transmission channels, and expected consequences form a causal architecture even without indicators or bureaucracy. This opens a methodological route for dialogue between intellectual history and development studies, provided that intended mechanisms are not confused with measured outcomes. Finally, the case suggests that household-focused development analysis should ask two questions simultaneously: what functions can a household realistically perform, and which burdens should not be left there? The first recognises local knowledge, care, and agency; the second guards against offloading structural problems onto unequal domestic relations. Legowicz's programme is historically valuable because it makes both sides unusually visible.

CONCLUSION

Józef Legowicz's *Duties of Rural Householders* presents the rural household as more than a residence or production unit. It is a micro-institution in which rules organise education, labour, resources, care, discipline, risk, and knowledge, and from which consequences are expected to extend into the parish community. The intended sequence is clear: pastoral authority supplies a morally legitimate body of practical knowledge; print and conversation circulate it; the householder converts it into routine; and routine is expected to improve spiritual and temporal welfare. This institutional architecture explains the handbook's unusual integration. Schooling, useful reading, timely work, reserves, supplementary crafts, punctual wages, honest agreements, restraint of violence, hygiene, nursing, isolation during infectious illness, fire safety, road repair, and forest stewardship belong to one programme because they are all treated as responsibilities of household government. In contemporary analytical terms, they touch capability, resilience, trust, public health, risk reduction, and shared goods.

The comparison must end where historical difference begins. Legowicz did not formulate development policy, a rights-based programme, or a theory of freedom. His reforms remained confessional, patriarchal, paternalist, and compatible with estate hierarchy. By concentrating on household conduct, the programme expanded practical agency while obscuring structural sources of insecurity and depending on unequal domestic authority. The historical importance of the text lies precisely in this combination. It reveals an early grammar of organised rural improvement in which religious norms, causal observation, and domestic governance worked together in the absence of specialised development institutions. "Development before development policy" should therefore be understood neither as praise nor as a claim of anticipation. It names a field of practices through which historical communities sought material and moral change - and a reminder that households can be both engines of capacity and sites where the costs of inadequate institutions are absorbed. The article's principal contribution is thus interpretive and methodological. Interpretively, it shows that the handbook's religious, economic, educational, sanitary, and social

instructions form one institutional design centred on household government. Methodologically, it demonstrates how development categories can be used to interrogate a pre-policy text without placing modern concepts in the author's voice. Functional resemblance must remain joined to historical difference. Legowicz's programme also leaves a durable analytical warning. Local institutions matter because they coordinate knowledge, resources, care, and behaviour close to everyday life. Their embeddedness, however, does not guarantee equal voice or adequate capacity. A serious account of household-based change must therefore examine both what households make possible and what larger institutions leave them to absorb.

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