

*From Ancient Kyiv, the first “Russia”,
to modern Poland and Austria*



*The Ledóchowski Family
in a thousand years of European history*



Jan Ledóchowski



Ambassadors, Generals, Saints and a Cardinal, mothers and writers, artists and musicians, politicians and rebels, engineers and architects, nuns, priests, spies, soldiers and sailors, they died in bed, battlefields and concentration camps, then the storms of history tossed them onto the shores of Turkey, Palestine, England, France, South Africa...

A unique story printed for the first time in English for the family.
For enquiries contact Jan@Ledochowski.eu.

A thousand years

The Ledóchowski story spans over 1,000 years, from ancient Kyiv to Poland and Austria. Prince Wladimir the Great's Ambassador, Halka, returned from Constantinople to persuade him to convert his empire, which stretched nearly from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, to Christianity. A much later Ledóchowski was Adjutant to the last Emperor of Austria, touring his Empire and battlefronts, and finally accompanying him into exile.

Blessed Maria Teresa and Saint Urszula are widely admired for founding religious orders which today care for thousands of needy people throughout the world.

Cardinal Mieczysław of Poland was arrested and imprisoned by the German Reich for resisting Bismarck's *Kulturkampf*. He was finally expelled, like his mother Maria Rozalia, who had wanted him to be a martyr. She had been arrested for spying against Russia.

General Ignacy valiantly commanded the Fortress of Modlin, which became the capital of Poland in a famous last stand against Russian invasion in 1831.

Captain Antoni taught navigation, wrote textbooks and invented terminology for the Navy of newly independent Poland after 1920.

Some prominent family members were quite controversial.

Marshal Stanisław led the Tarnogród Confederation in a successful rebellion against the Saxon King Augustus II. Did he really hand Poland over to Russian domination?

Jan was a boisterous Parliamentarian who started shouting "*Down with the Tsar!*" leading to a disastrous Uprising. Was he reckless or simply a few generations ahead of his time?

Wladimir, the Superior General of the Jesuits, was a superb organiser. Was he really anti-Semitic and responsible for Pope Pius XII's controversial position on Nazism and the Holocaust during the Second World War? His brother and a cousin died in Nazi concentration camps. His nephew, another Wladimir, fought for Poland throughout the War and then settled in South Africa. Was this Wladimir a traitor and communist sympathiser or should he be remembered for actively opposing the *apartheid* regime?

Jan puts the story of these and other family members in the context of wars, atrocities, religious conflicts and struggles between West and East through the ages. He explores the controversies and perhaps it is not surprising whom he usually ends up supporting.

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