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**THE POMERANIAN FAMILY CIRCLE  
OF FR. JÓZEF TOCKI (1805-1862),  
PARISH PRIEST OF ZDUŃSKA WOLA.  
A CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROSOPOGRAPHICAL STUDY  
OF THE PRIESTS OF KUJAWSKO-KALISKA DIOCESE**

**ABSTRACT:** Determining the origins of a priest is an integral part of biographical and more broadly prosopographical research on the clergy, hence it is important to demonstrate the degree of reliability of the sources that are used in such research. The descent of Józef Tocki, a Catholic priest who worked in the town of Zduńska Wola near Łódź, Poland, in the years 1834-1862, was verified in the article. He was born in 1805 in Gdańsk Pomerania in the seaside village of Kolibki. He was the son of a teacher. The noble origin declared in the priest's biography, however, was not reflected in the parish registers, describing his relatives as "honest". Of his seven sisters, four lived to adulthood, two of whom married teachers, and the eldest married a nobleman. The border between partitions limited contacts of the family members. Having achieved professional stability as a parish priest, Józef Tocki had an influence on the fortunes of his younger sister, who became his housekeeper. Other sisters' marriages maintained and probably raised the family's position in terms of connections and wealth. Their brother's priestly duties also affected the social advancement of the schoolteacher's children.

**KEYWORDS:** 19<sup>th</sup> century, genealogy, Kaszuby, Kolibki, Zduńska Wola, clergy, biographical writing.

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The in-depth research into the history of the clergy is linked to the reconstruction of the biographical entries of individual priests. The process of the formation of this professional group (and earlier the state) is closely connected to its recruitment, which, in turn, is bound with descent and family connections of the priests. In terms of connections, civil registries and church records include the answer to the questions posed. The exploration of such documents enables the enrichment of the spiritual biography of the clergyman.

The author has attempted to present the state descent of the Catholic priest of Kujawsko-Kaliska Diocese, Fr. Józef Trocki.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the study is also to depict the path of advancement of the priest family, the potential interplay of his closest relatives and the verification of the social status given in the priest's personal questionnaire. For this purpose, the clergyman's immediate family circle was described. The selected figure, originating from the Prussian partition, declared noble origin, which made him stand out from the ranks of the deanery clergy, mostly of local and plebeian origin. Information concerning the descent of the priest can be found in the tabular surveys encompassing the biographical entry written by hand in 1835<sup>2</sup> and in 1848.<sup>3</sup> The reliability of this personal data<sup>4</sup> as a document of official rank was confirmed by the author himself and his supervisor (dean). The biographical note created in this way can be included in a group of ego-documents preserving the biographical valour.<sup>5</sup>

The personal questionnaires written down in the aforementioned years constitute a source basis for, among other things, prosopographical analyses describing the social background of the clergy.<sup>6</sup> It seems important to establish a degree of reliability of this type of source material.

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<sup>1</sup> See: biographical entry: P. S z k u t n i k, *Duchowieństwo dekanatu Szadkowskiego w roku 1835*, „Biuletyn Szadkowski” [henceforth: BSz], 2007, vol. 7, p. 44; M. B u d - k i e w i c z, *Kapłani parafii Wniebowzięcia Najświętszej Maryi Panny w Zduńskiej Woli*, Zduńska Wola 2018, pp. 36-37.

<sup>2</sup> Commissioned by the Government Commission for Internal Affairs, Clergy and Public Enlightenment and then by the General Consistory of Kalisz. See: P. S z k u t n i k, *Duchowieństwo*, pp. 28-29.

<sup>3</sup> See: H. W i t c z a k, *Duchowieństwo dekanatu konińskiego diecezji kujawsko-kaliskiej na tle dekanatów sąsiednich w połowie XIX wieku*, „Studia Włocławskie”, 2020, vol. 22, p. 471.

<sup>4</sup> B. M i ś k i e w i c z, *Wstęp do badań historycznych*, Warszawa 1988, pp. 127-128 discusses the survey as a historical source, including the issue of the reliability of the answers.

<sup>5</sup> W. S z u l a k i e w i c z, *Ego-dokumenty i ich znaczenie w badaniach naukowych*, „Przegląd Badań Edukacyjnych”, 2013, No. 16, p. 67.

<sup>6</sup> See: D. O l s z e w s k i, *Struktura społeczna duchowieństwa diecezji kielecko-krakowskiej (1835-1864)*, [in:] *Spółczeństwo polskie XVIII i XIX wieku. Studia o uwarstwieniu i mobilności społecznej*, vol. 6, ed. J. L e s k i e w i c z o w a, Warszawa 1974, pp. 129-183; S. L i t a k, *Duchowieństwo diecezji lubelskiej w okresie międzypowstaniowym (1835-1864)*, [in:] *Spółczeństwo Królestwa Polskiego. Studia o uwarstwieniu i ruchliwości społecznej*, ed. W. K u ł a, vol. 3, Warszawa 1968, pp. 89-164.

The single example presented below illustrates the possibility of verifying the above-mentioned questionnaires with reference to the parish registers, the use of which in the research on the clergy<sup>7</sup> may also serve for the period before ordinations. Nonetheless, we should not use such records uncritically, they are often the only source presenting the social status of the person in question.<sup>8</sup>

The identification of the family relations allows us to depict the circle that might have formed the future clergyman. It is particularly important in terms of insufficient source material concerning the emotional life<sup>9</sup> of especially ordinary members of the clergy.

Even church dignitaries of middle class rarely left a relatively rich source enabling us to present their personality.<sup>10</sup> Shortage of source material hinders the reasons behind their entering the clergy. The reconstruction of the family circle helps depict the entourage that could influence the formation of the priest and show mutual influence of the clergyman and his relatives in the period of their whole life. The social position of the nearest family, especially parents, constitutes a factor potentially determining aspirations/promotion of the priest. The priest could also support their relatives, maintaining them at their rectory, where they could take advantage of their status and resources.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> T. Nowicki, *Źródła do badań prozopograficznych nad duchowieństwem i personelem parafialnym diecezji wrocławskiej w okresie nowożytnym*, „Archiwa Biblioteki i Muzea Kościelne” [henceforth: ABMK], 2019, vol. 112, p. 267 analyses church records as a source. Examples: S. Tyłus, *XVIII-wieczne duchowieństwo na kartach metryk parafii Kowel*, ABMK 2000, vol. 73, pp. 419-436; R. R. Kufel, *Duchowieństwo w księgach metrykalnych parafii Babimost od końca XVII do początku XX wieku*, ABMK, 2004, vol. 81, pp. 139-168.

<sup>8</sup> Church records as a source of mass character register personal data in many records and in different periods, which enables us to compare and reduce the risk of drawing conclusions from individual, not necessarily reliable entries registered in one place by one person.

<sup>9</sup> V. Julkowska, *Dawne i współczesne cechy konstytutywne biografii jako gatunku historiograficznego*, [in:] *Biografistyka we współczesnych badaniach historycznych. Teoria i praktyka*, eds. J. Kolbuszewska, R. Stobiecki, Łódź 2017, p. 20.

<sup>10</sup> K. Rulka, *Powszednie fascynacje i kłopoty ks. Floriana Kosińskiego, wrocławskiego dostojnika kościelnego drugiej połowy XIX wieku*, „Zapiski Kujawsko-Dobrzyńskie”, 2006, vol. 21, pp. 111-128.

<sup>11</sup> P. Szkutnik, *Krąg rodzinny ks. Andrzeja Chylińskiego (1799-1862), proboszcza parafii Męka w dekanacie sieradzkim*, „Przegląd Nauk Historycznych”, R. 20, 2021, No. 2, pp. 27-48.

The character of the analysed sources does not allow us to determine the mutual intentional impact of the above relatives, however, it shows a circle of people who might support the clergyman and whom he could himself help.

The extent of the family relationships reconstructed on the basis of records may encourage reflection on the research possibilities into the genealogy of the Polish clergy in the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>12</sup> The biographical research considers as one of its aims the establishment of the origin of a given figure.<sup>13</sup> The family circle as an aspect of biographical research is treated as a factor shaping the personality of a given character.<sup>14</sup>

Biographical entries build a component of the monograph of an individual parish,<sup>15</sup> or studies referring to deanery, sometimes supplemented with only one source,<sup>16</sup> can as well take the form of a dictionary.<sup>17</sup> The juxtaposition of many biographical notes becomes a starting point for the research of the prosopographical nature,<sup>18</sup> in which the author

<sup>12</sup> P. Sz kutnik, *Barwna postać w sutannie – ks. Wiktor Krąkowski (1827-1880), administrator parafii Borszewice, cz. I: okres wikariatu (do 1853 r.)*, BSz, 2008, vol. 8, pp. 49-84.

<sup>13</sup> T. Kulak, *Biografistyka a badanie kultury politycznej*, [in:] *Dzieje kultury politycznej w Polsce. Od schyłku XIX wieku do roku 1939. Materiały sympozjum zorganizowanego w dniach 3-4 kwietnia 1981 r. przez Instytut Historii UG*, ed. R. Wapiński, Gdańsk 1981, p. 15.

<sup>14</sup> R. Zadura, *Korzenie genealogiczne bl. ks. Stefana Frelichowskiego*, „Theologica Thoruniensia”, 2004, No. 5, pp. 463, 472.

<sup>15</sup> Constituting an integral part of the depicted history, e.g. W. P. Właźlak, *Dzieje kościelne Pajęczna*, Pajęczno 2005, pp. 31-77; W. P. Właźlak, *Dzieje parafii Borowno*, Częstochowa 2006, pp. 35-75; S. Zabrania, *Między Wartą a Liswartą. Z dziejów parafii Wąsosz (do 2015 r.)*, Częstochowa 2015, pp. 125-150; M. Budkiewicz, *Kapłani*.

<sup>16</sup> T. Markiewicz, *Duchowieństwo dekanatu Skala w świetle wizytacji z 1618 roku*, ABMK, 2010, vol. 94, pp. 79-193; T. Moskał, *Duchowieństwo dekanatu koprzywnickiego w świetle wizytacji z 1782 roku*, ABMK, 2008, vol. 89, pp. 321-331.

<sup>17</sup> M. Radkowska, *Polskie słowniki biograficzne – próba charakterystyki*, „Forum Bibliotek Medycznych”, 2011, vol. 4(8), ed. 2, p. 268-272 a list including dictionaries of the clergy.

<sup>18</sup> A. Radziwiński, *Pralaci i kanonicy kapituły katedralnej płockiej w XIV i I poł. XV w. Studium prosopograficzne*, vol. 1, *Pralaci*, Toruń 1991, vol. 2; *Kanonicy*, Toruń 1993; A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1525-1821*, part 1, *Rozprawy i Materiały*, Olsztyn 2000; part 2, *Słownik*, Olsztyn 2000; Tenże, *Katalog duchowieństwa katolickiego w diecezji warmińskiej*

asks one fundamental question, from which state the priest came,<sup>19</sup> while carrying out systematic analyses of the descent of the clergy.<sup>20</sup>

The research into the social origins of individual priests also forms a preliminary stage of a wider prosopographical study of the priests of the Kujawsko-Kaliska Diocese, which existed between 1818 and 1925. The clergy of this diocese has not yet received a comprehensive monograph,<sup>21</sup> only works describing the clergy of individual deaneries have been presented.<sup>22</sup> A comprehensive study is hampered by the state of preservation of the sources. Personal acts of the priest of the diocese were destroyed due to bombardment by the Bolshevik troops in 1920.<sup>23</sup> A series of personal acts, reconstructed on the basis of the surviving documentation is at present kept in the Diocesan Archives in Włocławek and constitutes part of the Acts of the Consistory General of Włocławek.<sup>24</sup>

One of the priests of the Kujawsko-Kaliska Diocese was Józef Tocki. Initially, this future priest studied in Gdańsk, later in the royal gymnasium in Chojnice. Despite being of Pomeranian descent,

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(do 1945 roku), Olsztyn 2003; *idem*, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821-1945*, part 2: *Słownik*, Olsztyn 2003; part 1, *Studium prozopograficzne*, Olsztyn 2004; T. Nowicki, *Plebani archidjakonatu pomorskiego w XVIII wieku. Studium prozopograficzne*, Lublin 2008; R. Krajniak, *Duchowieństwo kapituły katedralnej w Chełmży do 1466 roku. Studium prozopograficzne*, Toruń 2013; T. Nowak, *Duchowieństwo ziemi wieluńskiej w drugiej połowie XV i początku XVI wieku. Studium prozopograficzne*, Wieluń 2017; M. Hałaburda, *Duchowieństwo diecezji pińskiej (1925-1939). Studium prozopograficzne*, Kraków 2019; M. Stawiski, *Bernardyni przasnyscy w XVIII wieku. Analiza biograficzno-prozopograficzna*, Pelplin 2021.

<sup>19</sup> J. Szczepaniak, *Duchowieństwo diecezji krakowskiej w XVIII wieku. Studium prozopograficzne*, Kraków 2010, p. 10.

<sup>20</sup> J. Szczepaniak, *Duchowieństwo diecezji krakowskiej w XVIII wieku. Studium prozopograficzne*, Kraków 2010, p. 10.

<sup>21</sup> For later period the following work can be proposed: J. Dębiniński, *Duchowieństwo rzymskokatolickie diecezji włocławskiej w latach 1918-1939*, Toruń 2010, pp. 279-402 describes the clergy as a social group.

<sup>22</sup> For the Kujawsko-Kaliska Diocese, e.g. P. Szkutniak, *Duchowieństwo*, pp. 27-60; A. Kaczmarek, *Duchowieństwo dekanaturadoms[zczańs]kiego w latach 1819-1867 (studium strukturalno-biograficzne)*, Częstochowa 2017; H. Witczak, *Duchowieństwo*, pp. 469-500.

<sup>23</sup> *Z ciężkich dni Włocławka*, „Kronika Diecezji Kujawsko-Kaliskiej”, R. 14, 1920, Nos. 8/9, p. 246.

<sup>24</sup> W. Kujawski, *Diecezja kujawsko-kaliska. Opracowanie historyczno-źródłoznawcze*, Włocławek 2011, pp. 421-442.

the choice of the Seminary of the Holy Cross in Warsaw (1830-1834) and holy orders in Włocławek (1834) linked the fate of J. Tocki as a diocesan priest to the Kingdom of Poland.<sup>25</sup> Owing to his good command of German,<sup>26</sup> he became a priest in Zduńska Wola (as a vicar from 1834, as a parish priest in the years 1850-1862).<sup>27</sup>

J. Tocki was therefore a representative of the clergy of small urban centres,<sup>28</sup> which at the time of the beginning of industrialisation changed their national structure and adapted to the needs of the incoming settlers from the West. In terms of the composition of the office of the parish priest, the clergy speaking the language of the immigrant population and coming from the communities living in the symbiosis with the German element were preferred.

In the Szadków deanery, situated in the Kujawsko-Kaliska Diocese, where J. Tocki worked, all the clergymen outside the Kingdom of Poland (22%) were from the Prussian annexation, which resulted from its immediate vicinity. Four came from Greater Poland and only one, i.e. J. Tocki from West Prussia.<sup>29</sup> Priests from outside this borderline performed their pastoral duties in other dioceses of the Kingdom,<sup>30</sup> also in those geographically distant.<sup>31</sup>

Among the clergy of the Szadków deanery in 1835, the representatives of the gentry, to which J. Tocki declared his affiliation, were second in number (39%) to burghers (48%), ahead of peasants (13%).<sup>32</sup>

<sup>25</sup> The Diocesan Archives in Włocławek [henceforth: ADW], Deanery files from the Kujawsko-Kaliska Diocese, ref. 343, No. 27.

<sup>26</sup> At the beginning of the 19th century, the instruction of the Polish language was limited in schools in Gdańsk, See: D. Ł u k a s i e w i c z, *Szkolnictwo w Prusach Południowych (1793-1806) w okresie reform oświeceniowych*, Poznań-Warszawa 2004, p. 35.

<sup>27</sup> J. Ś m i a ł o w s k i, *Zduńska Wola. Monografia miasta do 1914 roku*, Łódź 1974, p. 108.

<sup>28</sup> In the Szadków deanery, consisting of 19 parishes, only three had more than 3000 worshippers (Szadek 4256, Zduńska Wola 3987 and Łask 3574). J. T o c k i was therefore a priest of the second most populated parish in the entire deanery, just after the capital's. See: *Ordo divini officii ad usum dioecesis Vladislaviensis seu Calisiensis pro anno domini 1862...*, Warszawa [1861], pp. 24-26.

<sup>29</sup> P. S z k u t n i k, *Duchowieństwo*, p. 47.

<sup>30</sup> In the Kielce-Krakow Diocese, 37% came from the Polish lands outside the Kingdom of Poland, including 8% from the Prussian partition. Cf. D. O l s z e w s k i, *Struktura*, p. 133.

<sup>31</sup> In the Lublin Diocese, 11% came from the lands outside the Kingdom of Poland, including 3,6% from the Prussian partition. Cf. S. L i t a k, *Duchowieństwo*, p. 103.

<sup>32</sup> P. S z k u t n i k, *Duchowieństwo*, p. 56.

A similar order of origin occurred among the clergy of the then Kielecko-Krakow Diocese, in which, however, burghers (58%) outnumbered nobles (30%), and peasants were of similar amount (12%).<sup>33</sup> In the Lublin Diocese, in turn, noble decent dominated (62,5%) just ahead of burghers (25,4%) and peasant (12,1%).<sup>34</sup>

A significant component of the identity of the priest were precisely descent and family,<sup>35</sup> who might have influenced the decision to choose priesthood or at least facilitate the primary education.

## Descent

J. Tocki at the beginning of his pastoral work (1835) defined his descent as noble. At the same time he mentioned real estate which was to stay “in the hands of his mother”. At the end of the vicariate period (1848), he specified that he was “of noble descent inherited from his ancestors” and that “abroad he possessed real estate”. Nonetheless, as a young priest he was in debt. In the seminary he took out a loan to buy a liturgical book (breviary).<sup>36</sup> He promised to repay his debt with the support of his mother, “who is quite wealthy”.<sup>37</sup> However, the priest’s financial problems during his period of study and vicarage do not prove the wealth of his family.

In Kolibki at the Gulf of Gdańsk, where J. Tocki was born, 279 inhabitants lived at the end of the 18th century. In 1781, Catholics 212 (76%) outnumbered dissenters 67 (24%). The Kashubians were Catholics in majority, who in the 1890s composed half of the population of this village (49,5%).<sup>38</sup> J. Tocki can be ascribed the Kashubian cultural and linguistic lineage with high probability.

Among the local Kashubian nobility, the surname Toucki or Towucki was borne by a family originating from the village of Tawęcino in the Lębork region. In the 18th century, this widely branched lineage lost

<sup>33</sup> D. Olszewski, *Struktura*, p. 138.

<sup>34</sup> S. Litak, *Duchowieństwo*, p. 116.

<sup>35</sup> R. Skrzyński, *Rodzina Marii Kunowskiej-Porębnej jako środowisko wychowawcze*, „Biografistyka Pedagogiczna”, R. 4, 2019, No. 1, pp. 358-359, discusses family upbringing environment.

<sup>36</sup> ADWł, The parish acts of Zduńska Wola, ref. Ap. Zduńska Wola 1, k. nłb.

<sup>37</sup> ADWł, The parish acts of Zduńska Wola, ref. Ap. Zduńska Wola 1, k. nłb.

<sup>38</sup> T. Rembalski, *Gdynia i jej dzielnice przed powstaniem miasta (XIII-XX wiek)*, Gdynia 2011, p. 83.

its estates in the mentioned area. The impoverished representatives of the family served in the Prussian army in large numbers.<sup>39</sup>

It is as well possible that the Tocki family descended from this pauperised family line, who at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries inhabited the Roman-Catholic parish in Chwaszczyno<sup>40</sup> near Gdańsk. In 1800, Marcin Tocki appeared in the records of marriages of three couples from the seaside Kolibka village. Apart from Michał Hryk, he was a wedding witness on 22 June 1800 of a 60-year-old widower Daniel Radac and 56-year-old widow Anna Brohenn.<sup>41</sup> Together with Józef Szneyman, on 26 October of the same year, he was a wedding witness of 27-year-old groom Michał Adler and 25-year-old bride Elżbieta Ewaldtin. The same day together with Filip Lit[zau] he performed the same role at the wedding of a groom Jakub Gosh and a bride Konstancja Ewaldin.<sup>42</sup> Brides must have been sisters who decided to have a wedding ceremony on the same day. The fact of witnessing at these ceremonies can confirm his relations with the women's families.

Two years later on 13 October 1802, M. Tocki himself at the age of 28 tied the knot marrying a bride Teresa Bychowska. The couple from Kolibki took Waław Knoblauch and [A ... ano] Kraus as their wedding witnesses. The first witness was also from Kolibki and soon on 28 October 1802 married a 25-year-old bride Anna Maria Herbstin.<sup>43</sup>

The above-mentioned Toucki family<sup>44</sup> possessed Bychowo in the Lębork area, from where the noble family of Bychowsky of Zadora Coat of Arms originated, who also owned land in Kashubia,<sup>45</sup> a dozen or so kilometres away from the parishes of Strzecz and Rumia. The Bychowski family lived in the parish of Luzino in large number, where in the second half of the 18th century as many as 30 descendants

<sup>39</sup> P. Prager t, *Herbarz szlachty kaszubskiej*, vol. 4, Gdańsk 2015, pp. 308-310.

<sup>40</sup> The name Tocki is not included in the monograph of this place. See: T. Rembalski, *Chwaszczyno pod zaborem pruskim (1772-1920)*, [in:] P. Kalka, D. Piassek, T. Rembalski, D. Małszycki, M. Hinc, *Chwaszczyno – dzieje wsi i parafii do 1989 roku*, Gdynia 2021, pp. 147-241.

<sup>41</sup> The Archdiocesan Archives in Gdańsk [henceforth: AAG], baptism and marriage records in the parish of Chwaszczyno of 1777-1824, ref. AS 3079, k. 22.

<sup>42</sup> AAG, baptism records in the parish of Chwaszczyno 1777-1824, ref. AS 3079, k. 22v.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, k. 23.

<sup>44</sup> A. Znamierowski, *Herbarz rodowy. Kompendium*, Warszawa 2004, p. 300, does not mention Tocki/Toucki family among the families with coats of arms.

<sup>45</sup> P. Prager t, *Herbarz*, vol. 1, Gdańsk 2015, pp. 65-67.



of this noble family were baptised, among whom were two girls with the name Teresa, at the time when the wife of M. Tocki was born. These were: Teresa Urszula, daughter of Franciszek and Anna née Czestkowska in 1775 and in 1779 Teresa Elzbieta, daughter of Michał and Katarzyna née Paraska.<sup>46</sup> Based on age found in the wedding record, we can assume that the mother of the priest was born in 1778, hence she could be the same as Teresa born in 1779. However, the precise assignment of these records to the very person requires further studies.

The Bychowski family appear in the parish of Chwaszczyno as early as the second half of the 18th century. In 1788, Jakub Bychowski, from the village of Pogenpol, as a bachelor at the age of 32, married Marianna Langowa, who was 24.<sup>47</sup> Jakub and Marianna's son was Jan Bychowski born in the village of Osowa<sup>48</sup> on 15 May 1800, and was baptised three days later. His godmother and godfather were Fryderyk Hagiel and Konstancja Toszowna.<sup>49</sup>

A few months later on 24 November 1800 in Chwaszczyno, Jakub Bychowski with Jan Hagiel were wedding witnesses of the above Konstancja Toszowna from the village of Legana and Jakub Szymański, a groom at the age of 35.<sup>50</sup>

Jakub Bychowski died in the village of Legana on 25 August 1802 at the age of 50.<sup>51</sup> He was buried at the local cemetery.<sup>52</sup> Marianna Bychowska died at the age of 45 in the village of Osowa and was buried on 21 November 1811.<sup>53</sup> To the east of the parish village of Chwaszczyno, at the beginning of the 19th century, there was a settlement called Tosch Bychowski, whose name may be linked to

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<sup>46</sup> A. Stachowska-Krzyżankowska, *Chrzty szlacheckie w parafii Luzino w drugiej połowie XVIII wieku*, „Zapiski Historyczne”, 2015, vol. 80, No. 3, pp. 137, 142, 143.

<sup>47</sup> AAG, baptism and marriage records in the parish of Chwaszczyno of 1777-1824, ref. AS 3079, k. 9-9v.

<sup>48</sup> The village of Osowa incorporated into Gdynia in the 20th century. See: T. Rembalski, *Gdynia*, p. 73.

<sup>49</sup> AAG, baptism and marriage records in the parish of Chwaszczyno of 1777-1824, ref. AS 3079, k. 60.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, k. 22v.

<sup>51</sup> Despite the age difference, it can be assumed that he was identical to M. Langowa's husband.

<sup>52</sup> AAG, death records in the parish of Chwaszczyno of 1801-27, ref. in 1246, k. 16v.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibidem*, k. 22v.

the family name of M. Tocki's wife. The above settlements were situated in the immediate vicinity of this place. To its north, Legan which may be identified with the settlement Legana, to its south, Poggenplud (Poggenpfuhl) most probably the same as Pogenpol.<sup>54</sup>

We can only assume that Teresa Bychowska was a relative of the above-mentioned Jakub. Her relationship with Michał Tocki could connect two pauperised noble families. State qualifiers in Latin records, however, do not prove such a status of this couple. Jakub Bychowski was defined as *honestus*, that is honest. *Honestus* as a determinant of the social position was also possessed by Marcin Tocki (1802, 1817). Couples who were accompanied by this witness in 1802 were also given such a state qualifier. Marcin Tocki's surname was not adorned with the predicate "von" either, attesting to his noble origin.<sup>55</sup> Based on the above Latin determinant of M. Tocki, we can regard him as a burgher of modest means or a village craftsman. In this way, however, declassified nobility was referred to.<sup>56</sup> From 1813, Marcin's surname was written in a Germanised form as "Totzki".

### Siblings

Marcin and Teresa Tocki had at least eight children, i.e. one son and seven daughters.<sup>57</sup> Most probably their firstborn daughter was 1) Józefina born between 1803 and 1804.<sup>58</sup> The only male descendant and the title character of this article was born in Kolibki in the Roman-Catholic parish Wielki Kack, a parish branch of Chwaszczyno on 19 September 1805.<sup>59</sup> He was baptised a week later on 26 September

<sup>54</sup> *Karte von Ost-Preussen nebstPreussischLitthauen und West-Preussen nebstdem-Netzdistrictaufgenommenunter Leitung des Königl. Preuss. Staats Ministers Frey Herrn von Schroetteer in den Jahren von 1796 bis 1802.*

<sup>55</sup> T. R e m b a l s k i, *Gdynia*, p. 149.

<sup>56</sup> T. R e m b a l s k i, *Predykaty „nobilis”, „de” i „von” w pisowni kaszubskich nazwisk szlacheckich w kontekście historycznym*, „Acta Cassubiana”, 2018, vol. 20, p. 205.

<sup>57</sup> With reference to their three daughters, their birthplace has not been determined.

<sup>58</sup> The above date results from her first marriage certificate. See: AAG, marriage records of the parish in Reda 1826-1863, ref. in 1298, No. 10 of 1829. Less probable birthdate (c. 1805) results from her second marriage certificate. See: AAG, marriage records of the parish in Reda 1826-1863, ref. in 1298, No. 9 of 1832.

<sup>59</sup> ADW1, The Diocesan Acts of the Kujawsko-Kalicka Diocese, The Archives of the Consistor General of Włocławek, Personal data, Fr. Józef Tocki's acts (1805-1862), k. 1v-2.

and received the following names 2) Józef Michał Jan. His godfather was a family friend, Waclaw Knoblauch, and a godmother Katarzyna Płochowa.<sup>60</sup> In c. 1807<sup>61</sup> or c. 1809<sup>62</sup> 3) Antonina, the second daughter of the Tocki family was born.

Three more daughters of the Tockis were born in the village of Kolibki, then baptised:

on 22 March 1812 4) Teresa Paulina Gertruda assisted by godparents Jan Pałaszewski and Teresa von Wysiecka (Wyszecka),<sup>63</sup>

on 11 July 1813 5) Katarzyna Augustyna Emilia assisted by godparents Henryk Fryderyk Wezman and Karolina G[r]jeta Walter,<sup>64</sup>

on 14 August 1814 6) Matylda Dorota Benedykta, born on 13 August, and baptised with the assistance of godparents Fryderyk Wesemann and Dorota Wesemann.<sup>65</sup>

The godfather of the second daughter was probably identical to the godfather of the third daughter, being also the husband of a godmother with the same surname. This demonstrates a close relationship between the Tockis and the Wesemann vel Wesemann family. The presence of T. von Wysiecka (Wyszecka) among the godmothers who had a noble predicate, is the first evidence of the Tockis' relationship with the family at that time, with which they later became permanently associated.

The contacts of the Tocki family went beyond Kolibki, which may be testified by the presence of Teresa Tocka next to Ernest Matsak, Józef [M]üller on 21 February 1813, among the godparents of Antoni, son of Antoni Lipko and Justyna Kuli[i]k of Mały Kack.<sup>66</sup>

In c. 1815 7) Walentyna<sup>67</sup> was born, the youngest child of the Tocki family, who reached their adulthood.

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<sup>60</sup> No date of birth is given in the baptismal certificate. The surname of the father is recorded as Tockowski or Tochowski. See: AAG, baptism and marriage records of the parish in Chwaszczyno 1777-1824, ref. AS 3079, k. 75v.

<sup>61</sup> AAG, death records of the parish in Żukowo, 1750-1845, ref. In 1785, No. 78 of 1832.

<sup>62</sup> AAG, marriage records of the parish in Reda 1826-1863, ref. In 1298, No. 17 of 1831.

<sup>63</sup> AAG, baptism and marriage records of the parish in Chwaszczyno 1777-1824, ref. AS 3079, k. 82v.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibidem*, k. 85.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibidem*, k. 87v.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibidem*, k. 84.

<sup>67</sup> AAG, marriage records of the parish in Reda 1826-1863, ref. In 1298, No. 8 of 1836.

The Tockis moved from Kolibki, 25 kilometres to the west, to the village Łebno in the parish Strzecz, <sup>68</sup> where on 20 October 1817 8) Urszula Marcjanna Cecylia was born and who was baptised on 26 October. <sup>69</sup> Her godparents were *nobiles*, that is noblemen Florian Kręcki and Anna Słuszevska. <sup>70</sup> The choice of the noblemen as the godparents of their children proves the contacts they maintained in this social stratum.

### Father and local Tockis

In the decade to come, the Tockis lived in Reda, 20 kilometres to the north of Łebno, where they married their daughters.

The choice of the new place of residence was probably not accidental. There were also other families with the surname Tocki living in the parish of Reda. In the village of Rekowo Antoni Tocki, a homeworker, died on 31 March 1827 at the age of 96 and was buried on 2 April. He left three daughters: Anna, Marianna and Katarzyna. <sup>71</sup>

Over three and half years later in the same village, Maciej Tocki died on 9 November 1830 at the age of 65, a bailiff, buried on 12 November, who left five children: Ewa, Anna, Jan, Franciszek, Antoni. <sup>72</sup>

Exactly seven months later on 9 June 1831 in Reda, Marcin Tocki died of chronic disease, at the age of 62, a school teacher. His wife was with him, who later gave the date of her husband's death to the parish priest. He was buried on 11 June. Five of his descendants were alive when he died: Józef, Józefina, Antonina, Matylda, Walentyna. <sup>73</sup> We can therefore assume that three among their daughters: Teresa Paulina Gertruda, Katarzyna Augustyna Emalia and Urszula Marcjanna Cecylia died in childhood, although no death certificates were found.

The age of M. Tocki given in the marriage certificate allows us to determine his birthdate at c. 1774. It is not the same as the one

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<sup>68</sup> W. Szulist, *Przeszłość obecnych obszarów diecezji pelplińskiej do 1772 r.*, Pelplin 2000, p. 170.

<sup>69</sup> The Diocesan Archives in Pelplin [henceforth: ADP], baptism records of the parish in 1810-1846, ref. in 1620, k. 34v.

<sup>70</sup> In the nearby village of Wiczlin, Kiel parish, in the 18th century, one of the owners of the nobleman's land was Barbara, née Słuszevska. Cf. T. Rembalski, *Gdynia*, p. 154.

<sup>71</sup> AAG, death records of the parish in Reda 1826-1854, ref. n 1298, No. 38 of 1827.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibidem*, No. 31 of 1830.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibidem*, No. 38 of 1831.

mentioned in the death certificate, which makes the deceased person born five years earlier, i.e. in c. 1769.<sup>74</sup>

A coincidence, indicating at the same time the great popularity of the surname in the area, was the death of its namesake and possibly another relative. In neighbouring Rumia (a neighbouring parish), Marcin Tocki, a bailiff, also died on 15 June 1831, aged 41, thus a generation younger than the priest's father. M. Tocki buried on 16 June died of cholera. He also orphaned five children including a son Józef (sic!), and Antoni, Konstancja, Marianna, and Dorota<sup>75</sup>.

Another family head of the same name, not much younger than Marcin Tocki, also lived in Reda. Jan Tocki, a homemaker, died in Reda at the age of 60 on 23 September 1836. Buried on 26 September, he left four descendants Jan, Antoni, Marianna, and Franciszka.<sup>76</sup>

If the above-mentioned families had belonged to one lineage, then in the first half of the 19th century it was quite heavily bred in the parishes in Reda and Rumia, which were clearly a cluster of the representatives of this family. Nevertheless, potential relatives of Marcin of Kolibki, as homeworkers and bailiffs, were undoubtedly in a worse material situation, which may be confirmed by their status. Both occupation and education distinguished Marcin of Kolibki from this group.

At this stage of research, apart from the potential relatives of the clergyman described above, siblings of his father and mother have not yet been established. This requires further source research. The names of the priest's parents do not appear among the godparents of his siblings, which may suggest lack of close contact with his distant family.

### **Sister Józefina 1<sup>o</sup> voto Rapel 2<sup>o</sup> voto Wyszecka**

Józefina, aged 25 according to the marriage certificate, got married still during the lifetime of both parents on 10 November 1829 in Reda as the first of their daughters. She lived then with her parents, as did her

<sup>74</sup> Death certificates usually included an unverified declared age. See: A. Zielińska, *Przemiany struktur demograficznych w Toruniu w XIX i na początku XX wieku*, Toruń 2012, p. 202; For 60 year olds, age was raised at about 2,2 years. See: P. Szuktnik, *Najstarsi mieszkańcy parafii Opole (Lubelskie) w końcu XVIII w. i ich rodziny. Próba weryfikacji wieku podanego w metrykach pochówków*, „Rocznik Lubelskiego Towarzystwa Genealogicznego”, 2014/2015, vol. 6, p. 100.

<sup>75</sup> AAG, death records of the parish in Rumia 1828-1863, ref. in 1261, No. 14 of 1831.

<sup>76</sup> AAG, death records of the parish in Reda 1826-1854, ref. in 1298, No. 14 of 1836.

future husband Jan Rapel, 26-year-old bachelor. Parents of the groom Antoni Rapel and Elżbieta Rogocka and parents of the bride consented to their marriage. Announcements also took place in Reda.<sup>77</sup>

Premature death of Jan Rapel forced Józefina to look for the next husband. Living in the village of Ciechocino, a 27-year-old widow,<sup>78</sup> found a good match. She married Antoni Wyszecki in Reda on 22 May 1832.<sup>79</sup> A 23-year-old groom, five years younger than Józefa, lived then with his parents. Announcements took place in his parish in Luzino near Reda.<sup>80</sup>

Józefina's mother, widowed Teresa Tocka, still lived in Reda, where on 21 September 1833 she became the godmother of Józef born on 20 September, son of a bailiff Jan Grafka and his wife Marianna Karsznia, inhabitants of Reda.<sup>81</sup>

Less than a month later, she probably attended the family ceremony of her granddaughter, and the Wyszeckis' first daughter born on 18 October 1833 in the village of Ciechocino, and baptised as 1) Cecylia Teofila Łucja on 20 October in Reda. Her godparents were Henryk Baron of Reda and Teresa Klein from the village of Ciechoczeń.<sup>82</sup>

The next granddaughter was born on 17 July 1835 already in Reda, and almost a month later was baptised as 2) Łucja Walentyna Wyszecka. Her godparents were Henryk Bahran of Reda, most probably the same as with the first child, and an aunt Walentyna who lived in Reda, then maiden (she changed her marital status the following year), in whose honour the child was given a middle name.<sup>83</sup>

Antoni and Józefina Wyszecki moved for good to the parish of Reda to the south-west to the parish Stężyca. On 4 February 1839 in the village of Pierszczewo<sup>84</sup> their third child was born 3) Teofil Andrzej,

<sup>77</sup> AAG, marriage records of the parish in Reda 1826-1863, ref. in 1298, No. 10 of 1829.

<sup>78</sup> When calculating her age according to her first marriage certificate, she was one year older and was 28 years old at the time.

<sup>79</sup> Antoni was recorded as: Wiszecki 1832, 1833, Wyszecki 1835, von Wyszecki 1839, Wysecki 1839, von Wiszecki 1840, Wyseck 1841, von Wysicki 1844, 1848, Wyszetzki 1841, 1841, 1848.

<sup>80</sup> AAG, marriage records of the parish in Reda 1826-1863, ref. in 1298, No. 9 of 1832.

<sup>81</sup> AAG, baptism records of the parish in Reda 1826-1862, ref. in 1297, No. 64 of 1833.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibidem*, No. 70 of 1833.

<sup>83</sup> AAG, baptism records of the parish in Reda 1826-1862, ref. in 1297, No. 47 of 1835.

<sup>84</sup> W. Szulist, *Przeszłość...*, p. 170. The village of Pierszczewo belonged to the indigenous nobility of Gdansk Pomerania. Cf. J. Krzepela, *Spis miejscowości i rodów ziemiańskich województwa pomorskiego*, Kraków 1925, the map attached.

whose godparents became Łukasz Jakusz and Faustyna Stolz on 10 February.<sup>85</sup> A. and J. Wyszeccki soon repaid their duties to their neighbours and became godparents of Teofil Kleofas on 26 September 1839, who was born a day earlier in Pierszczewo on 25 September, son of Łukasz von Jakusz and Marianna Gruchała (Gruchalla).<sup>86</sup>

The close relationship with Łukasz and Marianna Jakusz is confirmed by their re-appointment as godparents on 26 April 1840 at the baptism of their daughter 4) Albertyna Józefina, born two days earlier on 24 April in Pierszczewo.<sup>87</sup>

Mutual exchange of good neighbourly gestures took place also in 1841. A. and J. Wyszeccki became godparents of Matylda Florentyna Jakusz born two days earlier in Pierszczewo on 16 April.<sup>88</sup> I turn, Ł. and M. Jakusz became godparents on 21 November of 5) Aleksandra Elżbieta Wyszeccka born in Pierszczewo on 19 November.<sup>89</sup>

The Wyszecckis were also related to the family of Gruchała (Gruchalla), who also lived in the parish of Stężyca. In Żuromin, on 5 August 1841 Franciszka Wiktoria, daughter of Antoni von Gruchała (Gruchalla) and Józefina von Wyszeccki (Wyszetzki) was born and baptised, and whose godparents were George Krefft and Wiktoria von Płachecki (Pachetzki).<sup>90</sup>

The choice of A. and J. von Gruchal (Gruchall)<sup>91</sup> as godparents of their next son 6) Walerian Rudolf Wyszeccki born in the village of Pierszczewo on 23 February 1844, whose baptism took place almost a week later on 3 March, was to reinforce these noble connections.<sup>92</sup> It was also in this environment that the Wyszecckis selected the godparents of their next offspring 7) Klementyna Teofilia Cecylia born on 8 February 1848 in the village of Pierszczewo. On 13 February Józef and Zuzanna von Pałubicki (Palobitzki) became her godparents.

<sup>85</sup> ADP, baptism records of the parish in Stężyca 1836-65, ref. in 1591, No. 14 of 1839.

<sup>86</sup> The Parish Archives in Stężyca [henceforth: APS], baptism records in the parish of Stężyca, a copy of 1839-60, p. 2.

<sup>87</sup> ADP, baptism records of the parish in Stężyca 1836-65, ref. in 1591, No. 53 of 1840.

<sup>88</sup> APS, baptism records of the parish in Stężyca, a copy of 1839-60, No. 29 of 1841.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibidem*, No. 96 of 1841.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibidem*, No. 60 of 1841.

<sup>91</sup> The family of Gruchall vel Gruchałów belonged to the petty gentry in Kashubia in the Mirachowski county. Cf. P. P r a g e r t, *Herbarz*, vol. 3, Gdańsk 2009, pp. 57-58.

<sup>92</sup> ADP, baptism records in the parish in Stężyca 1836-65, ref. in 1591, No. 20 of 1844; APS, birth records of the parish in Stężyca, a copy of 1839-60, No. 18 of 1844.

The family of Wyszeccki alias Wysiecki from the village of Wyszecino in the parish of Luzino in the Wejherowo Land belonged to minor nobility of the Kashubian Kownia coats of arms.<sup>93</sup>

From 1839, Antoni Wyszeccki was recorded with the predicate “von”. In 1844 and 1848, he is registered as a landowner.<sup>94</sup> In 1841, his neighbour Lucas von Jakusz was also a landowner.

Józefina Wyszeccka in the years 1839, 1840 and 1844 is recorded with the particle “von”. In 1848, by writing her name as “Josephine geb. von Totzki”, her noble descent was also emphasised.<sup>95</sup>

While Józefina Wyszeccka’s birth name was adorned with the predicate von, it was not included in the death certificate next to the name of her mother Teresa Tocka. Teresa died in the village of Pierszczewo on 3 January 1840. She died almost eight years and a half after her husband. She left four children. The cause of her death was “senile weakness”. She was buried on 7 January, according to a death certificate, she was 76 years old,<sup>96</sup> which would mean that she was born in c. 1764.<sup>97</sup> However, she lived much shorter (14 years). Her age, calculated from her marriage certificate allowing the year of his birth to be determined at around 1778, was 62.<sup>98</sup> The deceased undoubtedly lived with her daughter Józefina in her son-in-law’s estate. It is most likely that their paths in life were permanently crossed after the marriage of the youngest daughter, Waleria in 1836, when the Wyszecckis moved from the parish in Reda.

<sup>93</sup> P. Prager t, *Herbarz*, vol. 1, Gdańsk 2015, pp. 109-110.

<sup>94</sup> ADP, birth records of the parish in Stężycza of 1836-65, ref. in 1591, No. 13 of 1848; APS, birth records of the parish in Stężycza, a copy of 1839-60, No. 13 of 1848.

<sup>95</sup> Although in the copy of the records from that year the same entry “Josephine geb. v. Totzki” has “von” crossed out.

<sup>96</sup> ADP, deaths records of the parish in Stężycza of 1806-46, ref. in 1596, No. 3 of 1840.

<sup>97</sup> The declared age for 76-year-olds was overstated by 8.8 years (findings according to the years of 1853-1872). See: E. Piasecki, *Ludność parafii bejskiej (woj. Kieleckie) w świetle ksiąg metrykalnych z XVIII-XX w. Studium demograficzne*, Warszawa-Wrocław 1990, pp. 39-41.

<sup>98</sup> This large age difference may raise doubts as to the correctness of the identification of the person with the act. In this case, the fact that her death occurred in the place of her daughter’s residence and because no other Tocki family in the parish was identified, leads us to consider the death certificate as an attestation of the death of the priest’s mother. There is no additional information in the death certificate which could conclusively establish that the deceased was the wife of Martin Tocki.



Józefina Wyszeccka still lived in the village of Pierszczewo on 26 September 1862, when she became her brother's successor.<sup>99</sup> She died there over two decades later on 5 April 1883 at the age of 70. She was buried on 18 April.<sup>100</sup> In this case, the age of the deceased appears to be underestimated by up to 10 years. Józefina's life expectancy calculated from her marriage certificate should be 79 or 80 years.

### Sister Antonina Żynda

Just over five months after her father's death, clergyman's younger sister got married. Antonina, who had previously lived with her parents, at the age of 22, was married on 21 November 1831 to Kazimierz Żynda, a teacher aged 25, from the village of Tokary.<sup>101</sup> Announcements were made in the groom's parish in Żukowo and the bride's in Reda.<sup>102</sup>

Unfortunately, Antonina died a year later, in confinement after the birth of her child on 23 November 1832 in the village of Tokary. She was buried three days later on 26 November in the parish in Żukowo. According to the death certificate, she died at the age of 25.<sup>103</sup> A daughter of Kazimierz and Antonina Żynda only lived one hour and died of "weakness" on 23 November 1832 in the village of Tokary.<sup>104</sup> Assuredly, relatives of the deceased from the female line lived in this parish. Antoni Bychowski, husband of Agnieszka died in Żuków on 13 November 1824, at the age of 34, and was buried on 16 November.<sup>105</sup>

The village of Tokary survived for a long time in the Tocki family tradition associating it with the attainment of a higher social status. This message is recorded in the priest's death certificate telling that his parents were "administrators of the village of Tokary".<sup>106</sup>

<sup>99</sup> The State Archives in Łódź, branch office Sieradz [henceforth: APŁoS], Notary Acts of Józef Sikorski, ref. 8, Act No. 293 of 1862, k. 492v.

<sup>100</sup> ADP, death records of the parish in Steżyca 1847-85, ref. in 1597, No. 40 of 1883.

<sup>101</sup> Tokary – a village belonging to the parish in Żukowo, possessing its own chapel of the owner of the village, Kczewski, inhabited in majority (97%) by the Catholics. See: L. J a ż d z e w s k i, *Dzieje Kościoła Katolickiego na obecnym obszarze archidiecezji gdańskiej. Nowożytność*, vol. 2, Pelplin 2015, pp. 101-104.

<sup>102</sup> AAG, marriage records of the parish in Reda 1826-1863, ref. in 1298, No. 17 of 1831.

<sup>103</sup> AAG, death records of the parish in Żukowo, 1750-1845, ref. in 1785, No. 78 of 1832.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibidem*, No. 79 of 1832.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibidem*, No. 44 of 1824.

<sup>106</sup> The State Archives in Łódź [henceforth: APŁ], Registry Office Records Acts in Zduńska Wola, ref. 95, death certificate No. 15.

The priest's widowed mother might have stayed there temporarily. However, direct links with this village were short-lived. The message probably came from his younger sister Matylda, who was present at the death of her brother-priest.

### **Sister Matylda**

Matylda, younger of Father Tocki's sisters, remained unmarried. She might have lived with her mother, and later with her sister Józefina. Later, she moved to her brother-priest to Zduńska-Wola becoming his housekeeper.

In Zduńska Wola on 5 November 1849, Matylda became a godmother of Antoni, illegitimate child of 24-year-old Józef Kotek, born in Zduny on 2 November. Dionizy Janowski, merchant, aged 34, became a godfather, who as a witness with Michał Sobański, organist, aged 18, living in Zduńska Wola, signed the act. Matylda's brother baptised a child brought by 50-year-old Rozalia Wachlińska, midwife living in Zduńska Wola.<sup>107</sup> The fact of becoming a godmother was an act of mercy and support for the lonely mother. Matylda, as the incumbent at the rectory, was able to fulfil this role in the absence of others. This record confirms Matylda's stay in Zduńska Wola, which should be linked to Józef Tocki taking over the administration of the rectory a few months earlier. Her brother's income provided opportunities for Matylda to stay at the rectory. Matylda must have been his housekeeper for more than a dozen years, until J. Tocki's death.<sup>108</sup>

It was Matylda who directly participated as the only sister in securing the property of the deceased brother in 1862, who was also given the material inheritance as "legal successor" after the deceased,<sup>109</sup> which could serve as compensation for work she performed.

Next, unmarried Matylda returned to her homeland. She must have chosen to stay at her oldest sister Józefina, who she outlived for almost two years dying on 16 January 1885 in the village of Nowa Sikorska Huta near Sikorzyn. She is defined in a death certificate as unmarried daughter of a teacher Marcin Tocki and Teresa. However, her maiden name was recorded mistakenly as "Brzeski",

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<sup>107</sup> APŁ, Registry Office Records Acts in Zduńska Wola, ref. 71, birth certificate No. 212.

<sup>108</sup> APŁoS, Notary Acts of Józef Sikorski, ref. 8, No. 293 of 1862, k. 492v.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibidem*, k. 505.

and birthplace Reda,<sup>110</sup> for Matylda was born, similar to her brother, in the village of Kolibki. There is every likelihood that there were no people around her who could remember such distant past. The closest living relatives must have been her nephews who did not remember a “seaside” period in the history of the family, especially for the fact that the Tocki siblings received upbringing already outside Kolibki.

The death of Matylda was reported<sup>111</sup> to Szymbark on 17 January 1885 by illiterate Franz Kelpin (he signed it with crosses), most probably a neighbour of the deceased, living in Nowa Sikorska Huta.

### Sister Walentyna Herrmann

The youngest sister, Walentyna, living with her mother, aged 21, got married as the last, on 20 June 1836, also in Reda. Her fiancé was her equal Karol Ludwik Herrmann,<sup>112</sup> teacher in the village of Werblinia.<sup>113</sup> Announcements were made in the parish church of the groom Mechowo and in Reda.<sup>114</sup>

The Herrmann family lived then in the parish in Strzecz, where the Tocki family were recorded. Their son 1) Hugo Albert was born on 22 January 1841 in the village of Linia<sup>115</sup> and was baptised on 31 January with the assistance of his relative Ludwik Herrmann and Katarzyna Walkusch.<sup>116</sup>

The Herrmann family soon moved back to the parish in Reda and settled in the village of Łężyce,<sup>117</sup> where Karol Ludwik Herrmann is also recorded as a teacher. Their second son was born there 2) Carl Friedrich on 15 June 1843, who was baptised on 25 June.

<sup>110</sup> The State Archives in Gdańsk, Registry Office in Szymbark, ref. 30, death certificate No. 4 of 1885.

<sup>111</sup> Notification should be made by the person in whose home the person died. See: A. Zielińska, *Przemiany*, p. 190.

<sup>112</sup> Perhaps his relative was Christian Herrmann (1765-1827), Protestant pastor of the church in nearby Mały Kack. See: T. Rembalski, *Gdynia*, p. 102.

<sup>113</sup> Werblinia – a village belonging to the parish in Starzyno, who was administered by the parish priest of Mechowo. Cf. L. Jądziński, *Dzieje*, pp. 138-141.

<sup>114</sup> AAG, marriage records in the parish in Reda 1826-1863, ref. in 1298, No. 8 of 1836.

<sup>115</sup> W. Szulist, *Przeszość*, p. 171.

<sup>116</sup> ADP, baptism records in the parish in Strzecz of 1810-1846, ref. in 1620, No. 18 of 1841.

<sup>117</sup> The village of Łężyce was incorporated into Gdynia in the 20th century. See: T. Rembalski, *Gdynia*, p. 73.

The representatives of the local nobility were chosen as his godparents, Walentyn von Malotki,<sup>118</sup> landowner, and Apolonia von Dombrowski<sup>119</sup> of Łężyce.<sup>120</sup> Walentyna Herrmann lived in the village of Łężyce for at least a dozen or so years, being in the right of the property inventory of 26 September 1862 his successor.<sup>121</sup>

### Conclusion

Parents of Fr. Józef Tocki did not come from the wealthy families. Marcin Tocki is recorded at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries in the village of Kolibki, where in 1802 married Teresa of the Bychowski family. Next to their names, as well as their potential relatives and acquaintances, at the beginning of the 19th century we note specification *honestus* meaning honest. This state qualifier situates the family at the level of indigent petite bourgeoisie or village craft. M. Tocki as a school teacher was distinguished by his profession. A few Tocki families lived in Reda and Rumia in the 1820s and 1830s, however, all of them had a lower status, since these were houseworkers and bailiffs.

M. and T. Tocki had at least eight children, of whom five lived to their adulthood. Józef, their only male descendant, left their home early. Of his seven sisters, four lived to their adulthood, and three outlived their brother. Apart from the first one, wedding ceremonies of his sisters (1829, 1831, 1832, 1836), married at the age from 21 to 27(28),<sup>122</sup> took place when Józef was in the Kingdom of Poland, therefore, he might not have attended them. Three of them gave birth to children, two as the wives of the teachers. Antonina Żynda died giving birth to a daughter, who also died just after birth. Walentyna Herrmann gave birth to at least two sons. Józefina Wyszeccka, wife of

<sup>118</sup> In the neighbouring village of Wiczlin, Kielnie parish, at the end of the 18th century, one of the owners of the four noble divisions was Marcin Malotka. See: T. Remalski, *Gdynia*, pp. 153, 155.

<sup>119</sup> In Kashubia, there were 10 separate noble families with the name Dąbrowski vel Dombrowski, etc. Perhaps, a family line living in the parish in Luzino in the Puck county, related to the Wyszeccki family, is meant here. See: P. Prager, *Herbarz*, vol. 4, Gdańsk 2015, pp. 51, 58-59.

<sup>120</sup> AAG, baptism records of the parish in Reda of 1826-1862, ref. in 1297, No. 31 of 1843.

<sup>121</sup> APŁoS, Notary Acts of Józef Sikorski, ref. 8, No. 293 of 1862, k. 492v.

<sup>122</sup> In the 19th century maidens in the Roman-Catholic parishes were on average 24,3 years old. See: A. Zielińska, *Przemiany*, p. 78.

a landowner, gave birth to at least seven children including five daughters and two sons. Younger Matylda, a maiden, lived with her mother, sister and then with her brother, before returning to her family, presumably again to her older sister Józefa.

Among the relatives of the clergyman there was a custom to baptise a child within a week after birth and give a child more than one name, contrary to common practices of the Polish peasantry families.<sup>123</sup>

The Tockis' acquaintance with the noble Wyszecki family, attested as early as 1812, was strengthened by the marriage of the priest's sister in 1832. The choice of godparents for their children in the 1840s proves that priest's sisters were closer to the circles of the petty gentry. Anthony's brother-in-law in the 1840s was the owner of a section of land, and among his neighbours and acquaintances there were representatives of the local gentry: Gruchała (Gruchalla), Jakusz, Pałubicki (Palobitzki), Płachecki (Pachetzki). Antoni's wife Józefina in 1848 also receives a predicate "von" in the records. Nonetheless, her parents do not obtain this determiner linked to the noble state even in death certificate.

Perhaps, this elevation was to "efface" the descent of the wife of a nobleman. It could have been an attempt to return to the former status of her ancestors reduced after the pauperization at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries to the plebeian *honestus*. In death certificate of the clergyman, it was recorded, in turn, that his mother's maiden name was Bychowska from the Ogoński family.<sup>124</sup> The second surname might refer to the coats of arms Ogończyk, which the Dombrowski family, family acquaintances, sealed their descent.<sup>125</sup> The recorded entries constitute an expression of aspiration of the family to elevate/return to the noble rank.

Children of the school teacher reinforced the social status and prestige of the family. This is demonstrated by the marriages and functions achieved. The daughters became the wives of teachers and a landowner, the son a parish priest of a large parish. With the passage of time,

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<sup>123</sup> L. D a c e w i c z, *Uwarunkowania socjalno-kulturowe nadawania imion podwójnych w Dekanacie Białystok w II połowie XIX wieku*, „Studia Wschodniosłowiańskie”, 2017, vol. 17, pp. 170-172, 182.

<sup>124</sup> No information has been found about remarriage of the deceased.

<sup>125</sup> The Dąbrowski family from Dąbrówka in the parish of Luzino. Cf. P. P r a g e r t, *Herbarz*, vol. 4, Gdańsk 2015, pp. 51, 58-59.

the clergyman became a support for his younger single sister, who, after her mother's death, found refuge in him, acting as a housekeeper at the vicarage.

No proof has been found of the permanent settlement of the priest's family near his benefice. These circumstances allow us to draw a conclusion that it did not constitute a starting point for the creation of the family material background. The family lived too far and their status was roughly comparable to the position of the priest, owing to the land possessed and professions of his brothers-in-law. Material background and brother-parish priest connections did not cause a change in the social and financial status of his siblings. Recognising, in terms of a case study, the familial collations of a parish priest from a small urban centre therefore makes it possible to see a rather obvious relationship between the great geographical distance and the priest's lack of influence on relatives remaining in the vicinity of their paternal area. As can be confirmed by sources, J. Tocki did not have any influence on his relatives, nor their choices concerning their place of living.<sup>126</sup> It could have resulted from independence of most of his sisters before or at the beginning of his work as a vicar, when he himself struggled with financial difficulties.<sup>127</sup> Unmarried Matylda, his housekeeper, who lived with his brother, when he was a parish priest, could be the exception.

The genealogical and comparative methods used enabled the presentation of the family ties of the priest. The analysis of the records did not prove, however, that the information on descent noted in his biographical note is compatible with the one he possessed. In the records described, there are no terms proving priest's descent from the higher state. Thus, the study demonstrates the extent of the difficulty of documenting the declared status. It prompts reflection on the assessment of the reliability of questionnaire data used in prosopographical works defining the social origin of the clergy. A tendency to flaunt one's origins was not extraordinary in this milieu. In the light of a broader study, a tendency was observed not to

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<sup>126</sup> A different example proving the significant influence of the clergy on the family. Cf. P. S z k u t n i k, *Kraq*, pp. 27-48.

<sup>127</sup> J. Tocki had debts outstanding for many years, still unpaid on 25 July 1838. Cf. ADWł, Parish Acts in Zduńska Wola, ref. Ap. Zduńska Wola 1, k. n1b.

reveal plebeian descent of the priests.<sup>128</sup> A description of the closest, and at the same time a currently known circle of relatives (according to Roman law, lineal affinity and collateral affinity), was therefore not sufficient to possibly confirm declared ancestry, which may refer to the status held by distant generations of ancestors. In the records of the Tocki family, we can note specifications *honestus*, hence the noble descent of the family remains uncertain.

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<sup>128</sup> M. R ó ż a ń s k i, *Duchowieństwo*, p. 104.

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