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## THE WOŁODKOWICZ FAMILY IN THE HISTORY OF BELARUS<sup>1</sup>

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### **Abstract**

This article is dedicated to the history of the Wołodkowicz family. The Wołodkowicz contribution to economic development of our Chashniki region was immense and, therefore, it is noteworthy to have a brief look at the history of this distinguished and rich, but unfairly forgotten family. From the end of the XVIII century Tadeusz Wołodkowicz, *krawdzi of the Minsk Voivodship* purchased Ivansk and the neighboring villages. From that time and until the 1917 October Revolution Chashniki district was a domain of one of the branches of this family line whose representatives settled down in Ivansk. The Wołodkowicz family had a reputation for being true patriots and fighters for the independence of their homeland. The family of Wołodkowicz was also renowned for their religiousness and benevolence. After the October Revolution the Wołodkowicz immigrated to Poland, and then fate scattered the members of this family throughout the world. I think the history of their genealogy will be interesting to the readers of this magazine.

### **Key words**

The Wołodkowicz family, Chashniki, Iwansk, The Wołodkowicz palace-and-park ensemble, history.

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## Резюме

### Род Володковичей в истории Беларуси и Чашниччины

Эта статья посвящена истории иванской ветви рода Володковичей, которые внесли значительный вклад в историю, экономику, общественную жизнь и культуру не только Чашникского района, но и Великого княжества Литовского и Речи Посполитой. Представители этого шляхетского рода, которые впервые упоминаются в исторических документах с XV века, занимали различные государственные должности в Великом княжестве Литовском на протяжении нескольких веков. Володковичи также известны как меценаты, высокообразованные люди, патриоты своей Родины. С конца XVIII века они приобрели Чашники, Иванск и ещё десяток деревень в нашем районе, создали дворцово-парковый ансамбль в Иванске. Описание дворцово-паркового ансамбля в Иванске, история и судьба некоторых представителей этого рода после Октябрьской революции, когда они были вынуждены эмигрировать в Польшу, также даны в этой статье. Полагаю, статья будет интересна всем любителям истории.

## Ключевые слова

Володковичи, Иванск, Чашники, дворцово-парковый ансамбль, род, история.

From the end of the XVIII century Tadeusz Wołodkowicz (Volodkovich), purchased Iwansk (Ivansk) and the neighboring villages. From that time and until the 1917 October Revolution the Czaszniki (Chashniki) district became a domain of one of the branches of this family line whose representatives settled down in Iwansk. The Wołodkowicz contribution to economic development of our region was immense and, therefore, it is noteworthy to have even a brief look at the history of this distinguished and rich, but unfairly forgotten family. Polish researchers of the history of gentry's families are of the opinion that the Wołodkowicz family originates from Lithuania<sup>2</sup> from a certain Wołodko<sup>3</sup>.

Others argue that their kin comes from Grand Duke Witold, brother of the king Władysław Jagiełło, and by family legendry, the family descends from Genghis Khan himself.

The first name mentioned in historical documents is Stanisław Wołodkowicz, the owner of the estate of Shteklin near Minsk. These documents date back to 1435. In the XV century historical sources mention three other representatives of this family: Mikołaj (1476), Zenka (1495) and Niekrasz (1499)<sup>4</sup>. In the XVI century, the members

<sup>2</sup> We have in mind annalistic Lithuania, part of which in Middle Ages covered the territory of modern Western Belarus.

<sup>3</sup> K. Pulaski. *Kronika polskich rodów szlacheckich Podola, Wołynia i Ukrainy. Monografie i wzmianki*. T. 1. Brody: Feliks West, 1911, p. 236–238; А.П. Сапунов. *Витебская старина*. Т. 4. Санкт-Петербург 1885, p. 281.

<sup>4</sup> A. Wołodkowicz. *Wołodkowiczowie herbu Radwan. Studium Genealogiczne*. Ottawa 1978, p. 2.

of the Wołodkowicz family occupy high positions in the Great Duchy of Lithuania administration. Thus, Marcin Wołodkowicz was the ambassador of the Great Duchy of Lithuania in Moscow in 1573. From 1573 he was the Minsk Judge and from 1588 was the Minsk governor<sup>5</sup>.

In the 30–60s of the XVI century another representative of this very large and branched family was the provincial governor (*wojewoda*) of Nowogródek, Krzysztof Wołodkowicz. At the same time, Chryzostom Wołodkowicz was the Minsk vice-judge and Fyodor was a territorial scribe<sup>6</sup>.

The Acts of Vilnius Archeographical Commission contain a document related to substitution by Mateusz Wołodkowicz of his own lands with the lands of the crown peasants of Eyragolsk district<sup>7</sup>. Crown peasants were the state or crown property. And the king could sell, give as a present or exchange them. The land was not the property of those crown peasants, they only lived and worked on it. Whole villages could be sold, presented and exchanged with all their inhabitants and the land. Earlier they belonged to the Crown and now to a new owner — a feudal lord.

The judges in this legal case were two other members of the Wołodkowicz family: Stanislaw and Mikołaj. The same document mentions Zofia, the widow of Piotr Wołodkowicz, who wheedled “two services of people and two wastelands” from her father-in-law before his death<sup>8</sup>.

In the XVII century the Wołodkowicz family became far more numerous and branched. They resided in the Nowogródek (Novogrudak) and Minsk districts, taking different public positions there. Thus, from the end of the XVI and the whole first half of the XVII centuries Adam Wołodkowicz was the Minsk governor and his brother, Marcin, took the position of territorial judge in Minsk from 1619 to his death. At the same time he was the founder of a monastery in Grozovo, the present-day Kopyl district. After Marcin's death the position of Minsk judge came to his nephew Janusz Wołodkowicz who was in office from 1653. In 1652 Martin's elder son was the Kovno *podczaszy*<sup>9</sup> and his middle son, Teodor, was a judge and consequently, a territorial scribe in Minsk. The youngest son, Krzysztof, was the provincial governor of Nowogródek from 1658<sup>10</sup>.

The Wołodkowicz were educated people of their time. One of the representatives of the family, Krzysztof Wołodkowicz, wrote *The history of Inland war, Life of prince Casimir* and *On incorporation of the Inflatns by Sigismund August*. The Wołodkowicz family agnates had repute for their handsomeness. Thus, the above-mentioned Krzysztof was so good-looking that even the sultan of Ottoman Empire ordered to paint his portrait, he hang the portrait in the sultan's palace in Istanbul<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> A. Wołodkowicz. *Wołodkowiczowie herbu Radwan...*, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> *Акты, издаваемые Виленской Археографической Комиссией*. Т. 24. Вильня: Типография А.Г. Сыркина, p. 81–86.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 146–147.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 116–117.

<sup>9</sup> *Podczaszy* — deputy cup-bearer.

<sup>10</sup> A. Wołodkowicz. *Wołodkowiczowie herbu Radwan...*, p. 3–5.

<sup>11</sup> J. Wołodkowicz. *Ze wzmagań na dawnych rubieżach Rzeczypospolitej. Wspomnienia z 1863 roku i lat następnych*, p. 281 (typescript).

The Wołodkowicz family was also renowned for their religiousness and benevolence. For example, at the beginning of the XVII century Grzegorz Wołodkowicz founded a monastery in Novodvortsi. In Grozovo, with Wołodkowicz money a seven-dome church of St. Nikolas was built. Marcin Wołodkowicz was the founder of the monastery in the above-mentioned Grozovo in the first half of the XVII century<sup>12</sup>. Four of his ten children chose serving to God as their life goal. Thus, his son Andrzej was a canon of Vilnia, a prior of Virgin Mary church, Jacub was the rector of the Polotsk Jesuit Collegium, and his daughters, Tekla and Klara were nuns in a Basilian monastery in Minsk. This tradition was continued by the grandsons and grand-grandsons of Marcin Wołodkowicz: grandson Michał was a founder of the Carmelite church in Minsk and his daughter Hanna under the name of mother Teresa was the abbottess of Benedictine monastery in Minsk. Felicjan Wołodkowicz (1697–1778) was even the Metropolitan of Kiev from 1762. One of the representatives of the Wołodkowicz family, Konstanty, donated a large sum of money to the Jagiellonian University in Cracow for poor students and even organized a dormitory “bursa” for them. Therefore, all the Wołodkowicz’s had an opportunity to study in this university for free<sup>13</sup>.

The members of the Wołodkowicz family also had a reputation for being true patriots and fighters for the independence of their homeland. A very interesting fact is related to the personality of Stanisław Wołodkowicz. During the 1654–1667 war between the Tsardom of Muscovy and the Polish-Lithuanian State he served as captain in Vitebsk Voivodship and defended Vitebsk. However, he was captured in 1655 and with a group of commoners and nobles exiled to Kazan, where he spent 8 years in captivity. Stanisław was one of the 59 exiled, who even there, in the remote captivity of hundreds of miles away from home, collected the sejmik which denounced those of his countrymen who had sold the country by swearing allegiance to the tsar of Muscovy and fleeing from persecution and terror had switched from Catholicism to Orthodoxy. With the hope to return to their homeland one day, those 59 people at their sejmik in Kazan expelled the apostates from nobility brotherhood and forbade them from holding any positions in the Commonwealth. Stanisław also stood for that verdict<sup>14</sup>.

The founder of the French line of the Wołodkowicz family, Henry (1765–1825), took part in the 1794 uprising led by Tadeusz Kościuszko. He was wounded, emigrated to France, and even from there he continued to fight for the revival of the former Polish-Lithuanian State. First, he served in the French army, was a general, commanded a brigade, and from 1806 he was appointed commander of the Polish Legion. Henry Wolodkowicz knew Napoleon personally and was his aide-de-camp for a certain period of time. For his courage and heroism in the war of 1812 he was awarded the “Legion d’honneur” and his name “Henry” is immortalized on the Triumphal Arc in Paris. Henry Wolodkowicz participated in the Napoleonic war with Russia, was captured and exiled to Siberia. After having received amnesty he moved to St. Petersburg, where he died in 1825<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> E. Morawska-Wołodkowicz. *Wspomnienia z Iwanskiem w tle*, p. 3–4, (typescript).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 5.

<sup>14</sup> Б. Пэндзіх. *Паміж раем і клаакай*. “Беларускі гістарычны агляд” 1998, № 12, p. 411–412.

<sup>15</sup> A. Wołodkowicz. *Wołodkowiczowie herbu Radwan...*, p. 9.

Henry's son, Joseph, also participated in the War of 1812 and was killed near Smolensk. Like his father, he was awarded the "Legion d'honneur". The French line of the Wołodkowicz have used a double surname, Pairier-Wołodkowicz<sup>16</sup> since 1903.

Another offspring of the Wołodkowicz family, Alexander, (1806–1861), was born in Iwansk. During the rebellion of 1830–1831 he headed the rebels in Vileika district. After the defeat of the uprising he emigrated to France and served the French Ambassador in Sweden. However, he retained love for his homeland for the rest of his life. He was buried in Paris, but in accordance with his will his heart was brought home and placed in the church in Radoszkowice (Radoshkovichi) which was the ancestral tomb of the Wołodkowicz family<sup>17</sup>.

### Michał Wołodkowicz (1735–1760)

These were some details about several prominent representatives of this family. Perhaps, the only exception was Michał Wołodkowicz (1735–1760), who his contemporaries called one of the most notorious "orgies", brawlers and boozers. He, however, was notable for extraordinary physical force and courage and went to fight a bear alone armed with a wooden fork only. He was mentioned in the poem *Pan Tadeusz* by A. Mickiewicz, who wrote that "both gentry and magnates at sejmik and even judges from the Tribunal trembled", before Michał Wołodkowicz<sup>18</sup>.

However, that same Tribunal sentenced him to death: he was shot on February 12, 1760. His adventures and punishment were described in detail by a well-known Belarusian researcher, ardent proponent of our past Adam Maldis in his book *How our ancestors lived in the XVIII century*. Bad temper and viciousness of Michał are seen from one episode given by the above-mentioned A. Maldis:

One day Michał Wołodkowicz went to the cathedral in Minsk. A well-known priest Oblachinski from Nesvizh was talking. He talked about the effect of alcoholism on people's behavior and the examples he gave were a true copy of Michał's behavior. The latter decided to take revenge. In a week's time, when Oblachinski entered the pulpit: "amidst general silence suddenly from outside strange music could be heard: something rang, jingled, muttered, blared, peeped, and laughed with a very exotic voiced"<sup>19</sup>.

All the people poured out of the church. The priest went out too. The square was filled with a crowd. In the middle of the crowd bears, monkeys and specially-dressed gypsies were dancing under the sounds of music. And above them all, on a tall cart towered Michał Wołodkowicz. He was sitting on the wine barrel surrounded by his team treating views and listeners with wine encouraging them to a funny game. Oblachinski immediately dispersed the crowd and threatened Wołodkowicz: "The time will come and God will punish you!"<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> Ibidem, p. 9–10.

<sup>17</sup> *Słownik geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego i innych krajów słowiańskich*. T. 3. Warszawa: nakł. Filipa Sulimierskiego i Władysława Walewskiego, 1883, p. 20.

<sup>18</sup> А. Міцкевіч, *Пан Тадэвуш*. Мінск: Мастацкая літаратура, 1985, p. 192.

<sup>19</sup> А. Мальдзіс. *Як жылі нашы продкі ў XVIII стагоддзі*. Мінск: Лімарыус, 2001, p. 202.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, p. 203.

On February 1, 1760, Michał imbibed a lot of alcohol while treating guests and in this condition went to the court. There he found the deputies in the meeting room and ordered to bring wine into the room and treat the court members... And as long as it was customary to invite into the chamber drummers and trumpeters of Tribunal infantry to loudly announce toasts during the drinking party, Wołodkowicz this time too wanted them in the room and asked the Tribunal vice-speaker Morikoni to order to have them in the room. When the vice-speaker rudely rejected the drunken Wołodkowicz, saying this delegation sounded a kind of a lazy-bone's manner, Wołodkowicz grew angry, took his sabre and assaulting no one, was cutting off the lighted candles, then driven mad cut the table with the sabre very close to vice-speakers arm. He slightly damaged the crucifix, which was next to him. When Morikoni bent, he pulled the cloth off the table, and threw it upon the vice-speaker with the intention to hack him defenseless. But that very moment Dłuski, the Lida deputy grabbed Wołodkowicz' flap and the latter was immediately slashed on the hand. Dłuski tried to run away, however, Wołodkowicz chased him and already pressed him into a corner and would have killed him on the spot, if not defended by Morikoni, who seized Wołodkowicz' waist and pulled his sword from his hand, which dropped in the middle of the room<sup>21</sup>.

Michał quieted for a moment and begged not to punish him. But when Dłuski began to complain about his hand cut to the bone for nothing, the rowdy gave him a fist in the face. In the process of reading the verdict, Wołodkowicz was cursing everybody terribly. After the court session was closed he called on the guardhouse forcing trumpeters and drummers to go with him. Out in the street, he came across some Dominicans who were walking with a stretcher for a deceased. Wołodkowicz grabbed the stretches from the monks, ordered the musicians to play a funeral march, while he sang. Then he came to the apartment of Dłuski and, having found nobody in, broke the windows<sup>22</sup>.

On Feb. 12, 1760, at the sitting of the tribunal Morikoni demanded death penalty for Michał Wołodkowicz, giving him no right for a counsel. Half of the deputies voted for the proposal, others opposed. When they began to write the decree, Michał initially intended to pull the verdict out of the book and then attempted to run away through a window. But in no time the Tribunal infantry broke into the room and seized Wołodkowicz; putting his hands shackled and hauling off to prison, where his feet were immediately chained and his waist was chained to the wall. According to A. Maldis, by law the verdict ought to be carried out in three days. However, then the news came to Minsk that Karol Radziwiłł was heading to save Wołodkowicz<sup>23</sup>, and that his troops were already in Koidonavo. Therefore, a few hours after the court sitting the prisoner appeared to the priest, who advised him to repent. But Michał felt that it was a bad joke. Finally, about two o'clock in the morning the soldiers of Tribunal infantry appeared. From six bullets four hit Wołodkowicz chest, two reflected from the metallic medallion, which he wore around his neck. Then the officer to it finishes off shot in the ear. The news of the death of Michał Wołodkowicz spread throughout

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, p. 204.

<sup>22</sup> Ibidem, p. 206

<sup>23</sup> Michał was a friend and relative of Karol Radziwiłł.

the country and got into foreign newspapers. Some condemned the deceased, others fiercely defended<sup>24</sup>.

### The Wołodkowicz family in the history of Czaśzniki district

In 1774 Tadeusz Wołodkowicz purchased Iwansk and the neighboring villages. From that time Iwansk became the main, even though not the oldest, domain of one of the branches of this family. When Tadeusz Wołodkowicz died in 1776 Iwansk was inherited by his brother Wincenty (1761–1838), chamberlain of king Stanislaw August and Marshal of the nobility of the Borisov district.

During the Napoleonic war of 1812 with Russia, he, like most Polish nobility, supported and welcomed Napoleon who had promised to recover the Polish-Lithuanian State after the victory over Russia. Wincenty Wołodkowicz headed the Borisov district committee and signed the “Appeal of Provisional Government of Borisov County of accession to the Warsaw Confederation”. It was he who gathered and passed to his direct descendants Dakshnyani and Markov in Vileyka county, township Czaśzniki, Iwansk and Koptsevichi in the Lepel district, Salamyarechcha, Vayshnarova, Padalyanka and Staroe Selo in Minsk county as well as Nizgaradok in Borisov county<sup>25</sup>. However, in the a document by Józef Wołodkowicz (1875–1956), the son of the last owner of Iwansk Wincenty (1846–1927), affirms that Dakshnyani, Salamyarechcha, Smalyantsi and Slobodka belonged to Ignacy’s brother Józef, who died in 1883 and only after his death the estates were inherited by his nephew, Ignacy’s son Wincenty (1846–1927)<sup>26</sup>.

In 1820 Wincenty Wołodkowicz built a winery Plant (Distillery) in Iwansk, where he employed 5 workers. This was the first enterprise in the Czaśzniki district. Production of vodka has apparently been quite lucrative at all times, as in 1834, Wincenty Wołodkowicz built another winery in the village of Harakova and in 1835 in Smalyantsi. Each of these enterprises employed 3 workers<sup>27</sup>.

Owing to the fortune which steadily favored the Wołodkowicz’, as well as business grip and entrepreneurship, until the end of the XIX century they gathered more than twenty villages and settlements. After Wincenty, Iwansk with the surrounding lands and villages, as well as Czaśzniki, Smalyantsi and all of the above mentioned villages were inherited by his son Emanuel (1805–1852) who used the name Ignacy and who was married twice: first, to Princess Wiktoria Drucka-Lubecka, and after her death in 1841, he married her sister, Princess Alina. From his second marriage Emanuel had three children: Maria (1844–1855), Wincenty (1846–1927) and Jadwiga (1848–1854). In 1840 Emanuel (Ignacy) built a brewery in Czaśzniki. The last owner of all this wealth was Ignacy Wołodkowicz’s son, Wincenty (1846–1927)<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> А. Мальдзіс. *Як жылі нашы продкі ў XVIII стагоддзі...*, p. 206.

<sup>25</sup> *Акты, издаваемые Виленской Археографической Комиссией*. Т. 37. Вильня: Типография А.Г. Сыркина, p. 199.

<sup>26</sup> J. Wołodkowicz. *Ze wzmagai na dawnych rubieżach Rzeczypospolitej...*, p. 40.

<sup>27</sup> *Памятная книга Витебской губернии на 1866 г.* Витебск, 1866, p. 156.

<sup>28</sup> R. Aftanazy. *Dzieje Rezydencji na dawnych kresach Rzeczypospolitej*. Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1991, p. 235.



Ignacy was a real Polish patriot and a devoted catholic. In 1840 the local authority intended to close the Catholic Church of Jesus Christ and change it into a Russian Orthodox church because there was not a Russian Orthodox church in Czaszniki at that time because the old one had burnt down. To prevent the capture of the Catholic Church of Jesus Christ, Ignacy founded on his own account the Russian Orthodox Church of Transfiguration in 1843 which has remained till our days<sup>29</sup>. In the Catholic Church of Jesus Christ there was a well-known miraculous statue of Jesus Christ. Believers from far away came to the church to worship this statue. But when the church of Jesus Christ was nevertheless changed into a Russian Orthodox church in 1868, the statue was moved to Iwansk and was placed in the local chapel. After the October Revolution the statue disappeared and its destiny is unknown<sup>30</sup>. Wincenty was married to Zofia baroness Hartingh, who in the in 1843 maternal line came from the family of Drucki-Lubecki. Through their wives the Wołodkowicz were also in kinship with such well-known families as the Pac, Wańkowicz and Tyszkiewicz. Wincenty and Zofia had eight children: Józef (1875–1956), Michał (1877–1878), Gustaw (1880–1933), Ignacy (1882–1944), Hieronim (1885–1953), Maria (1887–1967), Kazimierz (1889–1967) and Henryk (1893–1934).

Wincenty employed home teachers from Germany and France to teach the children German and French. All the children received college. Maria, who studied medicine in Switzerland, became the first certified woman doctor of Polish origin. Wincenty Wołodkowicz bought for his daughter a children's hospital in Vilnius where she worked until the end of her life<sup>31</sup>.

Józef, the eldest son of Wincenty and Zofia, married against his parents' wish a local girl, "from a humble background", who worked as a governess. For this, angry Wincenty deprived the elder son of the right to possess the presidency to the family nest — Iwansk, which passed to his second son, Gustaw. Later, having softened, Wincenty passed into Joseph's possession the estate Staroe Selo together with the surrounding farms<sup>32</sup>.

In 1917 the Wołodkowicz estates (Czaszniki, Koptsevichi, Hatsyanava, Fedzki, Tovpentsy, Iwansk, Naviny, Vishanki, Pachaevichi, Demidovichi, Prystoi, Medvedsk, Krasnitsa, Punki, Smalyantsi, Staroe Selo, Salamyarechcha, Krasnoe Selo, Dakshnyani, Imsharki) made about 100 thousand hectare of land, forests and lakes.

In 1886 W. Wołodkowicz founded a paper mill "Skins" next to Czashniki (now the paper mill "Krasnaya Zvezda") and a brick works in Iwansk. The Wołodkowicz family also owned numerous mills (in Smalyantsi and Vishkavichi, a windmill in Iwansk, including mills operating by animal power in Iwansk and Czaszniki, which were later transferred to steam traction), a saw-mill, brew houses, as well as a glass factory<sup>33</sup>.

Wincenty Wołodkowicz had his famous stable of trotters (about sixty horses) in Iwansk. He was very fond of black horses with white "stars" on the forehead. Trained

<sup>29</sup> J. Wołodkowicz. *Ze wzmagai na dawnych rubieżach Rzeczypospolitej...*, p. 45.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 46.

<sup>31</sup> E. Morawska-Wołodkowicz. *Wspomnienia z Iwańskiem w tle...*, p. 4.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 5.

<sup>33</sup> *Памятная книга Витебской губернии на 1865 г.* Витебск, 1865, p. 213.

grooms dressed in white looked after them. The horses took prizes at the races in Moscow and St. Petersburg. The owner bought them all over Europe and even in the United States. In addition to these sixty trotters, the estate had about other forty horses, which for one reason or another were flanged and could not participate in races and were used on the farm. After the revolution, when the Wołodkowicz family was forced to flee, Wincenty arrived in Warsaw in a carriage at the head of his herd of horses, which he himself drove out from Iwansk. Wincenty could not keep his horses in Warsaw so he sold them to individuals and to stables.

After some time Wincenty and Zofia Wołodkowicz moved to Bydgoszcz, a city in western Poland, where they spent the rest of their life hoping to return to their beloved Iwansk. After they died they were buried in the cemetery in Bydgoszcz. In the same crypt their three sons: Gustaw, Henryk and Józef were buried<sup>34</sup>.

The last owner of Iwansk, Wincenty Wołodkowicz, was an honorary member of the Vitebsk Noble Assembly from the Lepel district. He also was a member of the county committee on the needs of the agricultural industry. He paid much attention to putting into effect the economic achievements of agricultural science and best practices<sup>35</sup>.

On flood plain meadows in Iwansk racy trotters and cattle were bred. Fed bulls were taken for sale to Riga on big boats along the rivers Ulla and Western Dvina. In all the estates the economy was conducted carefully and cautiously. A land-reclamation team worked to drain wetlands<sup>36</sup>.

The following is an abstract from *Geographical Dictionary of Kingdom of Poland* published in 1883 in Warsaw about the Iwansk estate of Wołodkowicz:

At present Iwansk and the neighboring folvarks of Noviny and Vishenki belong to Wincenty Wołodkowicz. He also owns a borough of Czaszniki with the farm of Alinpol. The telegraph line Czaszniki — Dvinsk runs through Iwansk. There is an old wooden chapel built by the Jesuits. The sandy and marshy ground was conveyed through the efforts of the owners to the best condition in the neighborhood. Field reclamation and skillful use of agricultural machinery raise the culture of the local economy. Steam engines are used everywhere: at a mill, sawmill, distillery, brick factory, threshing mill. Brood cows and horses are bred here. The estate Iwansk includes Koptsevichi, Demidovichi Vostrau, Punki, Tovpentsy, Krasnitsa, Medvedsk, Fedzki, Hatsyanava and Pristoye decently. Throughout the summer the villagers are engaged in floating timber to Riga. Shortage of labor has a harmful effect on the state of agriculture and human well-being...<sup>37</sup>.

The discipline at the estate was very strict, the owner especially disliked manifested drunks who he fired immediately having felt the smell of alcohol. He liked to appear with surprise inspections where it was least expected<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>34</sup> E. Morawska-Wołodkowicz. *Wspomnienia z Iwańskiem w tle...*, p. 6.

<sup>35</sup> *Витебская губерния. Труды местных комитетов о нуждах сельскохозяйственной промышленности*. Санкт-Петербург: Типография В. Киршбаума, 1903, p. 330.

<sup>36</sup> *Памяць. Чашиніцкі раён: гісторыка-дакументальныя хронікі гарадоў і раёнаў Беларусі*. Рэдкал. М.Ц. Дробыш і інш., уклад. Н.Т. Кіндзяева, маст. Э.Э. Жакевіч. Мінск: Беларуская навука, 1997, p. 103–104.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 103–104.

<sup>38</sup> E. Morawska-Wołodkowicz. *Wspomnienia z Iwańskiem w tle...*, p. 7.

Unfortunately, at present there is no trace of the former brick factory which produced bricks of very good quality of various sizes and shapes, and from the distillery remain dilapidated warehouses.

Wincenty Wołodkowicz was a true philanthropist and Iwansk became known in Belarus as an island of Polish culture. With his own money he taught young people at the university and invited teachers from Poland and opened a Polish school in Iwansk, which acted illegally. The documentation and account books were also in Polish<sup>39</sup>.

Wincenty and Zofia Wołodkowicz had a rather unusual, day and night schedule. They went to bed somewhere around ten o'clock in the morning, woke up about six o'clock, had breakfast, going about their business, and had dinner around midnight. This routine was violated only in extreme cases for very important guests who came to him in Iwansk.

After the October Revolution the Wołodkowicz immigrated to Poland, and then the fate scattered the members of this family throughout the world.

### **The Wołodkowicz palace-and-park ensemble**

On purchasing Iwansk at the end of the XVIII century, the Wołodkowicz family decided to settle down here permanently. At the turn of the XVIII–XIX centuries the Wołodkowicz built a single-storey mansion. It was a strongly protruding rectangle which rested upon a tall basement with rooms with square windows.

The facade of the building had two identical porticos, each of which consisted of four columns. The simple walls were embellished with large windows divided into eight square parts. The pile was covered with smooth dual-slope shingled roof. The Wołodkowicz family lived in this building until the end of the XIX century. It had twelve rooms<sup>40</sup>.

In the late XIX and early XX centuries the Wołodkowicz built a new large two-storey mansion next to the old one, reinforced with counterforces at the sides. The new mansion was built primarily for storing the ever-growing collection and family heirlooms. They were collected by several generations and mostly by Wincenty Wołodkowicz, the last owner of Iwansk. A huge dining-room at the elevated first floor of the new palace was panelled with oak and resembled a refectory. The walls were covered with family portraits of different quality. Among the paintings done by home-grown artists there were also valuable works. The family collection was stored in the arched cellars of the palace. One of the halls with oak cabinets attached to the wall and reaching the ceiling was designed for the library and family archives. Most books in the library were bound in leather. The archives, apart from family documents, contained materials on the history of the Commonwealth, especially those relating to its north-eastern lands. It stored a considerable part of the archives of the Polotsk Jesuits, correspondence of crown vice-chancellor Hieronim Radziewski with King Jan Kazimierz, letters of Marina Mniszek to her husband False-Dmitry, several letters of Bar-

<sup>39</sup> M. Jałowicki. *Na skraju Imperium*. Warszawa: Czytelnik, 2003, p. 178.

<sup>40</sup> R. Aftanazy. *Dzieje rezydencji na dawnych kresach Rzeczypospolitej*. Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1991, p. 235–236.

bara Radziwiłł, autographs of King Zygmund August, awards and privileges of Stefan Batory, letters of Prince Mikołaj Radziwiłł the Orphan as well as the correspondence between Inland Master Wilhelm Furstenberg and his successor Gotthard Kettler from the times of secularization of the Order. The library and archives were arranged and catalogued before World War I by the Krakow historian Ivan Dombrowski. (*Unfortunately after the October Revolution the library and the archives disappeared and there is not any information what happened with them*). In another room on the same floor precious porcelain was kept. The Wołodkowicz family had Saxon china-wear, as well as the Sevres vases brought from France in the XVIII century. The third room was a kind of treasure-room. Here the Wołodkowicz stored mainly old silver, among which were large heraldic trays, baskets of very fine lacework, silver and golden candlesticks. On the walls were ancient weapons including carabellas (sables) decorated with silver, gold, rubies and other precious stones. But let's give the floor to M. Jałowiecki, a relative of the Wołodkowicz family who visited Iwansk in 1914:

Two locks opened and I stopped in astonishment, because never in my life had I seen such an amount of silver! There was a huge heraldic tray of lace work. In the huge wooden chests were hundreds of knives, spoons, forks, tea-spoons, dozens of silver plates and saucers, and on shelves there were beautiful silver candelabrams with pedestals that represented the Greek gods and goddesses.

Driven into the wall at special hooks hang sabers, framed in the skin of lizards, wrought in silver and gold with rubies on the hilts. Here, there was also a collection of Slutsk belts by masters Jan Madzharski and Pavel Yakubovich, and a collection of Oriental carpets<sup>41</sup>.

The fields of Iwansk in the vicinity of Czaszniki were the site of two great battles: the 1564 battle of Ulla and the battle of Russian troops under the command of Wittgenstein to the French units under the command of Marshal Oudinot.<sup>42</sup>

Having excavated the old battlefields Wincenty Wołodkowicz gathered damaged cones, bent armor, rusty swords, spears, curve oriental sabres, stone and cannon balls, arrows, buttons with Napoleonic and Russian eagles, broadswords of French dragoons, Polish cavalry sabers, metal plates of French soldiers tricron hats, etc. Each of these collections had a separate room. Thus, one could assert that the palace of the Wołodkowicz family in Iwansk was a kind of cultural-historical center in Czaszniki district at that period of time.

The first floor also had a huge living-room and guest-rooms. On the second floor of the palace housed the children and tutors with the governesses, who were invited from England, France and Germany. The yard was electrified. It was a great rarity in the early XX century, especially in rural areas. In the 90s of the XIX century Wincenty Wołodkowicz laid a phone line from the estate of Iwansk to the paper mill. It was the first telephone line in Czaszniki district<sup>43</sup>.

What happened to the library, achieves, museum exhibits and other historical riches after the October Revolution is unfortunately unknown. The local history museum in the Iwansk secondary school stores the village soviet (local council) documenta-

<sup>41</sup> M. Jałowiecki. *Na skraju Imperium...*, p. 187–188.

<sup>42</sup> Incidentally, the same M. Jałowiecki argues that both of these battles occurred in the same place.

<sup>43</sup> E. Morawska-Wołodkowicz. *Wspomnienia z Iwańskiem w tle...*, p. 7.

tion for the last three months of 1924 (certificates, fact sheets, documented requests of local population to provide them with firewood or forest plot, etc). Some of such certificates are written on the sheets torn from account books of the Iwansk estate of the Wołodkowicz family. On one of them there is even the handwritten signature of Wincenty Wołodkowicz which dates back as far as 1865! After the 1917 October Revolution the estate of the Wołodkowicz family was nationalized and on its basis the Bolsheviks created a commune named “The Red Fighter”. The commune members in the palace, where the village soviet was located, most probably “made use” of the Wołodkowicz family achieves. One can hardly imagine how many valuable historical sources and documents from the Wołodkowicz archive were destroyed in those days... Perhaps part of the archive is stored somewhere in the various archives and libraries in the former Soviet Union, waiting for their researcher. During the Civil War, General A. Zhirkevich, who once worked at the Vilnius Museum of Antiquities, came across the archive of the Jesuit college of Polotsk in the storeroom of the town of the Simbirsk. Perhaps it was part of the archive stored in the Wołodkowicz palace in Iwansk and during the mess and rigors of the Civil War somehow it got into Simbirsk?

In the process of work on this paper I came across an article by the Vitebsk scholar A.M. Podlipsky mentioning that some pieces of Wincenty Wołodkowicz museum exhibits, one way or the other, got into the collection of a well-known collector, V.P. Fedorovich<sup>44</sup>.

From another source, I learned that the collection of portraits of the Wołodkowicz family was in a private collection of another famous Vitebsk collector, A.P. Brodovsky. After the October Revolution, this collection became the basis for the Vitebsk Provincial Museum. The portraits of the Wołodkowicz, alongside with other exhibits of Vitebsk museum, most likely were brought out during the Great Patriotic War (the Second World War) in Saratov, where the museum collection was placed. Not all exhibits are known to have been given back. Perhaps the portraits of the Wołodkowicz family are still in Saratov<sup>45</sup>.

From documents by Józef it appears that part of the furniture and precious porcelain from Iwansk was removed to Minsk. Beautiful silver candelabrums and a lot of silver tableware turned out to be in Vitebsk. The family icon of the Blessed Virgin which was inherited from generation to generation turned out to be in Vitebsk too<sup>46</sup>.

Only God knows how many interesting and valuable documents, items and evidences have disappeared because of human indifference and ignorance in our crazy and insane age! One can only imagine how far richer and more interesting our history would be if we handled it with more respect and affection!

During the Great Patriotic War the palace housed a police garrison. In March 1943, the partisans of Zvonov attachment of the partisan brigade “Dubava” made an attempt to defeat this garrison, but the thick walls and good position of the palace allowed the

<sup>44</sup> A.M. Падліпскі. *Заснавальнік Віцебскага музея*, “Помнікі гісторыі і культуры Беларусі” 1980, No 2, p. 19–20.

<sup>45</sup> A.A. Букіна. *Музей А. Брадоўскага ў Віцебску*, “Віцебскі сшытак” 2000, No 4, p. 201–205.

<sup>46</sup> J. Wołodkowicz. *Ze wzmagañ na dawnych rubieżach Rzeczypospolitej...*, p. 66.

Polizei repel the attack. During the battle the palace caught fire and burned down from inside and remained up to the 1960s of the XX century.

Soon the order was given to dismantle the palace. There is a unique photograph of the palace in the museum during its destruction in the 70s of the last century.

Thus, gradually over several years, the palace, which required only a major overhaul, was almost completely destroyed. Only the back cornerpillar which the vandals could not break down remains.

Next to the palace there was a lodge for servants with a big dining-room for the workers employed by Wołodkowicz. This lodge also had two stories with a vast canteen and a hall.

Residents of Iwansk lived in the building until the early 70s of the XX century. Then they moved into new houses built by the collective-farm, and the lodge was gradually declining and crumbling. The palace was surrounded by a large picturesque park with lawns, flower beds, lime-tree alleys and a greenhouse to grow "oversees flowers". In the middle of the park there was a gazebo surrounded by pine trees, the paths were strewn with broken red brick. The park was planted with larches, mulberries, elms, oaks, lindens and other trees. On the outskirts of the park near the artificial pond there was a chapel. Near the park there was a big hippodrome where aristocratic-breed trotters were trained. Near the palace were outbuildings: stables, barns, a barn-floor, a smithy, an ice-room (a room to store bacon and meat). Nearby, there was a distillery, which was founded in 1820. After the October Revolution it was closed. After the Second World War there was a collective-farm sawmill. Then the building of the distillery was dismantled, with only two warehouse premises left which were used for a jointer's shop and a warehouse.

The chapel was also destroyed, the gravestones stolen, the pond turned into a mud puddle. Unfortunately, until today from a perfectly well-cared-for and picturesque palace – and – park ensemble only the lodge has been preserved. However, it is gradually crumbling and the park is running wild and losing its original appearance. All the rest was destroyed in the 50–70-s of the XX century.

A quite detailed description of the Iwansk estate of the Wołodkowicz family was left by Nina Vasilevna Fedzko, a resident of the village of Iwansk who was born in 1927 and the memories of whom I put down as far as in 2001:

I remember well the yet undamaged palace and the park. Near the landowner's pond there was a brick gate – central entrance to the estate from which a brick fence came – a fencing around the entire park. Near the pond the landlord's bath-house stood, which the partisans burned down during the war in an assault on the police garrison located in the palace. Opposite the pond, where is now the complex (a big collective cattle-farm), there was a huge two-storey barnyard for keeping grain and seeds. One could even enter the second floor with horses. Horse carts with full sacks of barley, wheat, oat and other grains drove to the second floor from which the workers pored them out into the compartments which had holes at the first floor to pour the grain and fill the sacks when needed. Next to the barnyard were two stables. Near the stables was a huge room for hay – the floor. There also were several outbuildings, which purpose I do not remember. On the way to Selets near the distillery was a settlement which was called Ignatavka. Close to the pond there is a huge, apparently, landowner's, bee yard, the honey from which was stored in the former landowner's chapel which was nearby. Today nothing remains

apart from one plate and the entrance into the vault beneath. In the park there was a huge brick house with three apartments. Under the house there was a basement. The house was destroyed after the war and today no trace remains.

Another thing I remember is that not far from the Burdytsk pond, on the road to the brick factory, stood the landowner's brick barn and a wooden house next to it. Nearby were eight farms, which before the war had been taken to the commune, because their owners were dispossessed. I remember that from the brick factory to the Burdytsk pond was a road, which was called Vysokaya. I also remember my parents told that near the palace sir Wołodkowicz had a glass greenhouse with overseas plants and flowers. Nearby the landowner had an orchard (I remember it well too, since with other children I went in for apples and pears). Near the two-story lodge, which is preserved until today, there was a smithy. It was dismantled quite recently, in our time. ...The distillery was across the road from which now only two warehouses remain. The very same distillery had a huge brick chimney. The distillery was closed immediately after the revolution, and what was in it before the war I do not remember, but after the war, it housed the collective-farm sawmill for a long time. Then the premise was relocated and the saw-mill was closed. This is all I remember about the former palace and the park.

In the mid-90's a businessman from Minsk bought the dilapidated lodge, re-roofed it, installed frames and mended the broken windows. He started other recovery efforts, hoping to make a shop and cafe in it, as well as accommodation for his family. But something went wrong; he left Iwansk without completing a good deed. Again everything went into decline. I noticed an interesting trend that is inherent to all obsessed with local lore and which was confirmed by my fellow historians from other corners of the Vitebsk region: first, you are looking for an interesting fact, an exhibit, some information, the history, and then all of this, so to speak, begins to "seek" you. This happened more than once in my work, too... Late in the autumn of 2009, a Roman Catholic priest from Czaszniki, Andrzej, came to my school. He was sent to me by the staff of the Czaszniki museum. He told me, that on behalf of the Polish journalist Gizela Chmielewska from Bydgoszcz, he wanted to find out if any trace of the Wołodkowicz family on Czaszniki land remained. It turned out that she was exploring the history of the Wołodkowicz family in cooperation with the granddaughter of Wincenty Wołodkowicz, the last owner of Iwansk, the daughter of his son Gustaw Elżbieta, who lives in Warsaw! Priest Andrzej took pictures of the section of the museum dedicated to the history of the Wołodkowicz family and sent them to Poland. Then I received an e-mail letter from ...Holland!

It turns out that Elżbieta's daughter, Izabella, lives with her family in Holland and on behalf of Elżbieta she was willing to correspond with me to share information. We started to exchange e-mail letters. They provided me with very valuable information, which extended my knowledge about the history of the family of Wołodkowicz, their life and destiny in the twentieth century. This includes the memories of M. Jałowicki who in 1914 visited Iwansk and gave a detailed description of the palace, as well as customs and the way of life of Wołodkowicz in Iwansk<sup>47</sup>, and the memories of her family, and the history of Elżbieta herself, as well as several valuable photographs. I sent them the information that aroused great interest with them, since they could not even imagine that the Wołodkowicz family had left a trace in Czaszniki

<sup>47</sup> M. Jałowicki. *Na skraju Imperium...*

district. From them I learned about the fate of the family of Gustaw, one of the sons of Wincenty and Zofia, who would have been the next owner of the Iwansk estate.

After the October Revolution Gustaw left for Poland with his wife countess Izabella Morsztyn and his parents.

Elżbieta Wołodkowicz (Dzierzykraj-Morawska by marriage), daughter of Gustaw was born in a villa near Warsaw May 30, 1924. Apart from her, Gustaw had four more children: Wincenty (1919–1944), Paweł (1921–1980), Helena (1922–1994) and Kazimierz (1926–1953) Wołodkowicz. To keep the family, worked as a chemical engineer in a laboratory in Warsaw (he was a chemist by education). This work reduced his days as it was related with harmful chemicals. He died in 1933. The children went to boarding school and spent the rest of their time at the estates of their relatives, among others at Hroszowka and Snow in present day Belarus.

Being true patriots, the family of Gustaw took part in the fight against the Nazis during the Second World War. Thus, Gustaw's wife Izabella, who during the occupation lived in Warsaw, hid in her home Jewish children who had escaped from the Warsaw ghetto. After the war she was awarded by the Israeli organization Yad Vashem. The award was received by her daughter, Elżbieta, because her mother had died by that time. Gustaw's sons participated in the resistance movement. Wincenty was heavily involved in helping Jewish children to escape from the Warsaw ghetto and was also the editor of an underground newspaper in Warsaw and perished during the Warsaw uprising of 1944.

After the war the life of the family was not easy. Elżbieta worked for some time in a shoe factory to earn some money, and in her spare time she made shoes for her relatives and friends. Her brothers, Paweł and Kazimierz, who did not accept the new government, and, at all that, were members of the Territorial Army ("Armia Krajowa") during the war, were under the supervision of the Polish secret police. They were about to be arrested, but they fled abroad. In 1953 Kazimierz died tragically in Canada while hunting and Paweł lived in the UK, where he died in 1980<sup>48</sup>.

Gradually the situation improved due to support from relatives living abroad. Elżbieta's husband Franciszek Dzierzykraj-Morawski became the first Polish Ambassador in the Netherlands in the 1990s after the political change in Poland. They have two children: a son Robert (single) and a daughter Isabella (Hus by marriage). Izabella and her husband Martin live in the Netherlands and they have three children: two sons, Vincent and Thomas, and a daughter Izabella.

Finally, 4–5 May 2010 Elżbieta Wołodkowicz-Morawska, her son Robert and her daughter Izabella with her family visited the Czaszniki District. They attended the paper mill, where a warm welcome was organized for them. Then of course they called on Iwansk, where they visited the remains of the palace and the park ensemble of their ancestors, went on tour to the school museum. The excursion was begun with a performance on the cymbals of the famous "Ogiński Polonaise". Unforgettable were the tears of joy and at the same time pain in the eyes of the descendants of the owners of Iwansk, who after so many years returned to their roots, to their heritage, to the fatherland! This polonaise, although called the "Farewell to the Fatherland", was, as

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<sup>48</sup> E. Morawska-Wołodkowicz. *Wspomnienia z Iwańskiem w tle...*, p. 8.



I said to the honorable guests, a symbol of returning to their homeland. They were very touched by the fact that the memory of their ancestors is preserved, and respected in Ivansk. The meeting was a very exciting and emotional experience. I will always remember as Mrs. Elżbieta Wołodkowicz-Morawska with a trembling hand stroked the remains of a wall of the former palace where her ancestors lived, and under the pouring rain knelt on the spot where the family vault — chapel used to stand and from which only one tombstone remained. And it is hurtful, shameful and sad for what people have done, because “they don’t know what they do”, as written in the Bible. Forgive us, O God! Since people did without knowing what they do before and do now! Even that small piece that remained of the former palace and park ensemble is still crumbling, cracking and being soiled. So much good did this family do for the history of our country that they deserve much more respect and attention.

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