

PIOTR MYŚLAKOWSKI

(WARSZAWA)

FRYDERYK CHOPIN'S CONTRIBUTION TO GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH
AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF NEWLY DISCOVERED RECORDS

This article discusses two interrelated genealogical issues concerning Fryderyk Chopin's blood and marital relatives, as broadly understood. The first part explains how, thanks to a short passage in a letter written by the fifteen-year-old Fryderyk to a friend, we learned of the existence of a second, parallel branch of the Krzyżanowski family – the descendants of Wojciech, who, as research has revealed, was the brother of Fryderyk Chopin's grandfather, Jakub. Information from the letter enabled us to discover the close family and social ties between the two lines, and especially with the Czachowskis. Their rich history coincides with Chopin's history at many points; among other things, the research showed relations with the pianist Karol Mikuli, the bookseller Karol Magnus and the photographer Jan Mieczkowski, while Fryderyk's close cousin, Dionizy Czachowski, went down in history as a heroic commander during the January Uprising. The article also points to a branch of Chopin's relatives not yet closely examined – relatives who were probably unaware of that family connection.

The second part of the article looks at the rich consequences for genealogical research resulting from crucial records relating to the parents of Justyna Chopin discovered in 2020: the birth and death of Antonina Krzyżanowska (Justyna's mother), the death of Marianna Bielska (Justyna's sister) and the marriage of Jakub and Antonina (Justyna's parents). These documents were first published in the previous volume of the *Rocznik Chopinowski* (vol. 28). The present article shows the extent to which our biographical knowledge has expanded in relation to the Krzyżanowski and Kołomiński families and also – incidentally – the Skarbeks, to whom the Chopins' history is inextricably linked. The marriage of Jakub Krzyżanowski and Antonina Kołomińska, which took place in the Pomeranian parish of Kłodawa Gdańska, near Tczew, opens up new hypotheses concerning the history of their employers, the Skarbeks of Izbica Kujawska, while at the same time providing us with more precise information about dates and places in the life of Chopin's grandparents. The circumstances relating to these facts greatly enhance our knowledge of historical events that affected them personally (such as the Confederation of Bar).