

## Jacek Dukaj

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THE MOST OUTSTANDING WRITER OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION IN POLAND  
WORTHY SUCCESSOR TO STANISŁAW LEM

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Jacek Dukaj (born 1974) is one of Poland's most interesting contemporary prose writers, whose books are always eagerly anticipated events. He is the author of *Black Oceans*, *Extensa*, *Other Songs*, *Perfect Imperfection*, *Xavras Wyzryn* and *Other National Fictions* and *Ice*, and the brains behind the *PL + 50. Future Histories* anthology. After the huge success of his novel *Ice*, which won the European Literary Award, the prestigious Kościelscy Award and was nominated for the Nike (the most prestigious literary award in Poland), Jacek Dukaj published widely acclaimed grim fairy tale *The Crowe*.

### MOST IMPORTANT PRIZES AND DISTINCTIONS

Jerzy Żuławski Literary Award for *The Crowe* (2010)  
Mackiewicz Literary Award for *The Crowe* (2010)  
PPNW Prize: Autumn Book 2009 for *The Crowe* (2010)  
European Literary Award for *Ice* (2009)  
Kościelscy Award for *Ice* (2008)  
„Polityka” Prize: Book of the Last Two Decades for *Ice* (2008)  
Kościelscy Award for *Ice* (2008)  
Prize in the Wirtualna Polska (website) public vote: Polish Novel of the Year 2007 for *Ice* (2008)  
Śląkfa Prize: Author of the Year 2007 for *Ice* (2008)  
Sfinks Prize: Polish novel of the Year 2007 for *Ice* (2008)  
PPNW Prize: Autumn Book 2007 for *Ice* (2008)  
Zajdel Prize: Novel of the Year 2004 for *Perfect Imperfection* (2005)  
PPNW Prize: Autumn Book 2003 for *Other Songs* (2004)  
Sfinks Prize: Polish Novel of the Year 2003 for *Other Songs* (2004)  
Zajdel Prize: Novel of the Year 2003 for *Other Songs* (2004)  
Sfinks Prize: Polish Novel of the Year 2001 for *Black Oceans* (2002)  
Zajdel Prize: Novel of the Year 2001 for *Black Oceans* (2002)  
Fantom Prize for *In the Land of the Faithless* (2001)  
Sfinks Prize: Book of the Year 2000 for *In the Land of the Faithless* (2001)  
Śląkfa Prize: Author of the Year 2000 (2001)  
Zajdel Prize: Story of the Year 2000 for *Cathedral* (2001)  
Srebrny Glob (Silver Globe) Prize: Story of the Year 1998 for *Heart of Darkness* (1999)  
Sfinks Prize: Polish Story of the Year 1998 for *Heart of Darkness* (1999)

### BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR OFFERED BY WL

#### Novels

*Extensa* (2002)  
*Other Songs* (2003)  
*Perfect Imperfection* (2004)  
*Ice* (2007)  
*The Plunderer's Daughter* (2002, reprint 2009)  
*Black Oceans* (2001, reprint 2008)  
*The Crowe* (2009)

**Short story collections**

*Xavras Wyzryn and Other National Fictions* (2004, reprint 2009)

*In the Land of Unbelievers* (2000, reprint 2008)

*King of Pain* (2010)

## Jacek Dukaj

# Xavras Wyzryn



Publication date: 2009

Pages: 232

Genre: Short stories

Rights available: World

### Keynote

The early novellas and short stories that kick-started the reputation of the reigning king of Polish literary science fiction

### Sales points

- historical science fiction of the very highest grade
- a brilliant introduction to the work of an author who enjoys mass popularity with readers and critics alike
- admired by those who read historical fiction, science fiction, or novels of ideas

### Description

The premise of the novella that “broke” Jacek Dukaj into the consciousness of a mass readership is at once simple and compelling: Poland lost the fight against Russia in the year 1920, never regained its independence, and now – 80 years later – is still a place where small underground factions are struggling for a free Poland. It’s a scenario that is at once science fiction, and a terrible reality for many countries around the world. Enter the titular hero with the unpronounceable name, Xavras Wyzryn, a star terrorist/freedom fighter who seeks to wage war with Russia by detonating an atom bomb in Moscow. The other main protagonist is Ian Smith, a pragmatic American who has come to Poland to film the renegade partisan, unable to decide if his subject is a madman or a genius. As might be gathered from such a short description, *Xavras Wyzryn* is, if anything, a novella that has only gained relevance since its initial publication. With its unflinching examination of the ethics of terrorism, it is a novel that forces the reader to reassess his or her own ethics on every page.

*Reading Xavras after September 11<sup>th</sup>, it seems more like an anti-patriotic work, showing patriotism as a potentially destructive force, regardless of its noble intentions. Dukaj can thus be read as the last successor to Polish Romanticism, or as someone who seeks to discard and stomp on the myth of Conrad.*

Wojciech Orłowski, “Gazeta Wyborcza”

*Xavras is insane, the very idea is insane, and the readers driven mad. After reading it I myself wanted to take Moscow with an atom bomb, but then I recalled that we won the war in 1920, and that the Solidarity Round Table had taken place. If it weren't for that, we'd be reading Xavras in the underground press as a bible of the enslaved.*

Paweł Włoch, “merlin.pl”

**Target market**

Fans of top-shelf science-fiction, and lovers of intricately constructed literature who normally stay far away from the science-fiction shelves.