

## 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

# Ice



Publication date: 2008

Pages: 1054

Genre: Novel  
(science fiction, alternative history)

Rights available: World

### Keynote

A XIX Century-style epic story worthy of the XXI Century. Alternative history in the style of Dostoevsky or Tolstoy laced with a sensational dose of fantasy.

### Sales points

- One of the most interesting and skilled Polish prose writers, whose imagination has no equal, not only in Poland but over the whole world.
- Multi-prize winner.
- *Ice* is a novel of the kind no longer written, a phenomenon on a world wide scale, even its appearance in a foreign language has aroused interest.
- **Awarded European Literary Award!**

### Description

*Ice* is a novel unlike any other — “last great novel of 19. century lost in our times”, as critics say.

This epic tale takes us back to belle epoque — from dark brickhouses of proletarian Warsaw to the luxury of Trans-Siberian Express, from crystal ballrooms of sky-high palace of Siberia’s Governor General to the factories and mansions of new Polish bourgeoisie.

Great attention to historical details and stylization of language are nevertheless mere ornaments to much more ambitious literary project: the recreation of “the spirit of the age”, *Zeitgeist* of Europe as it was before the First World War.

Even the psychological plays between main characters of *Ice* are shown according to 19-century views of human nature. But all this gives just a background for book’s main theme. *Ice* begins in year 1924 in Warsaw, which is still under the rule of the Russian Empire, tsar Nicholas II Romanov has no reason to fear Revolution; snow and ice cover the city in the middle of summer and glacial monuments walk the streets. “It has frozen”, say Russians in *Ice*: weather, economy, politics, history itself — everything has been stopped by single phenomenon: the Tunguska meteoroid.

Dukaj’s version of the 1908 incident brings to Earth a new mineral, tungetite: as electromagnetic machines made possible the experiments and evolution of 20-century science and technology, so machines of electrotungetite open door to “black physics”: discovery and manipulation of fundamental force changing the laws of logic. Benedykt Gierosławski, young Polish mathematician, is called by tsar’s Ministry of Winter to travel to Siberia and lands of Frost. In his voyage and in Irkutsk he meets many

historical and fictional powerful figures (Nicola Tesla, Józef Piłsudski, Grigori Rasputin among others). He's caught in a vast web of political, economic and religious conspiracies, intrigues of love and crime, forced to fight and take sides.

And Benedykt is so important because of his father, political exile and Polish revolutionist: "Father Frost", a man who allegedly can influence the spreading of *Ice*, in this way shaping the logic map of world and, consequently, the course of history. For there arises another great question: about history as a force of nature, limited and directed by certain rules inferable from empirical data.

*Ice* is a historical novel, a psychological novel and a science fiction novel — where "science" stands for 19-century philosophy of history.

### **Target market**

Fans of fantasy written with verve and an attachment to the detail encountered in novels and alternative histories, fans of books describing the world (particularly East Europe and Asia) from a surprising and revealing perspective but above all readers craving sensationally written books that keep them in suspense from the first to the last page and which can be returned to again and again.