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**Music, the Economy and Society:  
Szymanowska's Career Path in Russia in the 1820s**

A study of the career of Maria Agata Wołowska Szymanowska (1789–1831) as a composer, performing musician, and teacher in Russia sheds new light on the social and economic status of the Polish-born musician at the St. Petersburg court in the decades that followed the last partition of Poland in 1795. Her childhood and formative years were marked by the abdication of Stanisław August Poniatowski, the last Polish king, and Napoleon's creation of a truncated Duchy of Warsaw in 1807. In 1815, when Szymanowska was already a recognized pianist, the Congress of Vienna reassigned the administration of Warsaw to the Russian sector, and the former capital fell under the rule of the tsar of Russia, Alexander I. In 1823 Alexander's offer of court patronage to Szymanowska was timely. The tsar, himself an amateur violinist, sought to build support among the wealthier, and generally, more conservative, members of the former Polish nobility, and the presence of a recognized Polish-born virtuoso in St. Petersburg served the state in the broader cultural and social sphere. Szymanowska advanced the economic and social achievements of the keyboard artist in Russia in two ways. First, she disseminated the modern piano repertoire in Warsaw, Moscow and St. Petersburg in the decades that followed the partitions; and second, she affirmed the piano as an appropriate symbol of wealth and social status among Russia's aspiring middle class. Further, during a time of intense strife among the Polish intellectuals and the throne, Szymanowska's active participation in the public concerts of the court-sponsored amateur societies helped elevate Russian music to full participation in European musical life and strengthened Alexander's cultural ties with the wealthier, and generally more conservative, descendants of the nobility.

Szymanowska, who lived in Warsaw intermittently until 1827, when she settled permanently in Russia, is representative of a successful foreign-born artist who served under patronage in St. Petersburg during Alexander's reign. There she taught the younger generation of Russian aristocrats, the newly-noble, and the newly-wealthy as they sought to acquire the trappings of western culture, among

them, the ability to play the pianoforte. In the capital, in particular, the demand for private instructors remained at an all time high, as the acquisition of the piano and the ability to play the instrument symbolized in part the cultural expectations of the court and enabled the middle class to imitate the customs and manners of the nobility.

Szymanowska's childhood in Warsaw was consumed by music-making in the home. Her father, Franciszek Wołowski, a wealthy brewery owner, and her mother, Barbara Lanckorońska Wołowska, a descendant of an ancient Polish aristocratic family, were leading patrons of the arts. Together, they encouraged the young Szymanowska's interest in music. At the age of eight she began her musical studies in piano with the well-known Warsaw pianist, Antoni Lisowski, and at fifteen she pursued studies in theory and composition with the pianist and composer Tomasz Gremm. During her formative years the Wołowski family sponsored frequent afternoon and evening concerts that featured performances by Polish and foreign-born artists, among them, Kurpiński, Elsner (who later served as Chopin's teacher), Lessel, Klengel, and Steibelt. Since Warsaw's National Theatre served as an obligatory stop for musicians en route to Moscow or St. Petersburg, Szymanowska had ample opportunity to acquaint herself with contemporary performance and compositional styles, and she took advantage of the informal lessons these visiting artists provided to resident musicians. Syga and Szenic point out that Warsaw remained one of the important cultural centers on the lucrative northern tour that included Moscow and St. Petersburg.<sup>1</sup> Like other successful musicians of her generation, Szymanowska accepted the cultural expectations of her community and by the age of twenty-one she was an active participant in public and private concerts in Warsaw and the rest of Europe.

In 1810, after presenting a series of concerts in Warsaw and Paris, she married Józef Teofil Szymanowski, the landlord of an estate at Otwock, an agricultural center located about sixteen miles southeast of Warsaw. Within a period of two years she gave birth to three children: a set of twins, Helena (1811–1861) and

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<sup>1</sup> Teofil Syga and Stanisław Szenic, *Maria Szymanowska i jej czasy* (Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1960), 18–19, 39. I should like to thank the National Endowment for the Humanities (Special Opportunity for Archival Research), the Kennan Institute of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and the City University of New York Research Award Program for supporting research and travel for the completion of this study. Dates are given according to the Julian, or Russian calendar, except where the author or editor employs Julian and Gregorian dates. In those instances both dates are provided as in the original source.

Romuald (1811–1839), and a daughter, Celina (1812–1855), who later married the poet Adam Mickiewicz. Szymanowska's marriage reflected a continuing dilemma that she and other women faced in the early decades of the nineteenth century, as professional aspirations frequently conflicted openly with society's accepted gender roles. Moreover, her career goals and artistic interests did not necessarily coincide with those of her husband, who was content to pursue his agricultural interests in Otwock, while she sought professional success as a performer, composer, and teacher. Ten years later, in 1820, the marriage foundered and Józef petitioned for a divorce, which the courts granted a few years later; Szymanowska retained her maiden name and the custody of their children and resumed her professional career. Józef remarried soon after the divorce became final, yet Szymanowska, perhaps realizing the difficulties of combining marriage and career in the early part of the nineteenth century, did not. Initially, she received child support from Józef and earned additional income by offering keyboard lessons to the Warsaw gentry. She also accrued considerable earnings from royalties derived from the sales of single editions of her keyboard works in Leipzig and St. Petersburg and from the proceeds of public concerts. The publication dates of her works indicate that they were published immediately after she composed them, and illustrate the marketability of her keyboard works as teaching pieces and solo concert works.

In the social and cultural context of the Russian-administered sector that included Warsaw and Otwock, it is not surprising that Szymanowska eventually gravitated to the court in St. Petersburg after she was critically acclaimed as a pianist in Kiev, Dresden, Leipzig, Berlin, Paris, London, Moscow, and Milan. *The Times* of London, 30 June 1825, advertised a forthcoming vocal and instrumental concert featuring several eminent performers, among them, 'Madame Szymanowska'.<sup>2</sup> Tickets for the 2 July concert were inexpensive, priced at half a guinea each. Prior to Szymanowska's court appointment in 1823, the Empress Maria Feodorovna may well have heard Szymanowska perform at a private concert in Warsaw in the fall of 1818 in honor of the forthcoming marriage of her son, the Grand Duke Konstantin Pavlovich, to the Polish commoner Joanna Grudzińska. In a letter dated Warsaw, 9 September 1818, Maria Feodorovna wrote to her close friend and advisor Prince Sergei Mikhailovich Golitsyn, that

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<sup>2</sup> *The Times*, London, Thursday, June 30, 1825, 1. Courtesy of Michael Kassler, Sydney, Australia.

during the festivities that accompanied Konstantin's engagement she had attended several official events with military personnel and official citizens and that she had also become acquainted with gentrywomen connected with his court.<sup>3</sup> It is not unreasonable to assume that Szymanowska may well have performed for the Empress and her entourage at one of the private musical evenings arranged for the royal visit. Szymanowska, who at that time lived in Warsaw and had recently completed a series of concert tours in Europe and Italy, would have been in residence at that time.

Szymanowska's official appointment at the Russian court took place in 1823, when Alexander named her to the post of First Pianist to the Empresses Maria Fedorovna (1759–1828) and Elizaveta Alekseevna (1779–1826). As a professional musician at the court in St. Petersburg, Szymanowska successfully negotiated an unwieldy economic and political system kept in place by patronage, private fees, and tax credits extended to such foreign-born court musicians at a time when many talented native-born musicians did not necessarily receive such generous financial overtures. It is noteworthy, however, that the native-born Russian-Ukrainian composer Dmitrii Bortnianskii, who served as director of the Imperial Chapel Choir, was generously compensated under patronage, earning around 20,000 credit rubles annually. Yet for the most part the favoritism extended to foreign-born artists alienated the next generation of native Russian musicians and laid the foundation for the political and musical debates that surrounded Balakirev and his circle during the 1860s.

Alexander's offer of patronage to a well known Polish virtuoso at the Russian court might well be considered radical at a time when Warsaw remained a separate administrative arm within the Russian sector of partitioned Poland. Further, in the early 1820s the new and controversial generation of Polish intellectuals was strongly influenced by the radical writings of Adam Mickiewicz and Joachim Lelewel, both of whom served as strong advocates of Polish independence within the Russian sector. In such a conflicted political sphere, Szymanowska's appointment at the Russian court honored a tradition that flourished at the court of Poland's last king and extravagant arts patron, Stanisław August Poniatowski (1764–1795). During a time of intense strife among the Polish intellectuals and

<sup>3</sup> Maria Fedorovna, Letter to Prince Sergei Mikhailovich Golitsyn, Warsaw, 9 September 1818, *Pis'ma gosudaryni imperatritsy Marii Fedorovny k pochetnomu opekunu kniaziu Sergeiu Mikhailovichu Golitsynu, 1811–1828*, edited by I. Diumutel' (Moscow: Tip. F. I. Neibiurger, 1885), 33–34.

the throne, Szymanowska's active participation in the public concerts of the court-sponsored amateur societies helped elevate Russian music to full participation in European musical life and strengthened Alexander's cultural ties among the wealthier, and generally more conservative, descendants of the nobility.

The Russian musicologist Igor' Belza, in his biography, *Mariia Shimanovskaia*, earlier hypothesized that Alexander appointed Szymanowska as court pianist solely to appease dissident Polish factions who were strongly advocating constitutional independence for both Poland and Russia in the 1820s.<sup>4</sup> While Belza's view is historically accurate and merits further discussion, the author does not fully take into account Szymanowska's professional status as a financially independent composer and performer at the time of her court appointment. From a purely musical point of view, Szymanowska anticipates an important development that gained momentum in Europe and Russia in the early decades of the nineteenth century: the emergence of the pianist and composer whose works appealed to professional and amateur musician alike through publication of keyboard works for the home and the concert hall, and whose participation in public concerts in St. Petersburg elevated the stature of the aspiring amateur musician.

From all available evidence it appears that Szymanowska first performed at the court in St. Petersburg in the summer of 1822, with Alexander, Maria Fedorovna and Elizaveta Alekseevna in attendance.<sup>5</sup> Concerning this inaugural concert series, *Russkii invalid*, 30 June 1822, reported that Szymanowska's reputation preceded her arrival and that, following her second concert appearance at the court, the czar hosted a reception in her honor.<sup>6</sup> The following spring she accepted Alexander's offer of patronage. One Russian critic and writer on music, K. Shalikov, commented on Szymanowska's performance style in an essay that appeared in *Moskovskiiia vedomosti*, 6 May 1822.<sup>7</sup> The critic praised Szymanowska's improvised melodic ornamentation and her dazzling performance

<sup>4</sup> Igor Belza, *Mariia Shimanovskaia* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1956), 41–42.

<sup>5</sup> Anne Swartz, 'Maria Szymanowska (1789–1831)', Sylvia Glickman and Martha Furman Schleifer (eds.), *Women Composers: Music Through the Ages*, Vol. 3: *Composers Born 1700 to 1799, Keyboard Music*, (New York: Macmillan, 1998), 278–328.

<sup>6</sup> *Russkii invalid*, 30 June 1822, 610–611.

<sup>7</sup> *Moskovskiiia vedomosti*, 6 May 1822, 1146.

style, and referred to her as a *virtuoz*, or virtuoso, one of the earliest uses of the musical designation in the Russian press.

Szymanowska's earnings in St. Petersburg derived chiefly from teaching, publications, and public and private performances, in addition to her annual court stipend and guaranteed pension. Concert pianists and private teachers, in particular, were drawn to St. Petersburg, where the proceeds from one concert series might well cover the performer's living expenses for the better part of a year. Szymanowska earned enough money from the ticket sales of one spring concert series to support herself and her family for an entire year. According to the official organ, the *Journal de St.-Pétersbourg*, 16/28 April 1827, the tickets for concerts at Philharmonic Hall were priced at ten rubles each, an average price for performances of visiting virtuosos. With 1,000 subscribers in attendance, the series generated approximately 10,000 rubles (£500 sterling), a considerable sum at that time.<sup>8</sup> Her earnings from one series of concerts enabled her to live comfortably for one year in St. Petersburg, especially if other sources of income are taken into account. By way of comparison, Liszt's inaugural solo recital at St. Petersburg's Assembly Hall of the Nobles in the summer of 1842 generated a box office of 50,000 rubles, a sum that rivaled the annual salary of a government cabinet minister.<sup>9</sup>

Szymanowska performed works of living composers in all her public concerts in St. Petersburg from 1823 until 1827, and critics praised her expressive ornamentation in the modern repertoire that included works of Field, Franciszek Lessel (1780–1838), and Hummel. A typical public concert for Szymanowska included works for both voice and piano, according to evidence in the *Journal de St.-Pétersbourg*, 17/29 March 1827.<sup>10</sup> One critic praised her improvisatory keyboard performance style, with its expressive melodic ornamentation, that closely imitated the contemporary 'singing style' of Italian opera singers in St. Petersburg.<sup>11</sup> Two recent studies offer fresh evidence concerning Szymanowska's performance style. Kijas notes that the pianist and composer Václav Jan Tomášek hailed Szymanowska as a 'skilled pianist who has a strong attack, clarity, and

<sup>8</sup> *Journal de St.-Pétersbourg*, 31 March/12 April 1827, 160; 16/28 April 1827, 186; 17/29 May 1827, 138; 24 November/6 December 1827, 586.

<sup>9</sup> *Journal de St.-Pétersbourg*, 18/30 August 1842, 1929.

<sup>10</sup> *Journal de St.-Pétersbourg*, 17/29 March 1827, 138.

<sup>11</sup> *Journal de St.-Pétersbourg*, 31 March/12 April 1827, 160.

understanding of the composition, along with an inspired performance style'.<sup>12</sup> Dobrzański argues that Szymanowska's reputation may have derived in part from her ability to perform from memory, a fairly new practice at the time.<sup>13</sup>

In order to supplement her income from teaching she frequently performed during the private musical evenings sponsored by St. Petersburg aristocrats, for which she received compensation from the advance ticket sales. The *Journal de St.-Pétersbourg*, 5/15 April 1828, reported: 'Madame Szymanowska, the pianist of the Empresses of Russia, proposes to give a musical evening on April 9th, at the home of Count Kouscheleff... one may purchase tickets at the entrance of the Paez music emporium and at the English store'.<sup>14</sup> The event required tickets purchased in advance for an unspecified price, probably anywhere from 10 to 15 rubles, the usual price of admission to such an event. Approximately 100 to 150 tickets would have been made available, earning the pianist from 1,500 rubles to 2,250 rubles, a substantial sum at that time.

The first third of the nineteenth century represented a golden age for private teachers in St. Petersburg and private teaching was a major source of income for the large number of resident foreign-born artists, most notably, Szymanowska and Field. Fashionable private teachers were extremely well compensated, as the younger generation of Russian aristocrats, the newly-noble, and the newly-wealthy sought to acquire the perceived trappings of western culture, among them, the ability to sing and play the pianoforte. The court-appointed instructors earned the highest salaries, averaging around 1,000 rubles (£50) annually in 1825, and the rate of pay remained fairly constant from the 1820s through the 1840s.<sup>15</sup> The extent of Szymanowska's yearly financial remuneration from her court position is difficult to determine with absolute accuracy to this point. However, one may assume that as First Pianist to the Empresses she probably earned a salary of 1,000 rubles annually in 1825.<sup>16</sup> Szymanowska, who served

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<sup>12</sup> Anna Kijas, *The Concert Tours of Maria Szymanowska* (Master of Arts in Music Thesis, Tufts University, May 2005), 63; translated from Václav Jan Tomášek, *Vlastní Životopis Václava Jana Tomáška* (Prague: Topičova Edice, 1941), 258–260.

<sup>13</sup> Sławomir Dobrzański, *Maria Szymanowska: Pianist and Composer* (Los Angeles: Figueroa Press in conjunction with The Polish Music Center at USC, 2006), 33.

<sup>14</sup> *Journal de St.-Pétersbourg*, 5/15 April 1828, 168.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Harrison, Librarian of the London Library, *Notes of a Nine Years' Residence in Russia, from 1844 to 1853, with notices of the Tsars Nicholas I and Alexander II* (London: T. Cantley Newby, 1855), 283.

<sup>16</sup> Harrison, 283.

the Empress Maria Fedorovna until the latter's death from cholera in 1828, would also have been entitled to the customary lifetime pension financially equivalent to her annual salary. By way of comparison, Szymanowska's entire annual salary under royal patronage was roughly equivalent to the monthly wages of a doctor associated with one of the two St. Petersburg hospitals, whose pay averaged 1,000 rubles per month in 1800.<sup>17</sup>

Private instruction outside the court remained lucrative for the foreign-born teachers. According to Kohl, by 1842 the cost of private keyboard lessons in Moscow, and by extension, St. Petersburg, ranged anywhere from five rubles to 70 rubles, depending upon the instructor's level of artistry. The price of a one-hour private lesson from an accomplished pianist generally averaged 10 rubles, whereas student pianists earned five rubles and well known virtuosos probably earned anywhere from 60 to 70 rubles.<sup>18</sup> By way of comparison, in 1800 a professor of art earned approximately 20 to 25 rubles per day as a private tutor, and a private tutor engaged by a wealthy St. Petersburg family earned approximately 500 or 600 rubles annually.<sup>19</sup> Further evidence concerning wages and prices in 1813 indicates that the annual wages of a university professor may have amounted to as much as 4,000 rubles (£200 sterling), while a sea captain earned roughly 400 rubles (£20 sterling).<sup>20</sup> Significantly, there existed a large disparity between the wages of foreign-born artists under patronage and the wages of the average factory worker during Alexander's reign. The average day labourer worked long hours at the rate of one ruble to one ruble 15 kopecks per day, in addition to free board.<sup>21</sup>

Szymanowska was one of very few female musicians who prospered in Europe and Russia in the 1820s and whose income derived solely from the sales of published works, the proceeds of public concerts, and private teaching, in addition to court revenues. In the sphere of public performances, Szymanowska's success

<sup>17</sup> William Tooke, *View of the Russian Empire during the reign of Catherine the Second, and to the close of the Eighteenth Century* (London: T. N. Longman and O. Rees, 1800), 576.

<sup>18</sup> J. G. Kohl, *Kohl's Russia: St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kharkoff, Riga, Odessa, the German Provinces on the Baltic, the Steppes, the Crimea, and the Interior of the Empire* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1842), 285.

<sup>19</sup> Tooke, 543.

<sup>20</sup> J. T. James, *Journal of a Tour in Germany, Sweden, Russia, Poland in 1813–1814*, Vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1819), 372, 447.

<sup>21</sup> James, 44.

in Russia paved the way for other talented female pianists, most notably, Clara Wieck and Marie Pleyel, who performed in St. Petersburg in the late 1830s. One early nineteenth-century European traveler to St. Petersburg, Baron Friedrich von Storch, wrote concerning remuneration in the capital, that ‘the performers are of the first abilities and are paid with suitable liberality’.<sup>22</sup> It is worth noting, however, that well known opera singers may not have fared as well. One unspecified reviewer, writing in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, October 1831, argued that additional prominent singers from European capitals might have been attracted to the musical scene in St. Petersburg if the monetary compensation had been greater. The reviewer notes that ‘such performers are not anxious to submit their voice to the effects of the northern climate’ when they receive meager compensation.<sup>23</sup> In addition, the two outbreaks of cholera that devastated the population of St. Petersburg during the summers of 1828 and 1831 may well have contributed to the difficulties in recruiting singers and instrumentalists from abroad. According to the *Journal de St.-Petersbourg*, there were very few musical spectacles presented in July and August of 1831 due to the serious nature of the epidemic, and, as a result, the extravagant (and costly) Italian operas were not staged until the winter season.<sup>24</sup>

Royalties accruing from the sales of Szymanowska’s published works, in particular, added substantially to her yearly income, in large part because she did not restrict herself to one publisher. In 1819 Szymanowska’s keyboard works appeared in identical single editions published simultaneously in Leipzig and St. Petersburg.<sup>25</sup> In St. Petersburg’s music stores Szymanowska’s published keyboard works were priced favorably alongside those of composers such as Franz Berwald (1796–1868), Johann Cramer (1771–1858), and Pierre Rode (1774–1830), all of whose keyboard works were advertised in the catalogue of St. Petersburg music publisher Carl Lissner. Single editions of Szymanowska’s keyboard and chamber works represented in Lissner’s catalogue included caprices, romances, marches, polonaises, divertissements, and waltzes; all editions were priced from two to

<sup>22</sup> Heinrich Friedrich von Storch, *The Picture of Petersburg* (London: T. N. Longman and O. Rees, 1801), 423–424.

<sup>23</sup> *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, Vol. 33, October 1831, 676–678.

<sup>24</sup> *Journal de St.-Petersbourg*, 31 January/12 February 1831, 56; 23 June/5 July 1831, 293; 8/20 August 1831, 376.

<sup>25</sup> *Sanktpeterburgskiiia vedomosti*, November 1819, 1087.

eight rubles.<sup>26</sup> According to an advertisement in *Sanktpeterburgskiiia vedomosti*, the prices of Szymanowska's keyboard works compared favorably with those of Berwald and Cramer.<sup>27</sup>

The daily cost of living for Szymanowska and her two daughters in St. Petersburg sheds additional light on economic history and social history, and offers fresh evidence concerning the standard of living for foreign-born artists in the capital. In 1824, approximately one year after Szymanowska's court appointment, a severe flood in St. Petersburg created a difficult financial situation for many of the capital's citizens, yet, according to Tietz, the citizens raised a substantial sum for the relief of the flood victims. During the period from November 7 through December 28, 1824, the total sum for victim relief collected in St. Petersburg amounted to almost 4,000,000 rubles, and citizens from all social classes contributed. One civil servant, Mr. Damedon, a privy-councillor, donated 20,000 rubles, and an unidentified free serf gave 1,000 rubles, offering evidence of the increased wealth in St. Petersburg among those citizens who did not belong to the nobility.<sup>28</sup> With the exception of housing, the cost of living remained fairly low, indicating that Szymanowska and her daughters maintained a high standard of living on the income earned from composing, performing, and teaching.

The annual income of foreign-born artists in the St. Petersburg enabled Szymanowska to maintain a very high standard of living in the late 1820s. Merchant ships arrived regularly at the main port at Kronstadt, a naval fortress located about 20 kilometres from St. Petersburg on the Gulf of Finland. These ships contained fresh produce, including oranges and lemons, which were inexpensive, at four or five kopecks each. One cup of strawberries and a small cup of coffee were priced from four to 10 kopecks. Housing for Szymanowska and her two daughters remained expensive over the next two decades, with some exceptional homes bringing in an annual cash profit (based on the average house rental) of £5,000, £10,000, or £15,000 for wealthy Russian citizens traveling abroad.<sup>29</sup> By 1840 the rental of an opulent home in St. Petersburg increased to approximately 25,000

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<sup>26</sup> *Sanktpeterburgskiiia vedomosti*, November 1819, 1087.

<sup>27</sup> *Sanktpeterburgskiiia vedomosti*, November 1819, 1087.

<sup>28</sup> M. von Tietz, *St. Petersburg, Constantinople, and Napoli de Romania in 1833 and 1834*, Vol. 1 (London: Adolphus Richter and Co., 1836), 111.

<sup>29</sup> Charles F. Henning, *Revelations of Russia, or the Emperor Nicholas and His Empire in 1844* (London: Henry Colburn Publisher, 1844), 155.

rubles, or £1,250 a year, a sum considered high when compared with similar homes in London.<sup>30</sup>

Evidence concerning Szymanowska's professional relationships with her musical contemporaries in Russia remains scanty. Recent evidence illuminates her professional association with John Field in Moscow after Szymanowska left Warsaw for Russia in 1827. In July 1819 Field, who was then living in St. Petersburg, wrote to the publishing firm of Breitkopf and Härtel, recommending the publication of her keyboard works. Dessauer argues in addition that as mentor Field may well have inspired her compositional style.<sup>31</sup> The melodic embellishments in *Caprice sur la romance de Joconde* are similar to the ornamented, decorative passages found in Field's Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 1 no. 1, composed almost two decades earlier in 1801. First-hand evidence from the title page of Szymanowska's *Caprice sur la romance de Joconde pour le Pianoforte* (1819), dedicated to 'Monsieur John Field', indicates that she considered him as a close friend and mentor almost a decade before she resumed her friendship with him in Moscow.<sup>32</sup> Szymanowska would have had the opportunity in to attend one of the Warsaw concerts that featured Field's Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-flat Major and his Piano Concerto No. 2 in A-flat Major performed by the pianist Carl Mayer in 1815, according to a review in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*.<sup>33</sup>

Szymanowska may well have become reacquainted with Field in St. Petersburg in 1822, when she presented a concert series in the capital. Piggott offers evidence that Field's musical association with Szymanowska began during the 1822 St. Petersburg concert season, when he assisted in several concerts, including one of Szymanowska's.<sup>34</sup> Additional documentation concerning the high degree of similarity between the performance styles of Field and Szymanowska

<sup>30</sup> Robert Bremner, *Excursions in the Interior of Russia, including Sketches of the Character and Policy of the Emperor Nicholas; Scenes in St. Petersburg*, Vol. 1 (London: Henry Colburn, 1840), 223.

<sup>31</sup> John Field, *Sonata*, Op. 1 no. 1, in Vol. 12 of *The London Pianoforte School: 1766–1860*, Nicholas Temperley (ed.) (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1985), 2.

<sup>32</sup> Maria Szymanowska, *Caprice sur la romance de Joconde pour le Pianoforte*, Pl. no. 3067 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1819).

<sup>33</sup> *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, Vol. 17 (1815), 558. According to Nicholas Temperley, in 'John Field and the First Nocturne', *Music and Letters*, Vol. LVI (July–October 1975), 335, Field's Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-flat Major may well be the work that first exhibited the composer's idiomatic style of piano writing.

<sup>34</sup> Patrick Piggott, *The Life and Music of John Field* (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), 113.

appeared in Russian gazettes and journals during the 1820s, as music critics described performances of both pianists in reviews of recent concerts in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Most notably, in May 1822, one year after Field settled in Moscow, a review appeared in *Moskovskiiia vedomosti*, in which one unidentified critic favorably compared Szymanowska's improvisatory compositional and performance style with that of Field, 'whether or not Szymanowska studied Field's methods or studied with the composer'.<sup>35</sup> The reviewer praised Szymanowska's 'sensitive interpretations' and 'lightness of touch' in the execution of technically challenging passages from unspecified works of Field. The identification of Szymanowska's performance style with that of Field, a well known musical figure in Russia, more than likely enhanced her professional reputation and may well have added considerably to her ability to command higher earnings as a teacher and concert artist in St. Petersburg.

Although Szymanowska's income in Russia derived mostly from publications of her keyboard works and her participation in public and private concerts, her yearly stipend as first pianist to the empresses and the additional earnings from teaching piano is difficult to assess with any degree of certainty. We may assume that her yearly stipend between 1823 and 1828 may have been in the range of 20,000 to 30,000 rubles annually, based on the amount of government credit extended to an opera conductor in St. Petersburg in 1800.<sup>36</sup> In this respect Szymanowska is representative of the highly paid eighteenth-century composer under patronage, one who always remained aware of the limitations and expectations of her intended audience. She successfully incorporated ornate melodic ornamentation with the singing melodies that found favor with the empress Maria Fedorovna, and fostered an awareness of the western keyboard repertoire among the capital's musical amateurs.

While Szymanowska's performances of Field's works may well have influenced her own compositional style, there remains some doubt among scholars concerning whether or not she actually studied composition formally with Field in Warsaw, Moscow, or St. Petersburg. *Muzykal'nyi slovar'*, a musical encyclopedia

<sup>35</sup> *Moskovskiiia vedomosti*, May 1822, as quoted in Syga and Szenic, *Maria Szymanowska i jej czasy*, 38.

<sup>36</sup> Arcadius Kahan, *The Plow, the Hammer and the Knout: An Economic History of Eighteenth-Century Russia* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 317.

published in St. Petersburg in 1896, states that Szymanowska studied with Field.<sup>37</sup> More than likely her knowledge of Field's compositional practice derived for the most part from performances of his works rather than from lengthy periods of formal study with the composer in Russia. Field was already living in Moscow in 1827 when Szymanowska arrived with her daughters, Helena and Celina, and would have been informed of her arrival through detailed descriptions in the Russian press. The *Journal de St.-Petersbourg*, 24 November/6 December 1827, reported that, 'Madame Szymanowska, pianist of Her Majesty the Empress of Russia, arrives after a long absence and travels abroad... She proposes to stay in Moscow only for a short time, and after a trip to Kiev, to settle in St. Petersburg, where she proposes to give [keyboard] lessons'.<sup>38</sup>

First-hand evidence concerning Szymanowska's friendship with Field in Moscow can be gleaned from the diaries of her elder daughter, Helena, who kept detailed accounts of household life from 1 November 1827 through 12 May 1828. Although Field was, by this time, suffering from illnesses relating to acute alcoholism, he continued to serve as Szymanowska's mentor and friend during a time when he was no longer promoting his own concert career. Helena briefly notes Field's first visit to the Szymanowska home in Moscow in a diary entry, dated 19 November 1827: 'Prince Wiazemski... and Field, who is very cheerful, came to dinner'.<sup>39</sup> Field continued to visit the household and perform new works during Szymanowska's musical evenings. Helena provides a singular description of one of the private concerts that took place at Szymanowska's home in a diary entry dated 1 December 1827:

Field and Prince Wiazemski were at our house in the morning. Mama [Maria Szymanowska] invited Field to tea; shortly thereafter, Madame Aninhoff sent an invitation but Mama replied that she could not accept because Field was at our house... In the evening Field and his son were with us, and they were very cheerful and witty. [Field] signed our album, but did not know what to write; therefore, he sent his son downstairs after a book, which closes with a compliment that he inscribes in all albums [dedicated] to women. He then played his nocturnes and seventh concerto, as only Field

<sup>37</sup> G. Riman', *Muzykal'nyi slovar'* (Sankt-Peterburg: P. Jurgenson, 1896), 1426.

<sup>38</sup> *Journal de St.-Petersbourg*, 24 November/6 December 1827, 586.

<sup>39</sup> Helena Szymanowska, Autograph, *Dzienniku od dnia wyjazdu z Warszawy 1 listopada 1827*, '[Moscow] 19 November 1827', Rps. nr. 955, fol. 8.

can play so wonderfully. He wrote a note to Kazi [Wolowska] in English, informing her that shortly he will dedicate his new nocturne to her.<sup>40</sup>

On 3 December 1827 Helena wrote: 'on Wednesday, he [Prince Wiazemski] will be at Field's with us for dinner'.<sup>41</sup> This dinner indeed took place, as Helena noted two days later, on Wednesday, 5 December, 'At four o'clock we walked to Field's for dinner, where we found Prince Wiazemski already there'.<sup>42</sup>

Two weeks after Szymanowska's informal evening with Field, she presented a public concert in Moscow. Helena's diaries provide fresh evidence concerning Szymanowska's concert career at a time when she devoted herself to teaching and performance. The pianist herself remained in charge of all aspects of the performance, including rental of the hall, ticket sales, rehearsals, and advertising and promotion. On the evening of December 12, Helena reported that 'Pan Mickiewicz, Pan Malewski, Field and his son... were with us for tea'.<sup>43</sup> On December 14, 1827, Helena wrote that Szymanowska attended a rehearsal on the eve of the concert. Concerning Szymanowska's December 15 concert, Helena wrote, 'At seven o'clock the concert began. Many people attended and the reception for Mama was wonderful. Afterward Mama went to Princess Zeneida [Wolkowska], who was feeling weak...'<sup>44</sup> Unfortunately, there is no mention of Field's attendance at this concert. The following week Szymanowska became acquainted with Aleksandr Pushkin during one of Field's visits to the household. In a diary entry dated 20 December 1827, Helena wrote, 'at four o'clock Pan Pushkin came over and invited himself to dinner... Later Field with his son and Prince Wiazemski joined us'.<sup>45</sup>

Field's weekly visits with the Szymanowska family continued until the end of January 1828, when the family left Moscow and took up permanent residence in St. Petersburg. On New Year's Day 1828, Helena wrote that 'Field and Mr. Werner joined us for tea and supper. We all had a wonderful time...'<sup>46</sup> There is no further mention of Field in Helena's diary until 29 January 1828,

<sup>40</sup> Helena Szymanowska, fols. 13, 14.

<sup>41</sup> Helena Szymanowska, fol. 14.

<sup>42</sup> Helena Szymanowska, fol. 14.

<sup>43</sup> Helena Szymanowska, fol. 17.

<sup>44</sup> Helena Szymanowska, fols. 17, 18.

<sup>45</sup> Helena Szymanowska, fol. 18.

<sup>46</sup> Helena Szymanowska, fol. 22.

when she noted that ‘we went this morning with Pani Kozłowska to Field’s’.<sup>47</sup> Evidence from Helena’s diary entries illuminates the relationship between Field and Szymanowska. For despite Field’s declining health and his absence from the concert stage, he may well have continued to assist Szymanowska with the organization of her public concerts in Moscow and with her performing career in Russia.

Although details of Szymanowska’s December 15 public concert remain sketchy, Mickiewicz, in a brief note to the pianist penned on the evening of his departure from Moscow, wrote that, ‘amid noise and chaos at 3 a.m.... remember us when you play the Rondo of Klengel, a work that still echoes in our ears.’<sup>48</sup> The following day Szymanowska wrote to Mickiewicz, in a letter dated Moscow, 16 December 1827: ‘I leave it to others to say whether I played well, but I hasten to inform you that everyone found favor with my playing. While playing Klengel’s Rondo, I thought of good friends and countrymen [Mickiewicz and Franciszek Malewski]...’<sup>49</sup> Klengel’s keyboard rondo was a favored work in Szymanowska’s repertoire; according to the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, she performed the work to critical acclaim in Berlin and Milan in 1823 and 1825, respectively.<sup>50</sup>

Szymanowska achieved a degree of economic and social prominence among the nobility and she served as a strong advocate for Polish poets and musicians whose careers coincided with hers in Russia. In Russia a substantial portion of her earnings derived from the Dalmas editions of songs set to Mickiewicz texts. She met the poet for the first time in Moscow in November 1827 at a musical evening held at the home of the Polish-born noblewoman, Zeneida z Biełosielskich-Biełozierskich Wolkowska, one of Moscow’s leading patrons of the arts. According to Okołów, after hearing Szymanowska perform at Wolkowska’s

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<sup>47</sup> Helena Szymanowska, fol. 30.

<sup>48</sup> Maryan Reiter (ed.), *Dzieła wszystkie Adama Mickiewicza* (Lwów: H. Altenburg [1911]), vol. 10, 228.

<sup>49</sup> Maria Szymanowska, Autograph, Letter to Adam Mickiewicz, ‘Muscovy 4 [16] grudnia 1827’, fols. 1–3. Paris, Société Historique et Littéraire Polonaise. For a complete annotated text of this letter, see Anne Swartz, ‘Maria Szymanowska to Adam Mickiewicz: unpublished letters from 1827’, *Australian Slavonic and East European Studies*, Vol. 5 no. 1 (1991), 31–33.

<sup>50</sup> *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, Vol. 26, 1824, 612; Vol. 27, 1825, 110–111.

that November, Mickiewicz became a regular visitor to the Szymanowska household.<sup>51</sup>

Helena Szymanowska provided a colorful description of one of the poet's earliest visits to the Szymanowska household in Moscow in 1827:

Mr. Mickiewicz visited us. I had wished for a long time that I might meet this famous poet, the author of those beautiful ballads and sonnets that are so well known and admired. He promised to visit us often and lend us some Polish books. I gratefully look forward to this; it is a happy event for me, as Mr. Mickiewicz is as pleasant in company as he is in expressing his thoughts and feelings. Just yesterday I was reading the poetry of his creative imagination, and I find that the images are more vivid than those rendered by with color, and descriptions more natural than those found in the ballads of [Antoni Edward] Odyniec...<sup>52</sup>

Helena's assessment of Mickiewicz's poetry compared favorably with a review that appeared in the *Bulletin du Nord*, January 1828, praising Mickiewicz's impassioned romanticism and its sensational impact in St. Petersburg.<sup>53</sup> Due to the popularity of his poetry in Russia it is perhaps not coincidental that after a seven-year hiatus Szymanowska turned to the composition of four art songs set to texts from Mickiewicz's historical novel, *Konrad Wallenrod* (St. Petersburg, 1828): 'Alpuhara' (1829), 'Pieśń z wieży' (1828), 'Chant de Wilia' (1829), and 'Świtezianka' (Moscow, 1830).<sup>54</sup> In a letter to Mickiewicz from St. Petersburg, dated 14/26 May 1829, Szymanowska wrote, 'I have written "Wilia", a beautiful little flower, a polonaise, a Lithuanian song – something you taught me, and which I often play for myself; sometimes I cry, but I will not sing'.<sup>55</sup> After composing 'Chant de Wilia', she wrote no other vocal works.

In a radical departure from the conventions and restrictions imposed by the Russian theatrical censorship, Szymanowska set the Mickiewicz texts in the orig-

<sup>51</sup> Stefania Podhorska Okołów, *Podróże Mickiewicza* (Warsaw, 1957), 136.

<sup>52</sup> Helena Szymanowska, fols. 10–11.

<sup>53</sup> *Bulletin du Nord : Journal Scientifique et Littéraire*, January 1828, 50–57.

<sup>54</sup> Extant editions of Szymanowska's late songs, set to Mickiewicz's historical novel, *Konrad Wallenrod* (1828) are difficult to document. The editions housed in the Biblioteka Narodowa, Warsaw include: 'Chant de Wilia' (no publisher, 1829), Mus. 16777; 'Pieśń z wieży' (no publisher, 1828), Mus. 20077; and 'Świtezianka' (Moscow: K. Wenzel, 1830).

<sup>55</sup> Maria Szymanowska, Autograph, Letter to Adam Mickiewicz, Petersburg, May 14/26 1829, fol. 1 (Paris: Société Historique et Littéraire Polonaise).

inal Polish, rather than in French translation, as would have been customary for the time. We may hypothesize that her association with the court or her continuing relationship with the official St. Petersburg publishing firm of Dalmas may have strengthened her position with the state censorship during the early years of Nicholas I's reign. Most notably, she employed such genres as the polonaise and the song-romance as symbols of nationhood during a period when the Russian administration in Warsaw prohibited the use of recognizable patriotic themes in opera librettos and song texts. Additional evidence concerning her late compositional period in Russia may be gleaned through investigation of Szymanowska's letters to Mickiewicz from 1827.<sup>56</sup> Her correspondence with Mickiewicz establishes the dates of 'Wilia' and 'Świtezianka' and validates the poet's impact on the publication of Szymanowska's songs set to Polish texts at a time when the Russian theatrical censorship in Warsaw severely restricted songs set to national themes and sung in Polish.

Szymanowska was well aware of the musical expectations of her intended audience and she was aware of the financial benefits to be gained from private concerts in the capital. After settling in St. Petersburg in the spring of 1828 Szymanowska supported her family almost entirely from monies derived from teaching and from the proceeds of public and private concerts.<sup>57</sup> Due to the capital's location and extreme northern climate, private instructors were well paid, and the piano began to achieve a cult status as a symbol of upward mobility and social acceptance among the newly-wealthy musical amateurs who belonged to the state-sponsored musical societies. St. Petersburg's population doubled from 220,000 to 450,000 between 1800 and 1830, and foreign-born keyboard virtuosos, in particular, were in demand as private teachers for the aspiring middle class, in addition to the nobility. The *Journal de St.-Petersbourg*, dated 24 November/6 December 1827, reported that Szymanowska's courteous manner and thorough knowledge of music ensured her success as a private teacher in St. Petersburg.<sup>58</sup>

The *Bulletin du Nord*, January 1828, wrote that Szymanowska's success in St. Petersburg surpassed even her own expectations. This brief glimpse into her

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<sup>56</sup> See Anne Swartz, 'Maria Szymanowska to Adam Mickiewicz: Unpublished Letters from 1827', 25-43.

<sup>57</sup> *Journal de St.-Petersbourg*, 24 November/6 December 1827, 586.

<sup>58</sup> *Journal de St.-Petersbourg*, 24 November/6 December 1827, 586.

working life offers evidence concerning the social status of professional women musicians in Russia in the early decades of the nineteenth century:

Madame Szymanowska, endowed with musical genius from her youth, and pushed by an irresistible force to develop this most wonderful talent, did not suspect, however, that it would exclusively fill her future life. Rich from the moment she entered the world, music only offered her at this happy period of her life a pleasant recreation and another means of charming her social world. A reversal and change in her fortune forced her to debut in a rather brilliant manner so that His late Majesty the Emperor Alexander honored her by bestowing on her the title first pianist of the Empresses... Madame Szymanowska finally arrived at the moment of her return to St. Petersburg and it is easy to think that the public of this city, which has always been noted for its love of the fine arts, would know how to distinguish and welcome her with the enthusiasm that she inspired wherever one had the pleasure of hearing her play...

She dedicated herself to teaching music, an occupation that is probably difficult for a woman. Thus we offer her our sincere best wishes, and all those who feel an inclination for the piano, can argue over the advantage of having for a teacher someone who is distinguished in every respect.<sup>59</sup>

A broader assessment of Szymanowska's role as a teacher, composer, and pianist in Russia can be determined not only through critical reviews, but also from evidence drawn from letters and memoirs that provide evidence of her friendship with leading musical and literary figures, most notably, Mickiewicz, Pushkin, and Field. Her musical aspirations reflected a dual vision of the composer in a transitional era in Russia, an age when musical success was based not only on the consent and approval of a royal patron, but also, to a large extent, on public recognition and acclaim. Szymanowska earned a substantial portion of her yearly income from royalties, concert proceeds, and teaching, in addition to the financial benefits accruing from her position at the court. As an artist she was able to adapt successfully to the political changes that swept through St. Petersburg after the unsuccessful Decembrist uprising in 1825, the month that marked the death of her patron, Alexander I. Szymanowska's career in Russia represents a fascinating glimpse into the musical expectations of a performer and her audience at a time

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<sup>59</sup> *Bulletin du Nord : Journal Scientifique et Littéraire*, January 1828, 69.

when very few female musicians achieved public acclaim and financial parity with the gentry.

Szymanowska's patrons Maria Fedorovna and Elizaveta Alekseevna both favored the richly embellished melodic writing featured in the repertoire of the singers who earlier dominated the Imperial Italian Opera theater during Catherine the Great's reign and, for the most part, they rewarded composers whose works featured the lyrical melodies, lavishly ornamented sequences, and consonant harmonies that publicly conveyed the musical conventions of the eighteenth century court. For example, the dances in Szymanowska's *Dix-huit danses de différent genres pour le Piano-Forte* (1820), published in St. Petersburg, feature ternary form, contrasting major and minor modes, and ornamented melodies in the left hand.<sup>60</sup> Additionally, the *Polonoise pour le Pianoforte sur l'Air national favori du feu Prince Joseph Poniatowsky* (1820), with its lyrical melody and ornate 'filigree' ornamentation, served as a hallmark of her performance style in public concerts presented in St. Petersburg during the 1820s.<sup>61</sup> There are, to this point, no opus numbers attached to individual works. Neither the composer nor the publisher provided a chronological numbering of her musical output, as would have been customary for works composed during this period. The cataloguing of her music, along with appropriate opus numbers, remains a worthy project for future scholars.

While Szymanowska composed primarily in those genres associated with the eighteenth-century court, namely, minuets, cotillions, and song-romances, she also wrote studies and preludes, in keeping with the style of that period. Two brief excerpts from Szymanowska's concert works illustrate the changing signature style of her compositions before and during the period of court sponsorship. Her Etude No. 18 in E Major, from *Vingt exercices et préludes pour le pianoforte* (1819), with its jaunty melody, is a study in thirds and sixths that exhibits a complex dotted rhythmic structure and syncopated bass line often featured in the popular eighteenth-century French contredanse.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Maria Szymanowska, *Dix-huit danses de différent genres pour le Piano-Forte*, Pl. no. 3090 (Saint Petersburg: Dalmas [1820]).

<sup>61</sup> Maria Szymanowska, *Polonoise [sic] pour le Pianoforte sur l'Air national favori du feu Prince Joseph Poniatowsky*, Pl. no. 3092 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1820).

<sup>62</sup> Anne Swartz, ed., 'Maria Szymanowska: Three Etudes' from *Vingt exercices et préludes pour le pianoforte* (Bryn Mawr: Hildegard Publishing Company; The Theodore Presser Company, 2009), 1–11.

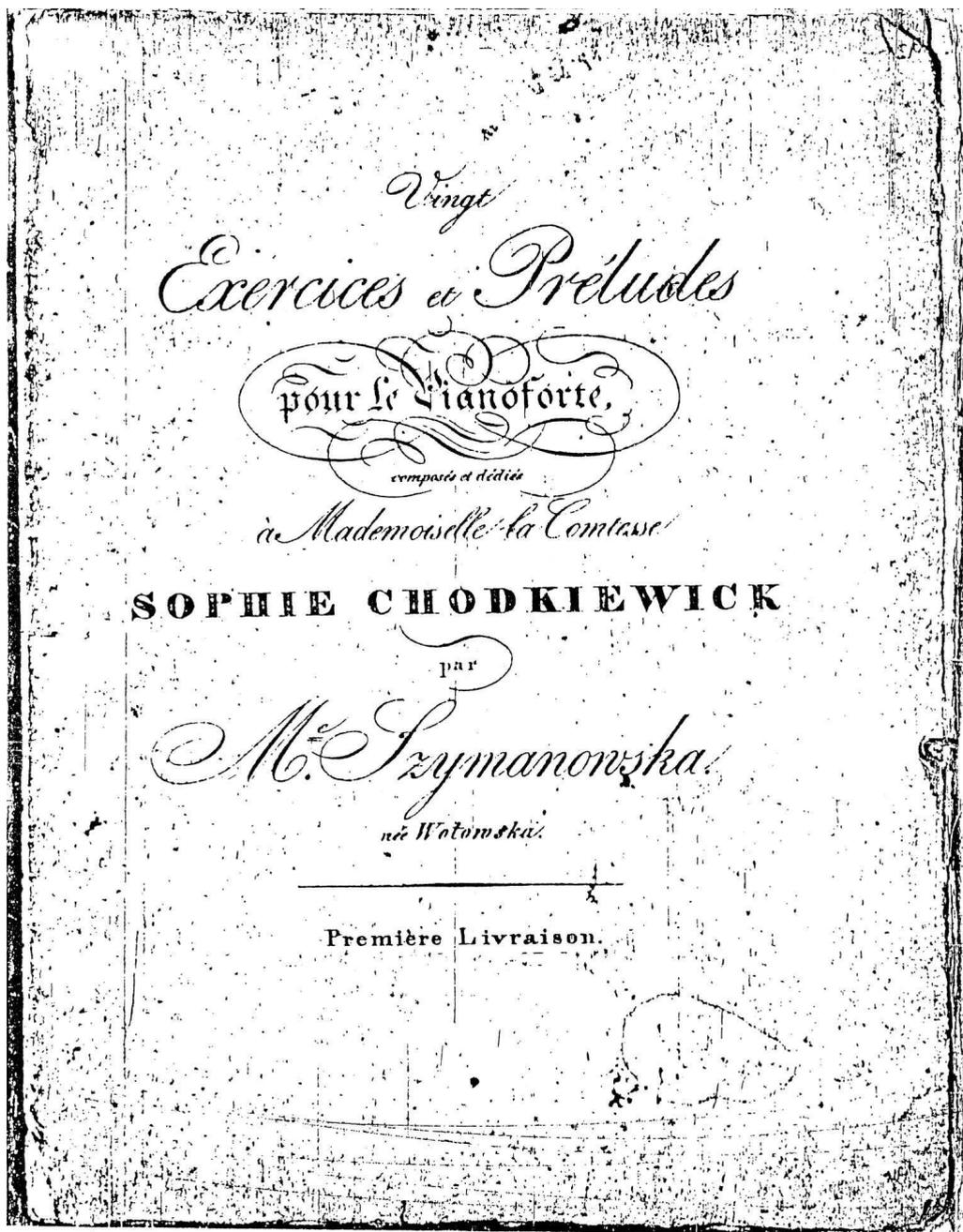


Figure 1: Szymanowska, *Vingt exercices et préludes pour le pianoforte*, frontispiece, Pl. no. 3043 (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1819).

*Presto.*

*Vivace*

*f*

*rall.*

80.48

Figure 2: Musical example. Szymanowska, Etude No. 18 in E Major, *Vingt exercices et préludes pour le pianoforte* (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1819).

Although it is difficult to ascertain the exact compositional dates of Szymanowska's piano works composed in the years preceding her court appointment in 1823, they were probably composed shortly before 1819, when Breitkopf and Härtel published several works for the piano, including, *Caprice sur la romance de Joconde pour le Pianoforte*, *Six Menuets pour le Pianoforte*, *Vingt exercices et préludes pour le pianoforte*, and one song romance, 'Le Départ'. Dalmas published simultaneous editions of Szymanowska's *Six Romances avec accompagnement de Piano-Forte*, and *Grande Valse pour le Pianoforte à quatre mains* (1830), attesting to her elevated stature as a composer and pianist in Russia well before 1823. Further, the royalties accruing from Dalmas in part enabled her to devote her time to writing music and preparing new music for public concerts in St. Petersburg. The improvisatory melodic writing in *Grand Valse pour le Pianoforte à quatre mains* and *Six Romances* is reminiscent of the ornamented melodies that served as a hallmark of the compositional style of two of her contemporaries, Hummel and Field.<sup>63</sup> She performed several of their keyboard works, including piano concertos, in public concerts throughout Europe and Russia from 1812 until 1822.<sup>64</sup>

Dalmas published piano music for both professional and amateur musicians, and Szymanowska's *Six Romances*, *Three Waltzes*, *Six Minuets*, and the *Grand Waltz for Four Hands* were in demand as teaching pieces and as keyboard works, suitable for music-making in the home.<sup>65</sup> The dedications of Szymanowska's piano works illuminate her career as a private instructor and offer first-hand evidence concerning the social and economic status of her students, who, for the most part, were drawn from the merchant and commercial classes, in addition

<sup>63</sup> M. Szymanowska, *Grand Valse pour le Pianoforte à quatre mains* (Saint-Petersbourg: Dalmas [1829]), 1–9; *Six Romances avec accompagnement de Piano-forte* (Saint-Petersbourg, Dalmas [1830]), 1–14.

<sup>64</sup> *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, Vol. 17 (1815), 558. During the first two decades of the nineteenth century Warsaw exhibited a rich musical life, as evidenced in reviews of the concert season that appeared in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*. In a subsequent edition the reviewer for the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, Vol. XXII (1820), 533–34, praised the concerts from recent seasons for their broad repertoire and for the high quality of the performances of works of Mozart, Hummel, Beethoven, Dussek, and Klengel. Unfortunately, the reviewer does not specify the performers, noting only that they were above average, despite the fact that several among their ranks were amateur, rather than professional, musicians.

<sup>65</sup> See Anne Swartz, ed., *Maria Szymanowska: Three Waltzes* (Bryn Mawr: Hildegard Publishing Company; The Theodore Presser Company, 2009), 1–12; 'Szymanowska, Menuet No. 2' from *Six Menuets* (Bryn Mawr: Hildegard Publishing Company; The Theodore Presser Company, 2009), 1–4.

to the gentry. Among her students were several patrons of the arts in Russia, most notably, the Princess Wiazziemskaia, *née* Princess Gagarin, the Countess Sophia Chodkiewich, the Princess Zenaida Wolkońska, and a Miss Natalia Titoff, the daughter of a wealthy Moscow merchant. The Dalmas editions of Szymanowska's works are, for the most part, identical to the editions of Breitkopf and Härtel, indicating that she did not revise earlier published works, as is so often the case with editions of other nineteenth-century pianists and composers, such as Chopin. For example, the easily altered improvisational melodic embellishments, a hallmark of Szymanowska's style in the *Polonaise sur l'Air national favori du feu Prince Joseph Poniatowsky* remain unchanged in both the Breitkopf and Dalmas editions.<sup>66</sup>

In conclusion, although the exact amount of Szymanowska's annual financial remuneration from her position as pianist to the Empresses of Russia is difficult to determine with absolute accuracy, due to extreme difficulties in interpreting evidence relating to the Russian economy and the ruble in the nineteenth century, fresh documentation culled from financial registries, edicts, advertisements, and box office receipts, indicates that Szymanowska largely achieved economic parity with the gentry and merchant classes and may well have ranked financially among the top twenty percent of the capital's wage earners. Her career path in Russia combined that of the independent artist and private teacher. In particular, in the years that followed Alexander's death, her friendship with Field enabled her to advance her career as a teacher and performer in Moscow, and later, in St. Petersburg at a time when the throne encouraged the arrival of foreign-born artists who actively engaged the audience in the public concert halls. Evidence from contemporary letters, diaries, and gazettes indicates that Szymanowska rekindled the musical and social connections between the throne and the middle class, in addition to the gentry, during Alexander's reign, at least a decade before the general acceptance of the female keyboard virtuoso in Europe and Russia. Further, she successfully paved the way for the next wave of professional women pianists

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<sup>66</sup> Szymanowska, 'Polonaise pour le Pianoforte sur l'air national favori du feu Prince Joseph Poniatowsky', dedicated to Madame la Contesse Mokronowska *née* Princesse Sanguszko (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1820), first edition, Pl. no. 3092, 1–3; 'Polonaise pour le Pianoforte sur l'air national favori du feu Prince Joseph Poniatowsky', dedicated to Madame la Contesse Mokronowska *née* Princesse Sanguszko (Saint-Petersbourg: Chez Dalmas, Editeur du Troubadour du Nord [1820]), 1–3.

in Russia, most notably, Clara Wieck and Marie Pleyel, who received laudatory receptions in St. Petersburg in the late 1830s.

Lastly, Szymanowska upheld high standards of performance in the general European repertoire and broadened musical participation to include the amateur pianist who participated in private concerts in the home and affirmed the social and economic gains of the middle class. Evidence from first editions, as well as from contemporary journals, gazettes, diaries, and letters attests to Szymanowska's considerable earnings as an independent musician and a musician under patronage, indicating that she was highly successful as a composer, teacher, and pianist during an era when professional opportunities for women were not readily available, even for talented musicians of her stature. Within the broader political and historical sphere, Szymanowska's musical contributions as pianist, composer, and private teacher and composer validated Alexander's vision of a westernized Russia within the established pan-European alliance of Prussia, Austria, Great Britain, and France, and affirmed the public concert hall as an appropriate vehicle for the dissemination of the modern repertoire in Russia.