

# ***THADDEUS***

## ***Love and Dalliance in Time of War***



**an abridged dramatisation of**

## ***Pan Tadeusz***

**by Adam Mickiewicz**

**to be performed, in Polish,  
in a semi-staged production with music, surtitles and images**

**7. 30 pm**

**Wednesday 19 and Thursday 20 February 2020**

**St John's College, Cambridge**

**Admission Free**

## **Some acknowledgements.**

The greatest debt of gratitude is to the institutions and entities that provide the outstanding talent, the cultural context and the infrastructure, without which nothing could be achieved:

**St John's College.  
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Among the many **individuals** who gave their special skills and many hours of their time, mention must be made of: John Bruce-Jones, for his presence in Lithuania; Mark Harrison, for vital help on all aspects of the PowerPoint Presentation; Gillian Jondorf, for composing the surtitles (helped by Zuzanna Kotrych); Sebastian Leśniewski, for his untiring support and broadcasts on Cambridge 105 Radio; Reuben Thomas, for going an 'extra mile' in record time.

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**The incidental music**  
is taken from the Dances of Maria Szymanowska  
(Mickiewicz's mother-in-law)

If you would like to hear more of her eloquent and expressive music, you may still be able to find this CD: *Szymanowska, Complete Dances for Solo Piano*, Alexander Kostritsa, GP 685.

## **THE READERS**

Narrator 1	Konrad Suder Chatterjee
Narrator 2	Edyta Nowosielska
Narrator 3	Patrick Boyde
Tadeusz	Krystian Schneider
Zosia	Magdalena Zuń
Telimena	Aleksandra Szypowska
Pan Hrabia	Antoni Prus
Pan Sędzia	Sebastian Leśniewski
Gerwazy	Patryk Jedrasiak
Pan Wojski	Patryk Jedrasiak
Podkomorzy	Patryk Jedrasiak

## **THE MUSICIAN**

Piano	Matthew Gibson
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## **DIRECTOR OF DANCE**

The Polonaise	Andrew Dobrzański
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## **SYNCHRONISATION**

Surtitles	Elena Violaris
	Zuzanna Kotrych

## Places and Spaces in *Pan Tadeusz*



*Map of Poland-Lithuania in the period of Pan Tadeusz, 1811-12*

The Niemen river is over 900 km long from its source near Minsk, the capital of Belarus, to the south-eastern corner of the Baltic. From Minsk it runs westwards to Grodno where it turns north and runs to Kaunas, in Lithuania, and then again westwards to the sea. In its lower stretch the river is a broad slow stream, in the middle of which, on a barge at Tilsit, Alexander I, Tsar of Russia, and Napoleon signed a peace treaty in 1807. This treaty gave re-birth to a Polish statelet, the Duchy of Warsaw, which became the vehicle for Polish nationalist hopes after 1807, but the Lithuanian half of the original Polish-Lithuanian state, such as the inhabitants of Soplicowo in the poem, remained disappointed by the Treaty and under Russian rule.

The Niemen in its middle reach from Grodno to Kaunas formed much of the border between Russia and the Duchy of Warsaw after 1807. Escape across the Niemen to ‘free Poland’ is often mentioned in the poem and, of course, our hero Tadeusz eventually takes this path. The Niemen is a faster-flowing river here, often between steep banks, and presented the first major challenge to Napoleon’s invasion of Russia. He crossed at Kaunas on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1812, while on 3<sup>rd</sup> July Prince Joseph Poniatowski and the Polish Corps including the famous General Dombrowski crossed the Niemen at Grodno.

Further still upstream, the Niemen does a half-circle from west to north to east around Nowogrodek and about a constant 30km from the town. Nowogrodek is where Adam Mickiewicz was born in 1798 and where he lived until 1815. The river here, near where Mickiewicz grew up, is very different – sinuous and meandering.

If you look on Google Earth at the Niemen near Nowogrodek you can see how the river course has shifted innumerable times over the millennia and left traces in oxbow lakes in their dozens and in curves of the river cut off and silted up thousands of years ago. The shifting river patterns of the Niemen are a reminder of the faster and more recent shifting border patterns in the area covered by the events in *Pan Tadeusz*. Poland, Lithuania, Russia, Austria, Prussia shifted their borders in the area, grew, shrank and disappeared in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries as what was once the largest state in Europe, the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, was dismantled. The border between Poland–Lithuania and Russia set by the Partition of 1793 was only 50km east of Nowogrodek; the 1795 Partition moved the border 150km west of Nowogrodek to Grodno and the Niemen.

In contrast to shifting rivers and borders, one of the compelling characteristics of *Pan Tadeusz* is how precisely and clearly it is set in real time and space. The action of the poem takes place in late summer 1811 and then at the end of June/beginning of July 1812. While Soplicowo and the villages around are fictional, Mickiewicz lets us know exactly where Soplicowo is meant to be. In summer 1812, 40,000 troops of Prince Joseph Poniatowski and the Polish 5<sup>th</sup> Corps of Napoleon's Grande Armée, as well as the Westphalian army under their King, Jérôme Bonaparte, were quartered, according to the poem, in Soplicowo, and Prince Joseph and his staff made their headquarters in the nearby town. The poem tells us this was shortly after their crossing of the Niemen at Grodno and their conquest of the western half of that part of Lithuania.

In fact Prince Joseph and King Jérôme did stop at Nowogrodek on 8<sup>th</sup> July and rested, a few days after crossing the Niemen, so we can assume that a short ride from their headquarters in Nowogrodek is where the main army stopped for a couple of days – a place which became the fictional Soplicowo. You can imagine how the 14-year-old Adam Mickiewicz would have experienced the retreat of the Russian forces through Nowogrodek on 3<sup>rd</sup> July and been caught up in enthusiasm for the Polish Napoleonic liberators a few days later.

Of the places mentioned in *Pan Tadeusz* some are obvious: Warsaw, Vilnius; some are fictional like Soplicowo; but there is a set of obscure places that help to place Soplicowo in a definite and real locality. Half a dozen villages appear in the poem that can still be found within a 40km radius of Nowogrodek: places like Korelicze and the hunting forest of Naliboki.

Nowogrodek itself has a long and complex history: the first capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, site of a great ruined castle, it was also the seat of an Orthodox metropolitan bishop in the Middle Ages. It is now deep inside modern Belarus. It was here that Adam Mickiewicz set a Polish epic, which is as much about Lithuania as it is about Poland, and located in an area where most of the peasantry at the time were probably Byelorussian speakers and Orthodox worshippers, not Catholics. You don't have to dig far below the rollicking story of *Pan Tadeusz* – the love and dalliance, hunting, fighting and war – to find the complex geography and history in which it is so satisfyingly rooted.

**John Bruce-Jones**

**Maria Szymanowska, c. 1825**



## Programme notes to the Incidental Music

Most of the works by the Polish pianist–composer Maria Szymanowska that we shall hear this evening were written during a period of relative peace and prosperity in Poland’s turbulent history. All are stylised dance pieces, conceived as ‘art music’ rather than literally intended to be danced to. In these respects the various works are typical of much Polish musical output at the time, some of which stemmed from traditions that evolved within Poland itself – most notably the polonaise – whereas others such as the minuet, quadrille and anglaise reflect a broader range of influences, ones to which even the polonaise genre was susceptible.

Maria Szymanowska (1789–1831) was a remarkable figure during this ‘Golden Age’ in Polish history: not only did she study composition with the leading musicians of the day, including Franciszek Lessel, Karol Kurpiński and Józef Elsner, but she also gained an international reputation as a pianist, eventually culminating in an appointment to the Russian imperial court in St Petersburg, where she died at the age of just 41 after a cholera outbreak. Her sizeable piano output is characterised by elegance and refinement, but it transcends the stereotypical limitations associated with some music written for the drawing room and in particular ‘for the ladies’, accusations to which even Chopin was not always immune. Szymanowska is a particularly apposite choice for tonight’s event, as she was the mother of Adam Mickiewicz’s eventual wife Celina, their marriage taking place shortly before the publication of *Pan Tadeusz* in 1834 and three years after the pianist–composer’s death.

Like those of her contemporary Michał Kleofas Ogiński, the polonaises that Szymanowska produced are especially interesting works, capturing the nobility and majesty that the dance had acquired by the eighteenth century through association with the Polish aristocracy, which in turn prompted its assimilation into the instrumental repertoire. At the same time, these pieces convey a sense of both nostalgia (*żał*) and defiance, features that Chopin too would harness in works of all kinds, not just his later polonaises. The one in A major, published in 1840 as Op. 40 No. 1 and known as the ‘Military’ Polonaise (a title which is not attributable to Chopin himself), is an excellent case in point. It considerably expands the dimensions and expressive language of the genre as conceived by Ogiński and Szymanowska, justifying the reference to ‘guns concealed by flowers’ that Robert Schumann coined in 1836 with regard to Chopin’s mazurkas, which in Schumann’s opinion could be seen as a ‘dangerous enemy’ of the Russian tsar. Chopin’s Nocturne in F major Op. 15 No. 1, first published in 1833, itself combines reflectiveness in the outer sections and raw anger in the contrasting middle section. Even if the Polish character is less obvious in this piece, it is never far from the surface in Chopin’s music, however indebted the composer was to some of the broader influences that also shaped the works of Szymanowska among others.

**John Rink**  
Faculty of Music / St John’s College

## The Early Life of Adam Mickiewicz (1798 - 1855)

- 24 December 1798    born in Zaosie near Navahrudak (Nowogródek), now in Belarus.
- 1807 to 1815        attends a Dominican school in Navahrudak.
- 1815                 enrolls at the Imperial University of Vilnius, studying to be a teacher.
- 1817                 together with Tomasz Zan and other university friends, he creates a secret organization, the Philomaths.
- 1818                 his first poem, "Zima miejska" ("City Winter") is published in *Tygodnik Wileński* (Wilno Weekly).
- 1819 to 1823        teaches at the secondary school in Kaunas.
- 1823                 due to his involvement with the Philomaths, he is arrested and imprisoned.
- 1824 to 1829        banished to central Russia.
- 1829 to 1832        he travels to a number of German cities and, then, to Rome, where he learns about the outbreak of the November 1830 Uprising in Poland. After a visit to Greater Poland (a part of Prussia) he arrives in Paris.
- 1833                 in Paris, he marries Celina Szymanowska, a daughter of the composer and piano virtuoso Maria Szymanowska.
- 1834                 *Pan Tadeusz* is published.



## Adam Mickiewicz and Aleksandr Pushkin



In the Romantic Age the nations of Europe spawned national poets. Or perhaps it was the other way round: that Romantic poets spawned nations. And, by chance or otherwise, Russia's twin capitals, St Petersburg and Moscow, were remarkable breeding grounds for such poets. In 1831 the Ukrainian serf Taras Shevchenko arrived in the northern capital, where he initially trained as an artist before switching careers to become the revered national poet of Ukraine. Adam Mickiewicz – also born in what was then a province of the Russian Empire – lived in Moscow somewhat earlier, from late 1825 to 1829. And then there was Russia's own Aleksandr Pushkin, who returned to St Petersburg from exile in 1826, and was based there until his death (in a duel, as is proper) in 1837.

Mickiewicz and Pushkin were almost exact contemporaries – born in December 1798 and May 1799 respectively. In an ideal world of Romantic encounters, they might have met in that playground for would-be-Byronic heroes, Russia's very own exotic orient, the Caucasus and Crimea. Mickiewicz visited Crimea in 1825, and Pushkin, in an unfinished appendix to his great verse novel, *Evgenii Onegin*, which was published in separate parts between 1825 and 1832, included lines about the 'inspired Mickiewicz' reciting his poetry upon Crimea's rocky shores, 'recalling his Lithuania'. A similar image, of the 'singer of Lithuania' amid the mountains of Crimea, appears in a sonnet of 1830. But Pushkin's own encounters with Mickiewicz were in Moscow and St Petersburg. They mixed in the same circles, frequented the same literary salons, debated the same works. Mickiewicz gave Pushkin a copy of Byron in English, inscribed (in Polish) 'This copy of Byron is dedicated to Pushkin by an admirer of both'. Each knew well the status of the other. There was mutual respect.

But not a lasting friendship. Pushkin's notions of freedom were not anti-Imperial, and the Polish uprising of 1830–31 proved sharply divisive. In a way, his tensions with Mickiewicz brought out the best and the worst of Pushkin. Among his least-admired works is the polemical 'To the slanderers of Russia', in which he defensively described the Polish conflicts as 'an argument of Slavs among themselves'. Yet one of Pushkin's greatest narrative poems, *The Bronze Horseman*, is also – among many other things – a polemical response to a poem of Mickiewicz. The two poets were bound even in their differences.

**Simon Franklin**

## Revisiting a schoolroom text

Jestem wdzięczny Profesorowi Patrickowi Boyde, że zaraził mnie swoim entuzjazmem dla *Pana Tadeusza*. Lektury szkolne mają to do siebie, że czasem nie zachwycają. Tak też było i ze mną w czasach szkoły podstawowej i średniej - zdaje się, że nawet nie przeczytałem dzieła Mickiewicza w całości. Ale skoro wczesną wiosną 2019 angielski znawca literatury z Cambridge (czyli Profesor Boyde) oznajmił, że *Pan Tadeusz* jego zachwyca, uznałem, że coś w tym musi być i zabrałem się do lektury.

Pierwsze co zauważyłem, to że nasza narodowa epepeja szybko i lekko się czyta, i że opowiadanie wciąga. Następnie zwróciłem uwagę na poczucie humoru - *Pan Tadeusz* to właściwie komedia. Przedstawione postacie nie są wyidealizowane, ale pełne różnych przypadłości.

Zastanowiło mnie, jak opisana rzeczywistość z początku XIX wieku ma się do dzisiejszych realiów, 200 lat później. Na przykład relacje człowieka z przyrodą. Upolowanie pięknego, dzikiego niedźwiedzia przedstawione jest jako rozrywka godna szlachty. Z dzisiejszego punktu widzenia, bardzo głupia rozrywka. Nie sposób też nie zauważyć, że w opowiadanej historii dominują mężczyźni. Jedyne kobiety, które mają głos to Telimena i Zosia. Dla tej pierwszej najważniejszym życiowym celem jest zdobycie męża, najlepiej dobrze sytuowanego, do tego stopnia, że gotowa jest porzucić Rejenta na przyjęciu zaręczynowym jeżeli tylko Hrabia zadeklaruje, że się z nią ożeni. Zosia natomiast mówi mniej, a głównie oblewa się rumieńcem. Zakochuje się w Tadeuszu po tym, gdy podsłuchiwała, że ten ją kocha. Wspomniana jest też Ewa, córka Stolnika Horeszki, którą kochał Jacek Soplica. O niej wiemy tylko tyle, że była piękna i dobra.

Mickiewicz wytyka też rodakom, jak trudno przychodzi im (nam) się zorganizować i jak łatwo jest napuścić jednych na drugich. W Księdze VII Maciej Dobrzyński ostro gani szlachtę:

To póki o wskrzeszeniu Polski była rada,  
O dobru pospolitym, głupi, u was zwada?  
Nie można było, głupi, ani się rozmówić,  
Głupi, ani porządku, ani postanowić  
Wodza nad wami, głupi! A niech no kto podda  
Osobiste urazy, głupi, u was zgoda!

Na koniec poważylem się też na kilka własnych interpretacji, odmiennych od tych, które proponowano nam na lekcjach języka polskiego. Otóż moim zdaniem Jackowi nie podano czarnej polewki, gdyż ten, przewidując, że taka sytuacja może nastąpić, a nie chcąc narazić się na poniżenie, wybrał udawanie obojętności i zaniechał oświadczyć. Kto ma wątpliwości, niech uważnie przeczyta wersy 572–84, w Księdze X. Powiem więcej - moim zdaniem Stolnik dawał Jackowi wyraźne aluzje, że ten powinien się oświadczyć, oraz sugestie, że chętnie widziałby go jako zięcia. Kto ma inne zdanie, niech przyjrzy się wersom 615–22 w Księdze X. Albo najlepiej niech też odświeży sobie całe dzieło.

**Sebastian Leśniewski**

## Professor Boyde, please could you tell us ‘Where you are coming from’?

This performance of *Thaddeus* is the latest in a series of semi-staged productions which have kept me busy since my retirement in 2002. I have had to learn so much in the past eighteen years – how to speak dead languages as though they were living, how to use, creatively, the essential high-tech resources; how to coach and inspire teams of amateurs; how to persuade audiences to come along to a reading aloud of dense and complex texts in four different languages (none of them Italian). But I have of course been re-deploying my previous knowledge and skills (acquired through the teaching of Dante and Italian Narrative Art); and there are some ‘red strands’ running the whole length of the ‘cable’.

The plays are all abridgements of rarely performed verse-dramas, or dramatisations of episodes in classical epics or of books in the Bible. All have been enhanced by live music and illuminated by appropriate images. The meaning has always been made crystal-clear by specially-composed surtitles, or by the projection of the original text, or – as tonight – by both!

In every case the focus has been on the language of a major text which is to be enjoyed on its own terms and for its own sake, just like a symphony. Every directorial choice is intended to heighten the impact of the Word, to rouse it from its hibernation on the page, to bring it from potency to act. There are two underlying obsessions; first, my conviction – shared with Dante – that the essence of poetry lies in its verbal music (*armonia, dolcezza*), which is why it does not survive translation: and, second, that a good reading depends on deep understanding and conveys a loving interpretation – which it does more effectively than any written commentary. (And, yes, there is also a thin ‘black thread’ of muted protest against the cult of the Director in the modern theatre and against the dominance of Theory in the teaching of literature at our universities.)

**Patrick Boyde**

## Alphabetical table of the principal works semi-staged between 2002 and 2019

<i>Achilles: The End of his Wrath</i>	Homer
<i>Aeneas I: Troiae Tutamen</i>	Homer
<i>Aeneas II: Teucrorum Spes</i>	Virgil
<i>Ajax</i>	Sophocles
<i>Anticleia, Calypso, Circe, Nausicaa</i>	Homer
<i>Apocalypse</i>	New Testament
<i>Borderers, The</i>	Wordsworth
<i>Job: Trial by Ordeal</i>	Book of Job (Septuagint)
<i>Horace</i>	Corneille
<i>Manfred</i>	Byron
<i>Mark, The Gospel of</i>	New Testament
<i>Maud</i>	Tennyson
<i>Oedipus at Colonus</i>	Sophocles
<i>Paradise Regained</i>	Milton
<i>Penelope</i>	Homer
<i>Persephone and Demeter</i>	Homeric Hymn + Ovid
<i>Prometheus Bound</i>	Aeschylus
<i>Prometheus Unbound</i>	Shelley
<i>Pulchérie</i>	Corneille
<i>Samson Agonistes</i>	Milton
<i>Two Kinsmen from Lycia</i>	Homer
<i>Two Kinsmen from Thebes</i>	Shakespeare

# Who's Who

**PATRICK BOYDE** is Emeritus Professor of Italian. He has been adapting and directing dramas in Greek, Latin, French and English since 2004.

**KONRAD SUDER CHATTERJEE**, Czech–Polish by blood and upbringing, theatre actor and Classics teacher by training, playwright by passion, queer at heart, curious by nature. He is now undertaking his MSc degree at SOAS.

**ANDREW DOBRZAŃSKI** co-manages the Royce Institute in the Department of Physics. Born in Essex, with Polish grandparents from Lwów, he took up Polish dancing with ‘Ojczyzna’ while completing his Geology PhD at Edinburgh.

**MATTHEW GIBSON** is a recent music graduate of St John’s, and this year continues to sing in the College choir. Next year he will begin training at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland as a postgraduate répétiteur.

**PATRYK JEĐRASIĄK** is a postdoc in the Engineering Department, where he completed his PhD and MPhil. He grew up in Myślubórz, Poland.

**GILLIAN JONDORF**, Fellow of Girton and former Senior Lecturer in Renaissance French, has been composing surtitles for semi-staged productions in Greek, Latin and French every year since 2004.

**ZUZANNA KOTRYCH** is a first-year Education student at Queens’ College, having completed her sixth-form studies as a British Alumni Society scholar. She grew up in Solec Kujawski in the Kuyavian–Pomeranian Voivodeship, Poland.

**SEBASTIAN LEŚNIEWSKI**, born and raised in Słupsk, Poland, is a PhD-qualified linguist, working as a university preparation teacher in a private language school in Cambridge. He is also a presenter on the local Cambridge 105 Radio.

**EDYTA NOWOSIELSKA** took her Master’s in Polish at the Jagiellonian University in Poland where she was born and grew up. She is now a Lecturer in Polish at the University of Cambridge, and also runs her own school of Polish in London.

**ANTONI PRUS** was born in Częstochowa (Poland). After attending high school in Cracow he is now a second-year undergraduate in the Department of Chemical Engineering at Cambridge.

**KRYSTIAN SCHNEYDER** was born in Warsaw where he attended high school. He is currently a first-year undergraduate studying HSPS at Selwyn College.

**ALEKSANDRA SZYPOWSKA** is a Classics graduate of Lucy Cavendish College; she also studied at the Academy for Theatre Practices in Gardzienice, Poland. Currently, she works at the intersection of poetry, spoken word, and music.

**ELENA VIOLARIS** is studying for a PhD in the Faculty of English on levels, games and ‘architectures of play’ in postmodern and contemporary literature.

**MAGDALENA ZUŃ** was born in Lublin and graduated from the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University with a Master’s in Applied Linguistics. She now teaches English as a foreign language in Cambridge, and performs in local theatre groups.