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THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MONUMENT TO FRYDERYK CHOPIN IN WARSAW, 1901–1914

This article presents the work of the public Committee for the Construction of a Monument to Fryderyk Chopin in Warsaw during the last years of Russian rule in Polish lands. The committee was set up at the initiative of the opera singer Adelajda Bolska and her husband, Count Aleksander Dienheim-Szczawiński-Brochocki, with the permission of Tsar Nicholas II. The committee's aim was to build a monument to the composer in his home city, with money obtained thanks to the generosity of the public. That work was frowned upon by the Russian administration, which regarded the monument as a symbol of Polish aspirations to independence. In initiatives organised under the committee's patronage, such as music concerts, theatre shows, art exhibitions and amusements, thousands of people across the world took part.

The committee's successes also included organising a large-scale competition to find a design for the Chopin monument, which was won by sculptor Waław Szymanowski and architect Franciszek Mączyński. Although their design was not realised at the time, the committee's work helped to popularise Chopin's music and to boost national awareness among the Poles during the times of enslavement.