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*Szymanowska Scholarship: Ideas for Access and Discovery through Collaborative Efforts*¹

Introduction²

My interest in Maria Szymanowska's music and life began during my undergraduate studies, when I discovered that she was largely an unknown figure to scholars in the United States. As a pianist, I had performed several of her compositions, including *Le Murmure* and *Vingt Exercices et Préludes*, and by the time I was in graduate school, I had decided to conduct my research on her life and career as a pianist and composer. I knew that there was a need for a resource, which could act as a guide to primary and secondary source materials, many of which were not located in the United States. My main interest was in those materials held by archives, libraries, and museums, which can be elusive and difficult to track down, even by experienced scholars. Why was it and largely still is, difficult to locate and access these primary sources? The reality is that there have always been and continues to be a percentage of primary source materials, which are never fully indexed or documented (contextually) in finding aids or library catalogs, for various reasons, but often due to lack of funding or staffing. One of the ways in which librarians and music scholars have addressed this issue is through the creation of resources, such as bibliographies, indexes, thematic catalogs, or other research guides, which focus on primary and secondary sources made up of early and modern musical editions, discographies, literature, and other relevant materials, which are then identified and annotated for use by other scholars, students, and the public.

While completing my research for my thesis, I realized that there was a need for such a resource on Szymanowska and this led me to

¹ I would like to thank the University of Connecticut Libraries, Polish Academy of Sciences, Paris (Centre Scientifique de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences), and Société Maria Szymanowska, Paris for the opportunity to attend and present at the 2nd International Symposium on Maria Szymanowska et son temps, April 28–29, 2014.

² The presentation, from which this article was drawn, was given on April 29, 2014 and is available on my website: <http://www.annakijas.com/presentation-given-at-maria-szymanowska-et-son-temps-symposium>.

write a bio-bibliography, which was published in 2010.³ As a librarian and scholar, I think that bio-bibliographies are still important for scholars and students doing research on subjects or in areas that are not well represented in traditional scholarship, however, since I first started my research on Szymanowska in the early 2000s, I have realized that there needs to be a greater emphasis placed on enabling access and discovery of materials, especially primary sources, through modes beyond print. Book-length annotated bibliographies are still being published and are largely done in print format with e-book equivalents. Although these are useful in identifying unique or unknown primary sources, as well as secondary literature, they continue to present this information in a structure that is static. While the author of a print book can provide narrative and contextualize the material presented to the reader, the information is static and confined to those pages. It is unable to demonstrate relationships between the identified sources and subjects, or create networks *beyond* the page. Due to these limitations, it is important that librarians and scholars look beyond the print mode and create, either in addition to, or in lieu of print, digital resources that are built on linked open data, which many international libraries, archives, and museums have begun to implement.

In this article, I will focus on two things: first, how libraries, archives, and museums (LAMs) are beginning to make information or data, as well as the content itself, available to academics and the greater public, through the use of linked open data, which enriches the data and makes it visible. Second, I will explore and propose several ways in which scholars can use this data or digital content to become curators and collaborators with LAMs. In addition, I will present several examples of projects, which are creating digital resources or building applications on this data.

PART I

Paper-based materials = paper-based networks, so how can we make it easier to access the data, which is described in finding aids and kept in archival boxes? And how can we identify or visualize relationships within these networks that may then lead us to additional information? A traditional finding aid, whether in print

³ Anna Kijas, *Maria Szymanowska (1789–1831): A Bio-Bibliography*. (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2010).

or digital form, can only provide us with a static layer of information related to our subject or person. It is then up to the researcher to continue digging through archival records, in order to find connections that may exist within or across collections. Rather than solely relying on these paper trails, what if we were able to access this hidden archival data using digital tools built on linked open data? Libraries, archives, and museums employ standards in order to make it easier to access and discover materials critical to our research. Using information already present in our catalog or discovery systems, such as authority headings (i.e. Szymanowska, Maria), allows a user to identify persons or works by connecting records together and forming a network within one collection or across multiple content providers.

Adding linked open data into the mix allows cultural heritage portals, such as Europeana and the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) to serve up content that is being created by individual galleries, libraries, archives, and museums (GLAMs) on a national and international level.⁴ In addition to acting as a portal, Europeana and the DPLA, each provide new ways for researchers to engage with the content that has been digitized or described. For example, the DPLA uses temporal (dates) information to allow researchers to display content relevant to their search in a timeline view, which promotes further discovery of related content.⁵ Searching for content by or about Adam Mickiewicz uses the publication dates for works printed since 1829 and visualizes them on a timeline with bars of varying length, which represent the number of works published or written in a given year. Further exploration of content is possible by selecting the bar for a specific year, such as 1890, and gaining access to the item record, which may also link to a digital object. Both Europeana and DPLA use linked open data and have an open API (application programming interface), which allows researchers and the public to re-use the content created by GLAMs in innovative ways.⁶

⁴ For additional information about these portals, visit: Europeana, <http://europeana.eu/>; Digital Public Library of America, <http://dp.la/>.

⁵ Digital Public Library of America, Timeline View: <http://dp.la/timeline>.

⁶ For information about using open data for the development of applications, tools, and other resources, visit: Digital Public Library of America (DPLA), <http://dp.la/info/developers/> and Europeana Labs, <http://labs.europeana.eu/>.

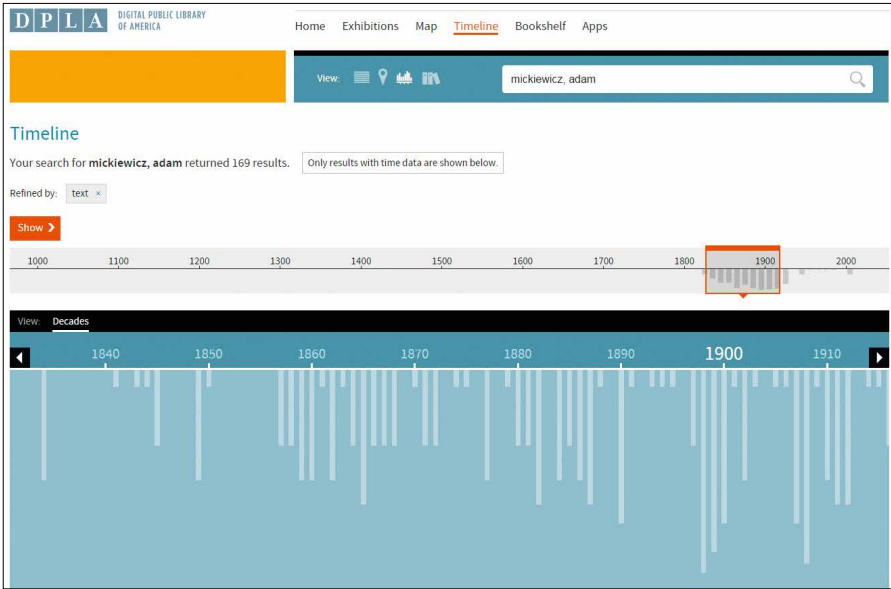


Fig. 1. DPLA Timeline View

Beyond the library (archive, gallery, or museum) – What does linked open data mean for scholars?

The increase in digitization of materials does not necessarily make it easier to do research, discover or access these sources. In their article, “Using Linked Open Data to Enhance Subject Access in Online Primary Sources”, Thea Lindquist, Michael Dulock, et al, point out the several existent barriers, which include:

- decontextualization of sources (inadequate metadata for searching according to subject, time, period, and geographical area);
- impenetrability of institutional databases;
- sheer magnitude of results.⁷

One of the ways around these barriers, then, is to use data being created by libraries and contributed to services, such as VIAF (Virtual International Authority File) in order to enhance records and link them using linked open data. VIAF is a service that combines all known name authority files into a single record by matching and linking them across the web. For example, an

⁷ Lindquist, Thea, Michael Dulock, Juha Törnroos, Eero Hyvönen, Eetu Mäkelä. “Using Linked Open Data to Enhance Subject Access in Online Primary Sources”, *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* Vol. 51, Iss. 8, 2013. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01639374.2013.823583> .

authority record for Maria Szymanowska, will show variant spellings of her name, each linked to authority records at a specific international institution (identified by a flag). The same idea is applied to works, hence, her compositions are identified and linked to authority records.

The screenshot shows the VIAF search interface. At the top, it says 'VIAF Virtual International Authority File'. Below that is a search bar with 'Search' and 'Search Terms: szymanowska, maria'. Underneath, there are dropdown menus for 'Select Field: All Headings' and 'Select Index: All VIAF'. Below the search bar, it says '32 headings found for szymanowska, maria'. A table lists the results:

Heading	Type	Sample Title
1 Szymanowska, Maria, 1788-1831	Personal	Mazurken, Kl (1826)
Szymanowska, Maria Agata Wolkowa, 1788-1831		Country dances, piano, A# major
Szymanowska, Maria Agata		
Szymanowska, Maria Agata Wolkowa, 1788-1831		Serenata, 1982
Szymanowska, Maria, 1788-1831		

Fig. 2. VIAF authority heading

The majority of VIAF authority headings for Maria Szymanowska are linked to modern musical editions, and secondary literature or works, therefore there is still a need for primary source records held across international institutions to be created or contributed along with linked open data to VIAF. These primary sources, such as her *Divertissement pour le pianoforte avec accompagnement de violon*, held by Wellesley College, could then be accessed and discovered more easily.⁸ Once records are enhanced with linked open data, they can be connected across the Web and more easily discovered.

Within the last seven years, American and European libraries, in particular the Library of Congress, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Biblioteka Narodowa (Poland), and Deutsche National Bibliothek, have worked towards making their bibliographic data accessible through linked open data.⁹ There is still much work to be done before all of this data is linked and discoverable, however the effort from these and other institutions is becoming more


⁸ Catalog record for Maria Szymanowska, *Divertissement pour le pianoforte avec accompagnement de violon*, Wellesley College Library (U.S.). <http://luna.wellesley.edu/record=b1585781-S1>.

⁹ Each of these libraries has provided information about their open data initiatives. For more information, visit: Library of Congress, <http://id.loc.gov/about/>; BnF Data <http://data.bnf.fr/>; Biblioteka Narodowa (Warsaw), <http://babin.bn.org.pl/?p=2567>; Deutsche National Bibliothek, <http://www.dnb.de/EN/lids.html>.

visible. For example, the BnF has made their data available as an open data project on data.bnf.fr, giving their users access to data about an author, work, or topic through one portal. Searching for the author: Maria Szymanowska, will find a page with descriptive metadata pulled from the bibliographic data created by the Bibliothèque nationale de France. The portal also provides information about materials by or about Szymanowska held at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, as well as links to external resources, including VIAF, Wikipedia, and Europeana.

BnF Bibliothèque nationale de France **data.bnf.fr** search data.bnf.fr

Maria Szymanowska (1789-1831): nom d'alliance



Country :	Pologne
Gender :	feminin
Birth :	Varsovie, 14-12-1789
Death :	Saint-Petersbourg (Russie), 24-07-1831
Note :	Planiste et compositrice. - Née Wolowska
Variants of the name :	Maria Agate Szymanowska (1789-1831) Maria Agata Szymanowska (1789-1831)
ISNI :	ISNI 0000 0001 1072 5505

Occupations (21 documents) | Documents about this author | Pages in data.bnf.fr (2 page) | Sources and references

Occupations

- ▶ Compositeur (16)
- ▶ Auteur de lettres (1)
- ▶ Éditeur scientifique (1)
- ▶ Auteur ou responsable intellectuel (3)

Compositeur 16 documents

- [Ballade par Mme de St Onge, mise en musique... par Mme Marie Szymanowska](#)
Material description : In-fol.
Edition : Paris : Hanry, [s.d.]
[catalogue]
- [Complainte d'un aveugle qui demandait l'aumône au Jardin des Plantes à Paris, mise en musique par Mme Marie Szymanowska...](#)
Material description : In-fol.
Edition : Paris : Hanry, [s.d.]

Fig. 3. Data.bnf.fr (<http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb43291214k/PUBLIC>)

One of the things that would make these records even more useful to scholars and users interested in Maria Szymanowska would be to add digitized content that can be linked. Access to digital images of early editions, correspondence, or manuscripts

would allow people to view these sources, share them, and even possibly re-use them for scholarly purposes. Digital objects (# given in parenthesis following the name) for several of her contemporaries, including Frédéric Chopin (99), Franz Liszt (64), Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (154), Adam Mickiewicz (12) have been created and are accessible through data.bnf.fr, while the majority of archival materials related to Szymanowska held by the Bibliothèque nationale de France and other European institutions, are only available in print format.

PART 2

In this section of the article, I will explore several ways in which scholars can become curators and engage in collaborative research. In order for there to be greater access to and discovery of Szymanowska sources, scholars should collaborate with libraries, archives, and museums on several levels, which can include identifying collections or materials in need of attention, providing additional context to materials through curation in online exhibits, as well as proposing collaborative research projects, which can lead to grant funding. This type of work can ensure that sources, such as correspondence or diaries are digitized, described, indexed and made available through portals, such as Europeana, or re-used in digital projects. For example, in *Nineteenth Century Disability: Cultures & Contexts*, primary source texts and images on physical and cognitive disability from different library and archival collections are curated and presented together.¹⁰

In *Documenting Teresa Carreño*, primary source texts and images documenting her musical career are curated, transcribed, linked to original records, and visualized spatially on a map.¹¹

The Bibliothèque nationale de France open data project, mentioned earlier, offers data for download, which can be used to create visualizations specific to one person, topic, or work, or combined with other data in order to represent relationships or connections across collections.¹²

¹⁰ Karen Bourrier, *Nineteenth Century Disability: Cultures & Contexts*, <http://www.nineteenthcenturydisability.org/>.

¹¹ Anna Kijas, *Documenting Teresa Carreño*, <http://documentingcarreno.org/>.

¹² For details about the open data project led by the Bibliothèque nationale de France, visit: <http://data.bnf.fr/semanticweb>.

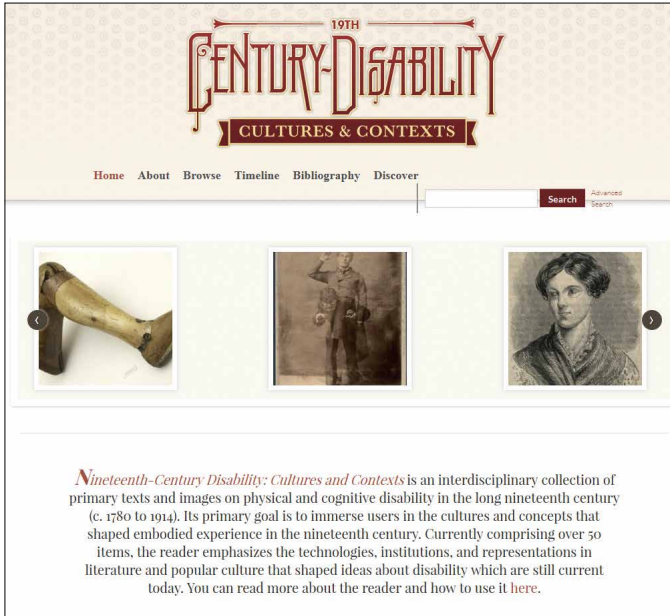


Fig. 4. Nineteenth Century Disability: Cultures & Contexts

Documenting Teresa Carreño

Boston Music Hall (January 24, 1863)

Description

Carreño performed *Capriccio Brillant*, Op. 22 (Mendelssohn, Felix), *Fantasia on Verdi's "I due Foscari"* (Rossellen, Henri), and *Fantasia on Donizetti's "Lucia di Lammermoor,"* Op. 8 (Prudent, Émile) in the Second Philharmonic Concert with conductor Carl Zerrahn. The concert began at 7:30 pm. Tickets cost \$0.75.

She received a medal with a blue ribbon, which read: "Presented to Teresa Carreño, the child pianist, by the Philharmonic Society of Boston as a token of their homage of her genius. January 24th, 1863."

Source

Announcement: *Boston Evening Transcript*, January 19, 1863: 3.

Review: *Evening Saturday Gazette*, January 25, 1863: 3.

Review: *Dwight's Journal of Music*, January 24, 1863: 343.

Announcement: *Boston Evening Transcript*, January 27, 1863: 2.

Review: *Dwight's Music Journal*, January 31, 1863: 350-351.

Subject

Concerts

Contributor

Kijas, Anna

Transcription

Boston Evening Transcript, January 19, 1863.

Philharmonic Concerts.

Carl Zerrahn has the honor to announce to his subscribers and the public that he will give his Second Grand Philharmonic Concert at the Boston Music Hall, on Saturday Evening, January 24, 1863, assisted by Signorita Teresa Carreño and Mrs. Celia Houston-Ford, (pupil of Signor Bendelari) who will then make her first appearance in public.

Fig. 5. Documenting Teresa Carreño

One of the ways we can already visualize networks linking sources related to Szymanowska is through the use of visualization tools, such as LODLive.¹³ LODLive is a project, which demonstrates the use of linked open data standards and proves that resources published according to semantic web standards are easy to access and understand. Entering the VIAF URI for Szymanowska into <http://en.lodlive.it/> will create a central node, which holds the information from the VIAF record. From this node, other URIs and linked open data connect to form a network.¹⁴

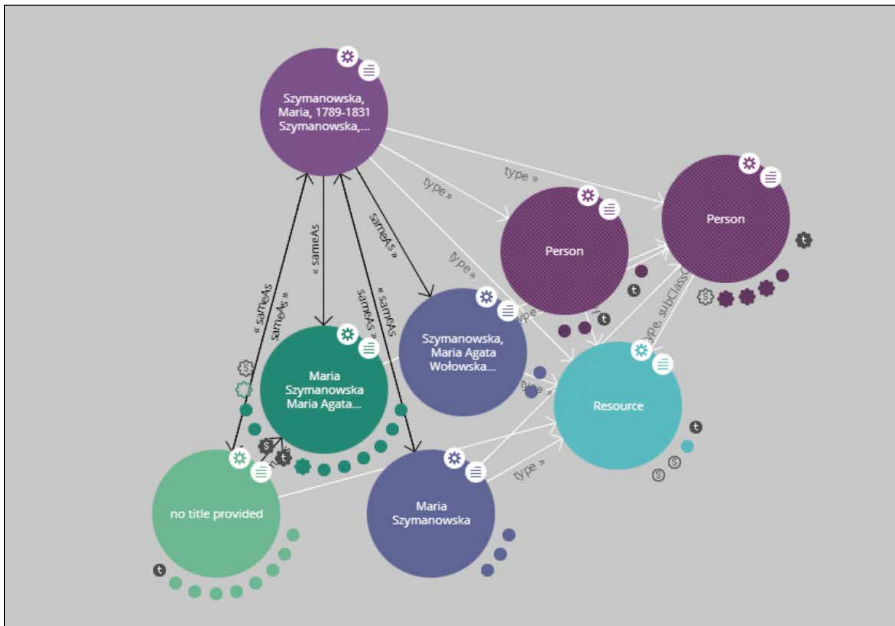


Fig. 6. LODLive Visualization

The user can see that the different nodes represent data linked to records from providers, such as Wikipedia or the Bibliothèque nationale de France. This type of visualization is not comprehensive and will only show connections that exist which meet the linked open data standards. However, it gives us a starting point for thinking about how not only LAMs, but also scholars, can participate in improving existent data and context about persons

¹³ For more information or to use LODLive, visit: <http://en.lodlive.it/>.

¹⁴ To view the Szymanowska VIAF URI in LodLive, visit: <http://en.lodlive.it/?http://viaf.org/viaf/79200325>

(such as Szymanowska, Adam Mickiewicz, or Johann Wolfgang von Goethe), as well as musical, literary, and artistic works, and topics.

Content from LAMs who are not implementing URIs or linked open data will not be represented in these types of networks. Therefore, it is important to raise awareness about the capabilities of linked open data and to collaborate with librarians and technology staff to create projects, which are centered around standards that encourage open data creation and sharing. Such collaborative efforts can ensure that Szymanowska sources at various institutions are connected and made not only accessible, but discoverable, by academics and the public. As a lesser known figure in musical history, Szymanowska is not well-represented in VIAF or other open data projects, as other musicians may already be (i.e. Chopin or Liszt). Imagine being able to access data about Szymanowska's musical output, correspondence, literature, as well as digital content, through one portal, such as Europeana. This data would then allow users to re-use content and represent the data in different ways, including timelines, maps, or networks, which could display connections or relationships between Szymanowska and other artists or prominent figures of her time, such as Goethe or Thorvaldsen.

It is thus important, that librarians, archivists, scholars, and IT professionals work together on recommendations and standards, as well as actual projects, in order to ensure that research and scholarly needs are being met. It is especially important that the legacies of musical figures, such as Szymanowska, who may not hold a central place in the western music canon, are preserved across archival collections, libraries, and museums. Moreover, it is essential that descriptive data about sources related to Szymanowska's life and profession is made re-useable to encourage future research and scholarship, but more importantly, accessible, in order to preserve the cultural heritage and memory of a notable Polish composer and pianist.