Βιβλιοθήκες Μουσικής και Δημιουργικότητα: Σύγχρονες τάσεις και προοπτικές σύνδεσης με την Πολιτιστική και Βιομηχανία Music Libraries and Creativity: Trends and Perspective Synergies with the Cultural Industry

COMMUNICATION THEORY
AND DATABASES
FOR MUSICOLOGICAL RESEARCH
CASE STUDY: NATIONAL RADIOTELEVISION ARCHIVE FOR
CONTEMPORARY CLASSICAL MUSIC

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#### ARTEMIS PAPADAKI

Bellerbys College artepapa@gmail.com

**ABSTRACT** | This paper will focus on the communication theory applied in order to form the methodology used in revealing aspects of the Contemporary Classical Music landscape in Greece, in the digital era. The main goals were to structure the qualitative research and to create a conduct of communication in order to present all pieces of information recorded from three different sources: The Contemporary Classical Music Archive (scores and parts hosted at the National Radio-Television of Greece) combined with primary (Oral History Project) and secondary (bibliography) data. All these sources contained information about the compositions, facts about the composers' life as well as their idiom and way of thinking. Linking flexibly primary and secondary data and turning them into a valuable source for researchers and stakeholders, beyond any geographical limits, has been considered of utmost importance. Outcome of this research was the construction of a MySQL data base, designed to contain all afore-mentioned Linked Data, as well as a web platform open to controlled feedback. This new communication path might contribute to the re-definition of future artistic choices, relationships and directions of the composers and their audience.

Keywords: digitization, Linked Data, communication, Dance's Helical Model, Hooper-Greenhill Model, contemporary classical music, archive, methodology, flexible classification, multiple readings, National Radio Television of Greece, data base.

#### 1. THEORETICAL CONTEXT

The paper focuses on the application of communication theory, in order to form the methodology used in revealing aspects of the Contemporary Classical Music landscape in Greece, in the digital era. The goal was twofold. To structure the qualitative research and to create a conduct of communication in order to present all pieces of information recorded from three different sources. The Contemporary Classical Music Archive (scores and parts hosted at the National Radio-Television of Greece), primary data collected through the Oral History Project as well as secondary data, in order to present information about the compositions, facts about the composers' life as well as their idiom and way of thinking (Howard & Sharp, 2001). Linking flexibly primary and secondary data, contributed to the creation of a valuable source for users (coders and decoders) ranging from researchers to general public and any other stakeholder beyond any geographical limits.

Observing the development in classical music culture, we can briefly say that in the 20th century, the succeeding genres of western classical music are characterized by the crumbling of old forms and structures, and the creation of new ones, offering, thus, liberty in the way of expression. Contemporary music is characterized by changes in contact and codes, according to Jakobson (Anogianakis, 1985; Fiske, 1992). The challenge that arose was to choose the appropriate methodology in order to reveal and describe the trends and choices that have been prevalent among Greek composers during the last decades.

Qualitative and quantitative research tools (in addition to the research of secondary sources) seemed to be the solution. The composers have been asked to provide facts that influenced their artistic life and viewpoints on important factors affecting creativity. When composers refer to themselves and their work, they do not only give us a special and authentic point of view, but also contribute to a field of discussion, initially indirect, that can prove very fertile. Having as a springboard this belief, a questionnaire has been designed in order to investigate how knowledge and skills are developed and shaped within a certain social and cultural context, offering another color to the Contemporary Classical Music landscape in Greece. The secondary sources included the recording and cataloguing of the Contemporary Classical Music compositions that are to be found in the relevant department of National Radio Music Ensemble Library, and biographical data of Greek composers as well as references on their idiom from the electronic or printed sources, available.

The aspects that were presented in this research comprise: historical, political, cultural and socioeconomic data about the musical environment in Greece and its context as well as personal data from the composers' life, stances and choices as well as list of their works.

The methodology, in order to Link Data, has been inspired by the theories on communication and the creation of public opinion. Primary goal was to organize and present the Archive of contemporary classical music (scores and parts) housed in the Music Ensembles Library of the Hellenic National Radio Television (E.R.T.) and allow it to be linked with other sources of information and data, enhancing the users' experience. At the present paper, special focus will be given to certain models.

Starting point was the organization and presentation of the Archive of contemporary classical music (scores and parts) housed in the Music Ensembles Library of the Hellenic National Radio



Television (E.R.T.) and allow it to be linked with other sources of information and data, enhancing the users' experience.

### A. Dance's Helical Model

Dance 's Communication Helical Model (1967) depicts communication as a dynamic process, that moves forward (McQuail & Windahl, 2001; Fiske, 1992). After the initial source releases its information, this orbit until it gets enriched by new and existing "users" and sources, thus increases its active locus and area of influence in a continuous process. A net of communicative outcomes is generated. Nothing stands alone. Every message affects both structure and content of the communication process that follows. Every outcome becomes the basis for the signified and signifier of the next communication circle. Helix represents the way different procedural aspects are changing over time, stressing the dynamic nature of communication. Key feature is continuous flow.

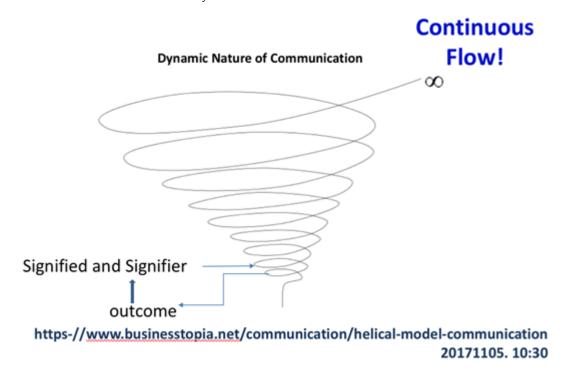


Figure 1: A Helix represents the way different procedural aspects are changing over time (Edited by A.P.)

## B. The notion of Public Opinion

Vincent Price (1996) notices that the term "public opinion" refers according to Childs (1939) to a simple aggregation of individual views, whereas Cooley (1902) and Blumer (1948) see in the term a collective-level (Cooley, 1902; Vincent, 1902; Blumer, 1980; McPhail & Rexroat, 1979). They believe that public opinion is a product emerging from discussion and debate.

In 1990 Pierre Bourdieu challenged the existence of public opinion. "Public opinion does not exist in the form which some people, whose existence depends on this illusion, would have us believe. [...] There is formulated opinion, pressure groups mobilized around a system of interests" (Bourdieu, 1990)



Bourdieu thinks that the similarity and convergence of opinions is misinterpreted, because many times the accord is only superficial and not substantial, as different reasons (motives, environments, social conditions) might lead every individual to similar choices.

We could borrow the term "public opinion", to refer to the representation of a common locus or a common orientation in physical, intellectual or psychological or mental state of members belonging to a social group, regardless the options of each one of them.

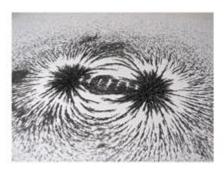
Social structures create a solid ground, but also borders around societies. Public opinion always exists in reference to a certain social structure, therefore, depends on the existence of rules and limits that are gradually readapted and restructured.

It is triggered by the developing dynamic relationships and the inherent need for evolution and "revolution" in human beings. The geometric locus described by this term is a field with properties of attraction or repulsion resembling to magnetic forces. Every child carries "magnetic material" without being fully developed or oriented. We could imagine the process of mental, psychological, intellectual maturity, as the state when an individual becomes as a dipole with clear alignment and orientation in physical or "intellectual space and time". Powerful magnetic fields inspire and contribute to the alignment of these individual dipoles. Either people with radiating personalities, sources carrying strong messages, or people who know how to manipulate can become a magnetic source. Any cultural organization has the goal to become a radiating source. To enable continuous communication and flow of information among creators, artists and stakeholders. Some of them have the potential to become leading units in the arts field.

Figure 2: Magnetic Fields and public Opinion

## Common Locus

## **Common Orientation**



Magnetic Fields: Inspiring People or Situations
Powers of Attraction or Repulsion

http://nagasaki.peugeot-dealer.ip/cgi-bin/WebObjects/111c62c5682.woa/wa/read/pi 12c77c28c1b/

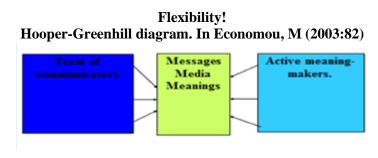
The structure and reactions of human societies, as that of every form of "collective behaviour" (herd, swarm, flock, society...), relies on the either conscious or sub-conscious co-existence, at any level. This creates common "geometric loci" among social groups which give dynamic to any form of communication.

Figure 3: "Common Areas of Existence" and Collective Behaviour



# C. Meaning Making

According to Hooper-Greenhill, the visitor (of an exhibition and, by extension, of an archive) is not passive but active meaning-maker. This model is influenced by the semiotic school. Users interpret the messages in multiple ways, depending on their point of view, educational, cultural, and historical background, as well as their physical, mental, psychological and intellectual idiosyncrasy. In the process of meaning-making all direct and indirect factors, called "media", participate in a state of "constant move" (Economou, 2003; Hooper-Greenhill, 2006). All of these influences build a system that allows message analysis to take place based on semiotic models, multiple intelligence, and constructivism theories. Key word is flexibility.



# 2. DATABASES IN THE DIGITAL ERA SERVING MUSICOLOGY AND HISTORICAL RESEARCH

Digital communication offers opportunity to users with different viewpoints to have access to information that in the past might have been accessible only by scholars. Therefore, contributes to the holistic development of individuals, by enabling the acquisition of information and data in a flexible way.

The flow, the dynamic and the flexibility of the models described above, reflect the way we imagine the effects of a historical database in the digital era are.



# 3. CASE STUDY: NATIONAL RADIO-TELEVISION OF GREECE (ERT) ARCHIVE OF CONTEMPORARY CLASSICAL MUSIC

## Main goals and challenges

- a) Presenting all pieces of information recorded from the Classical Music Archive (scores and parts hosted at the National Radio-Television of Greece)
- b) Linking Data: Combine with primary and secondary data concerning information about the compositions, facts about the composers' life as well as their idiom and way of thinking.
- c) Maximizing flexibility in extracting information and data, in order to attract various users. Priority was given to: enable multiple readings, reveal patterns, facilitate analysis, and create a fertile ground for the creation of educational projects at all levels.

The Challenges were:

a) To increase search-ability.

The problem that arises with software used by most musical libraries is that search is enabled either by composer or composition. All other catalogued data are hidden in deeper layers. These systems have been designed in order to serve librarians working in "physical rooms" to respond to a special request. So, the first step was to overcome this restriction and additionally to enrich and link flexibly the archive with the other sources and to expand it outside its physical limits. Thus, enabling Linked Data to be a valuable source not only to researchers, but to any stakeholder or user outside any geographical limits.

- b) To find a way of putting all Linked Data together in order to trigger and facilitate communication with multiple users and stakeholders and to allow multiple readings depending on the interest and point of view of each researcher.
  - c) To create the potential of linking this platform with other archives and collections and
- d) To create a dimension of time, defined as a controlled feedback-communication path enabling indirect communication among composers, conductors, musicians and their audiences. Thus, i) triggering storing of information that in the future could be turned into historical data, ii) igniting fermentation and iii) becoming an inspiring source capable of contributing to the future reshaping of the Contemporary Classical Music Culture.

## 4. PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES

## a) The archive

The archive of Contemporary Classic Music (scores-parts) is located, in a room way too small, on the first floor of the E.R.T building, in the General Administration wing of the radio station. The general public has no clue as to the existence of this department and physical access and use of it by external visitors is practically extremely difficult.



Hence it was necessary to create another way of enabling access and use its contents. The archive, being open to different groups of visitors such as pupils, students, interpreters of musical instruments, composers, conductors and the general public, can be turned into a "living organism". In this way, it "will affect directly present time, look with confidence towards future, and treat with due respect past, without blind devotion to it" (Economou, M., 2003:13).

The creation of the right conditions for the communication between the archive and its environment (various social groups-stakeholders) was considered to be of utmost importance. Rending the archive to an accessible source of inspiration to multiple users, raises its cultural capital.

As a first step, a very detailed cataloguing of the material was undertaken, in order to make it accessible to multifaceted information searches and correlations. It was done in such a way, to as far as possible turn it into a central nucleus of a cultural organism, of course under the supposition that there would be a corresponding political desire for its creation.

The rich material required additional information about the lives, style-idiom and works of the composers referred to. Using bibliographical material from both traditional and electronic sources, as well as material that the composers themselves offered for the present study, a basic outlined information for each composer has been presented in an epigrammatic style on relevant tables, in order to allow readers to have easy access.

Special interest has been shown in the description of each composer's style. Being well aware that if a third person is called upon to describe the idiom of a composer, the outcome will be refracted by his/her personal perspective, it felt important, to ask as many composers as possible to talk about themselves and their work, giving an estimation on diverse issues having to do with musical composition. An analytical approximation on my part of the style of each one would have been well beyond the scope of the present paper. So, a new basic goal has been set. To record the opinion of as many composers as possible on different issues, their standpoints and their beliefs, within the limited time frame of the research. It has been thought paramount that all points of views should be heard, in order to ensure that the present work did not function as a system for deciding what is or is not worthy of aesthetic admiration or intellectual pursuit. Therefore, an Oral History project has been linked to the initial one. Having the archive as a point of departure, the hope was to create a dialogue (firstly through qualitative and quantitative research) with contemporary Greek composers, musicians, conductors or cultural managers, in order to add a dimension of time through this experiential aspect of the archive. The use of new technologies can lead to a more direct dialogue between the composers, but also between them and the broader public as well as specialists, thereby creating fermentation in the field of contemporary music.

In this manner, a lively picture of the landscape of contemporary Greek Concert music was presented from the angle of compositions and from the perspective of each composer. It is called lively, because acknowledging that "truth" and "objectivity" is a "locus" of many "dimensions", depending on time-space and on who the observer is, the constant communication with composers tried to add colours to this picture, contributing to its reconstruction. The comparative juxtaposition derived from different observers is very important.



Parallel to that, the hope for connecting the archive to the present has been accomplished. As D. Glenos says: "We have to adopt the approach of a "creative historicism" that consists of the harmonious connection between the past and the strengths and impulses of the present. In a manner that the past gives every element that can be used as an ideal example that then gets incorporated into the present. Thereby also the contemporary impulse can comfortably stretch and raise its elements into cultural value, in as useful a manner as the contemporary psychic necessities require" (Athanassopoulos, 1971).

In order to meet the goals set, the following information derived from primary and secondary sources should be organized in "Layers".

- a The contents of the archive located at FRT
- b. Other available secondary resources, or sources that composers provided about their work.
- c. Oral History project that aimed to the initiation of a dialogue with Greek composers, in order to present their viewpoints, choices and stances.

#### 5. METHODOLOGY

All collected data was put into three main XLS tables and then has been entered in the specially constructed MySQL database. Some fields that allow linking with other Archives, such as: recordings, digitized items, ephemera (programs, posters), broadcasts etc, have been created [BARCODE ITEM, SCAN CODE, POSITION, REEL ID, POSTER ID, PROGRAMME ID] These Linked Data that could contribute to the revealing of aspects of the music culture as well as Greece's cultural history in general.

- 1) Archive content: Table "Compositions"
- 2) Biographical data of the composers taken from printed and electronic primary and secondary sources: Table of "Biographical Data\_ Composers"
- 3) "Composer's Self-Presentation": Table of Views and Stances/Attitudes/Positions of the composers, information given to me by the composers for the purpose of this work.

These tables were made in order to make easier horizontal (by composer or composition) as well as vertical (by theme or question) reading. The MySql database enabled advanced search. The website constructed has been based on the same database.

The reasons for starting with MS-XL data sheets

The exact content of the central source of information (Archive of Contemporary Music Compositions hosted at the National Radio Television of Greece) was not known from the beginning.

XL datasheets offer flexibility in adding new columns for the inclusion of new pieces of information, considered as important.

On the process, a strong need for a rich layer comprised of secondary data arose.

The cataloguing restarted four times for at least the first 350 entries, because new elements, considered as important, have been emerging.



#### HeJMEC Vol. 8 |

XL datasheets facilitate the creation of Standardized Columns in addition to the non-standardized more informative ones.

Finally, the datasheets offered the opportunity to avoid being restricted to either a source oriented or method-oriented database from the beginning but use a mixture of both in the end. Therefore, some decisions on:

- -How the information the information would be turned into data
- -The creation of the hierarchical system for grouping information together and the structure of the tables inserted into the database, in order to achieve the formation of effective queries, more flexibility and accuracy had been taken in the end.

### 6. STRUCTURE OF THE DATABASE SOFTWARE: MYSOL

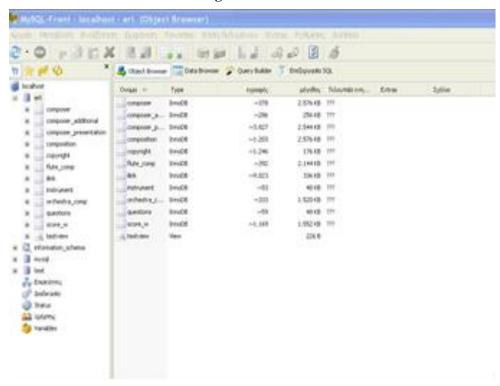


Figure 5: Tables

Figure 6: List of items on composer's table

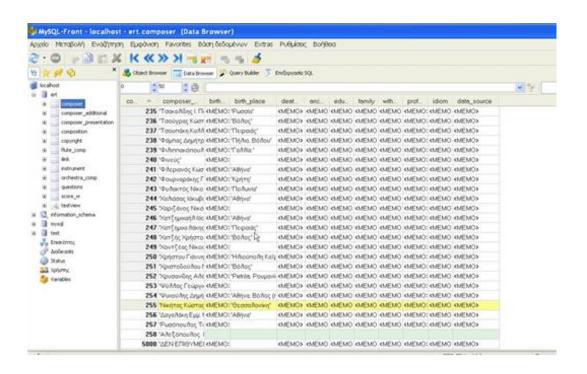
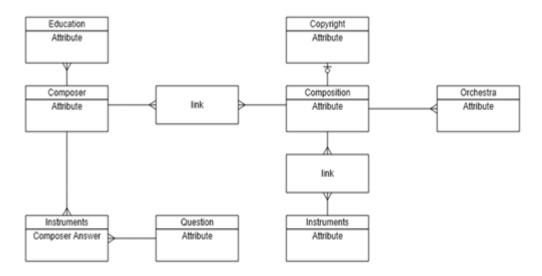


Figure 7: Architecture of the database



The material has been organized in the tables shown above with the relationships shown below in a way, facilitating advanced search. The information revealed could be organized in 7 basic categories: Object, property indications, Serial Numbers (linking the fields), Genre level one, Genre level two, Documentation from the Archive, Documentation from other secondary sources-Oral History Project.

CONDUCTOR SCORE

SAMITO

CONDUCTOR SCORE

SAMITO

SAMI

Figure 8: Linked Data

# Queries

Pre-formatted queries have been created, covering a great range of research interests, which can be tailored to the needs of the user.

Figure 9: Stimulation of one query and its outcome Query returning compositions between two dates

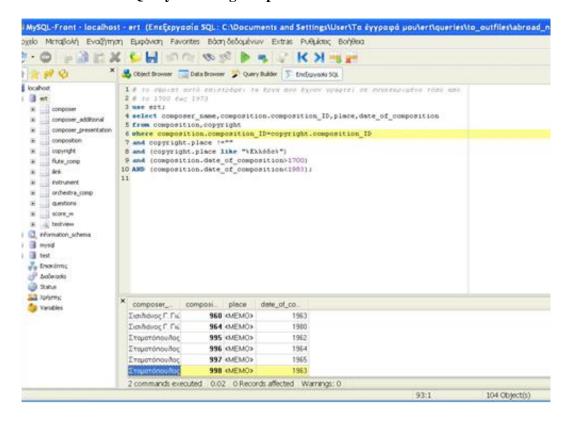


Figure 10: Query returning the instruments participating in a composition

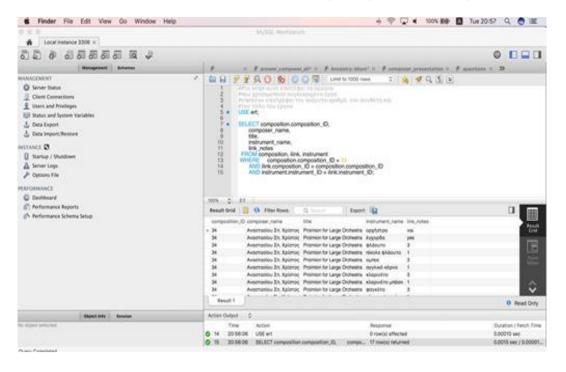
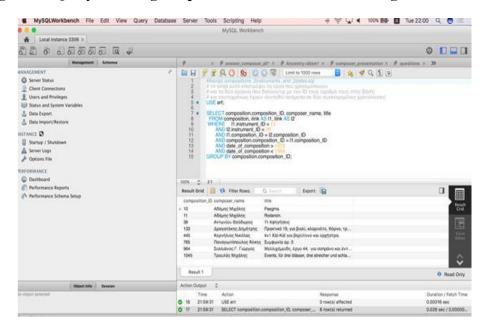


Figure 11: Query returning compositions between two dates using two instruments



# Web-platform

Final step of the project was the construction of a web-platform open to controlled feedback which had as starting point, the MySQL data base designed to contain all fore-mentioned Linked Data. It is believed that this can contribute to the re-definition of future artistic relationships, directions, or choices of the composers, musicians, conductors and their audiences adding an open dimension of time to the database. The aim of this wider project, that started with Greek Contemporary Classical Music, is to answer to many questions revealing trends in Western classical music culture. A very helpful application on the website is that it is used as a front-end by the users in order to reach the base's content. Feed-back can be submitted by the user and the administrator decides whether it will be integrated in the base.

Τροβολή στη μελέτη και έρευνα της λόγιας μουσικής στην Ελλάδα του 20ού αιώνα

Τροβολή στη μελέτη και έρευνα της λόγιας μουσικής στην Ελλάδα του 20ού αιώνα

Τροβολή στη μελέτη και έρευνα της λόγιας μουσικής στην Ελλάδα στου 20ού αιώνα

Τροβολή Επεξεργοθε Δειμέρος εμφάνος:

Αρχικές Απαλλάλα του 20ού αιώνα

Τροβολή Επεξεργοθε Δειμέρος εμφάνος:

Αρχικές ΠΑΠΑΔΑΚΙ
ΙΥΜΒΟΑΗ ΤΗ ΜΕΛΕΤΗ ΚΑΙ ΕΡΕΥΝΑ ΤΗΣΙ
ΑΝΤΙΑΙ ΚΟΥΙΚΗΣ
ΑΝΤΙΑΙ ΚΟΥΙΚΗΣ
ΤΗΝ ΕΛΛΑΔΑ ΤΟΥ 20οΥ ΑΙΟΝΑ

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Figure 12: Web-platform



Figure 13: Advanced Query. Compositions (score available) between 1889-1941, by composers who studied in France

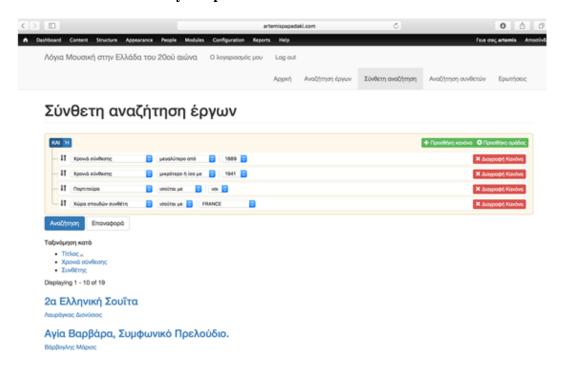


Figure 14: Advanced Query return 1

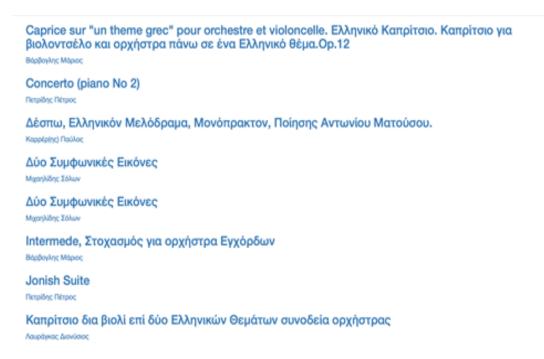
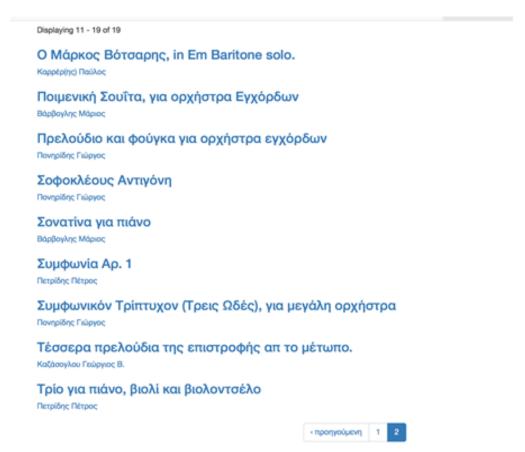


Figure 15: Advanced Query return 2



#### **Conclusions**

These principles of continuity, flow and flexibility stretched by the communication models of Dance and Hooper-Greenhill, as well as the principles of attraction, repulsion and fermentation that can find application in the creation of public opinion, have been applied in order to create a tool, able to link data sources in a flexible and productive way, very useful for any researcher in the digital era. This tool can be used in order to reveal aspects of the Contemporary Classical Music landscape, not only in Greece (which was the starting point), but in the world. These aspects comprise, besides historical, personal data for each participant in the particular social group (data from his/her life and choices, as well as an image of the works of each one), a comprehensive picture of the authors' tendencies, description and assessment of the socioeconomic conditions, the political-cultural choices, and the stance/attitude of public. Research can be customized and tailored according to the researcher's interests. Thus, the wider project and its concept can contribute to research projects on musicology, history of arts, sociology or other disciplines, pointing out the beauty of continuity among disciplines.



Figure 16: Continuous Flow – Dynamic - Flexibility - Beauty

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#### HeJMEC Vol. 8 |

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#### ARTEMIS PAPADAKI

#### Bellerbys College

Artemis Papadaki pursued studies and career in Biology (BSC), Music (flute/piano diplomas), Musicology (PhD) and Cultural Management (MSc). The core of her research interests is an interdisciplinary approach and synthesis among different disciplines with starting point the art and science of communication that straddles science and art subjects and applies to both. She has been permanent member (piccolo-flute player) of the Contemporary Music Orchestra of the Hellenic National Radio/Television (ERT) and freelance member of the National Opera of Greece. As musical consultant of ERT she organized and presented the archive of Contemporary Music and contributed to the creation of the software supporting the ERT music-archive. She been Artistic Director of the Rethymnon Renaissance Festival and she has worked on various Ecology projects in collaboration with the Athens Kapodistrian University and the Ministries of Agriculture and Environment.