

DPEX Final Report 30 June 2008

Award holder

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1. Introduction

This report details the DPEX project that took place at Glasgow between the 1st of May and the 30th of June 2008, carried out at HATII (Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute) by Giuseppina Vullo.

The exchange has been promoted by DigitalPreservationEurope, a council supported by the EU which aims to improve coordination, cooperation and consistency in current digital preservation and curation activities and to secure the longevity of digital assets and heritage.

2. Institutional context

The Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute (HATII) was formed in 1997 to bring together Glasgow University's expertise in Information Communication and Technology (ICT) in the arts and humanities and cultural heritage sector. HATII's mission is to:

- conduct innovative research into the use of information and communication technology (ICT) within the humanities, archives, libraries, and museums
- lead learning and teaching in Arts and Media Informatics, often referred to as Humanities Computing
- build and support a user community adept at the creation and use of online resources
- assist in the creation and preservation of electronic resources and to encourage their integration into teaching and research

These activities are led by three teams: Research and Teaching Group, The Resource Development Team, and the Arts Technical Support Group¹. Many of HATII's research larger projects are focused on issues surrounding long term access to digital information; these include DigitalPreservationEurope, PLANETS, CASPAR, the Digital Curation Centre and Interpares.

¹ HATII, University of Glasgow, <<http://www.hatii.arts.gla.ac.uk/hatiihist.html>>.

3. HATII team

The HATII team with whom I have worked was composed by four people. Prof. Seamus Ross, director of the HATII; Joy Davidson, Research Projects Co-ordinator and HATII DCC Manager; Perla Innocenti, HATII Preservation Researcher (SHAMAN and DPE); Andrew McHugh, DCC Research Fellow.

4. Activities and results of the exchange

This part is dedicated to a detailed description of my weekly activities at HATII as a DPEX fellow.

The first week was important to take contact with the new environment and to meet the HATII team, in order to focus the aim of the exchange and choose the study cases. Moreover, HATII invited me to attend the SHAMAN WP1 meetings and Phd presentations.

Several meetings took place with Seamus Ross, Joy Davidson, Perla Innocenti and Andrew McHugh. A project proposal and work plan were the results of these discussions, under the common agreement that a comparison between different assessment methodologies could be the heart of my DPEX activity.

The two different assessment methodologies selected were DRAMBORA and InterPARES 3.

Developed jointly by the [Digital Curation Centre \(DCC\)](#) and [DigitalPreservationEurope \(DPE\)](#), the Digital Repository Audit Method Based on Risk Assessment (DRAMBORA) presents a methodology for self-assessment, encouraging organisations to establish a comprehensive self-awareness of their objectives, activities and assets before identifying, assessing and managing the risks implicit within their organisation².

InterPARES 3 is an international collaborative endeavour, composed of several national and multinational teams. The Direction of the entire project is funded by Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council's Community-University Research Alliances grant³.

A first selection of interesting projects within the University of Glasgow included: The Glasgow Story⁴; French Emblems in Glasgow⁵; Enlighten⁶; The Correspondence of James McNeill Whistler (GUW)⁷.

The selected cases were:

- [Enlighten](#). The University of Glasgow Institutional Repository Service
Enlighten is the University of Glasgow's institutional repository service and includes published material by members of the University of Glasgow, including peer-reviewed journal articles, published conference papers, books and book chapters.

This project was chosen in order to analyze how to evaluate an active digital repository that offers born-digital research outputs, bibliographical references and full texts. The digital preservation issues are evident as there's no analogue form of these records.

- [The Correspondence of James McNeill Whistler \(GUW\)](#). On-line Edition, University of Glasgow 2003-2007. Currently available: 1855-1903

Director: Professor Nigel Thorp. Edited by Margaret F. MacDonald, Patricia de Montfort and Nigel Thorp; including *The Correspondence of Anna McNeill Whistler, 1855-1880*, edited by Georgia Toutziari. *The Correspondence of James McNeill Whistler*.

² DRAMBORA, <<http://www.repositoryaudit.eu/about/>>.

³ InterPARES 3, <http://www.interpares.org/ip3/ip3_index.cfm>.

⁴ The Glasgow Story, <<http://www.theglasgowstory.com/index.php>>.

⁵ French Emblems in Glasgow, <<http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/french/>>.

⁶ Enlighten, <<http://www.lib.gla.ac.uk/enlighten/>>.

⁷ The correspondence of James McNeill Whistler, <<http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence/index.htm>>.

Based on records of over 13,000 letters, the on-line centenary edition makes available a total of some 10,000 letters covering the period 1855-1903. The edition includes all the letters written by Whistler and all the letters written to him; letters mentioning Whistler are also included on a selective basis.

This project was chosen in order to analyze how to assess a digital repository that is behind a digital archive, considering the electronic edition as a whole primary historical source, made up of original structures and digitised materials, which involves activities as hypertext editing, archival rules, use of images, etc., in order to understand if / how the historical and the scientific value of this source is going to be guaranteed in the long-term.

A work plan was prepared during the second week to synthesize the aim of DPEX and the activities to carry out.

Work plan – Activities overview – May 9th 2008

The main activities will be the same for both case studies. It will be necessary to:

- Analyze the DRAMBORA audits methodology
- Analyze the applicability of [InterPARES 3 methodology](#), using their questions and templates
- Analyze the study case on the Web
- Look at the documentation available on the Web
- Identify / Select the contacts
- Take contact with the people involved, to have some more documentation and fix the appointments
- Collect the outputs
- Analyze / Compare the outputs
- Conclusions

The third week was focused on a preliminary analysis of both of the case studies. All the documentation available on the Web was collected and a draft on the Websites features was prepared. The draft was helpful to highlight the strengths and some incoherencies within the content presentation and the search outputs.

Besides the draft, the third week was dedicated to take contact with the people involved in Enlighten and GUW.

There was a meeting with Graeme Cannon, GUW system developer, in order to have some technical documentation and a first look at the database in which GUW data set is stored; at the same time a first general email was sent to GUW editors to have some editorial documentation and to fix a date for the audit.

A meeting took place also with Susan Ashworth, from the Glasgow University Library, to fix the audit's date for Enlighten (June 2nd-3rd).

The fourth week was spent on the pre-audits operations, managing a regular contact with Enlighten's staff, in particular with Susan Ashworth and Morag Greig, Enlighten Advocacy Manager, who provided some relevant documents. A detailed program for the audit was proposed to them and DRAMBORA Interactive⁸ was downloaded, starting to learn how to use it.

The same kind of activities was carried out for GUW and the main contact became Prof. Margaret MacDonald, who agreed and collaborated to prepare the audit, which was fixed for June 10th. A first access to the InterPARES Project website researcher area was provided and some days were spent in studying the methodology and looking at the case studies.

The fifth week was dedicated to Enlighten, reading all the pre-audit documentation and highlighting some lack of information on the various aspects, preparing a file with the DRAMBORA template and filling it with the information on Enlighten. All the information was transferred on a new DRAMBORA account, according to the different audit sections, in order to fix the information and involve the library staff in completing and updating it.

⁸ DRAMBORA Interactive, <<http://www.repositoryaudit.eu/download/>>.

The sixth week was almost all dedicated to Enlighten, as it started with the audit. It took place for two days at Glasgow University Library, thanks to the assistance of Perla Innocenti. It was a very useful and challenging experience, and together with the librarians it was possible to analyze and discuss almost all the aspect of the repository, following the DRAMBORA assessment schema. We prepared the risk register and the library staff agreed about the main risks of their repository. A very interesting part of filling the risk register was the correlation between the risks.

The seventh week was spent completing the online DRAMBORA risk register and the online access details were sent to the library staff.

The InterPARES 3 assessment methodology was applied on Enlighten and the filled questionnaires were sent to Susan Ashworth. During the same days I started a report on G UW to prepare the second audit.

During the eight week a first part of G UW assessment took place with Graeme Cannon and the second part was postponed by Prof. Margaret MacDonald to June 23rd. Andrew McHugh supported me during the conversation with Graeme Cannon, leading the audit and preparing a document to synthesize the main issues that were discussed. A document was prepared to have a list of questions for Prof. Margaret MacDonald and in the same days it was possible to receive a feedback on InterPARES 3 from Morag Greig.

The second part of G UW audit took place on June 23rd, at the beginning of the last week. It was possible to meet Prof. Margaret MacDonald and lead the audit, thanks to the assistance of Andrew McHugh and to the first audit experience. The DRAMBORA risk register was completed and the InterPARES 3 questionnaire was filled.

5. *Conclusions and practical information on the exchange*

DPEX has been a challenging and learning experience. Two very different digital repositories have been analyzed and two dissimilar and internationally recognized assessment methodologies have been applied. It has been a huge opportunity to learn, experience and work in permanent contact with researchers and professionals involved in digital preservation.

The hosting institution had an essential role in giving the possibility to access to essential information and to be received by important institutions; HATII team shared generously its research results and offered its time to facilitate and support the exchange.

From a more general point of view, HATII gave all its support for this DPEX in a professional, social and logistic sense.

**Giuseppina Vullo graduated with highest marks in Library Science in 2002 with a thesis on Niccolò Puccini's private library, after a traineeship at Forteguerriana Library in Pistoia.*

In 2003 she moved to Florence for an annual stage at the EUI Library and continued her work experiences for Reti Medievali and at the University of Florence Social Sciences Library. In 2005 she received with highest marks her Master degree in Multimedia Documentation Management at the Tuscia University of Viterbo.

After a traineeship at CERN Library, she currently works at the USI Library in Lugano. Since the beginning of 2006 she is enrolled as a Ph.D. student in Bibliographic Sciences at the University of Udine under Prof. Giovanni Solimine's supervision. She's web editor of «Bollettino AIB», the Italian Libraries Association quarterly and member of the AIB National Commission on the Early Printed Book and Special Collections.

She has been a DPEX fellow at HATII, University of Glasgow, in May-June 2008.