

Concurring Curation for a Poetic GLAM¹

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Are galleries, libraries, archives and museums (GLAM) concurring? If we follow the OED definitions of concurrent: are GLAM “running together, going on side by side, harmonious, acting in conjunction; co-operating; contributing to the same effect”? Are they running “as parallel lines” or are they “meeting in or tending to the same point”?

Galleries, libraries, archives and museums – each of these four is a catch-all covering a great diversity: collecting and non-collecting art galleries, commercial galleries, community galleries, artist-run cooperative galleries; national libraries, university libraries, with their special collections, public libraries, special libraries; government archives, corporate archives, religious archives; national museums, history museums, children’s museums, ecomuseums, science museums, museums of ethnology...

Reflecting on integrative practice between galleries, libraries, archives and museums involves thinking about the characteristics, the commonalities, the differences and distinctions, the convergences and divergences between at least four constituents: GLAM materials, GLAM users, GLAM professionals, and GLAM institutions. In the abundant literature the order is mostly reversed, starting with GLAM as institutions. However, I would like to present some reflections on: what is used, by whom and why, curated and managed by whom, and in what institutional setting?

They say that where you stand on an issue depends a lot on where you sit.² I am a user of libraries and archives, a regular visitor of museums, and a collector of modern art. But professionally, I am an archivist, engaged in theory, scholarship, methodology and practice of archivistics. I study the characteristics of records and archives in their social and cultural contexts and how they are created, used, selected and transferred through time. In my field, archives (or records) mean ‘information created, received, and maintained as evidence and/or as an asset by an organization or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business or for its purposes, regardless of medium, form or format.’³

Let me present such a record. 370 years ago Abel Tasman sailed

from the shore of what he had named Staten Land and what since 1644 became to be known as Nova Zelandia, New Zealand.⁴ The journal of his expedition contains the first representation in text and images of the west coast of this country, and of the Māori people. There are at least two versions of the journal preserved: one in the Mitchell Library in the State Library of New South Wales, another in the National Archives of the Netherlands in The Hague. The latter, signed by Tasman himself, contains numerous charts, outlines of the coasts and illustrations, most of which are missing from the other copy. That one, the so-called Huydecoper copy in Sydney, on the other hand, has many more details in latitude and longitude calculations. Moreover, it contains the first accurate mapping of the entrance of Cook Strait. That map (made by Tasman's pilot-major François Visscher) should – according to an early 20th century Dutch Tasman scholar – “not be put away in some collection or archive, but be on continuous display for everyone in the assembly hall of the New Zealand parliament.”⁵ This Huydecoper copy was offered in 1925 to the Turnbull Library; the seller asked £600 to £800. Apparently the Turnbull was not interested, because the next year the journal was bought by the Mitchell Library for £740 (in today's money £38,000 = NZ\$ 76,664).⁶

A third copy (“a very faulty one”) of the Tasman journal was acquired in the 18th century by Joseph Banks, one of Cook's captains, who had it translated into English. By that time Tasman's journal had become public knowledge since in 1674 a summary of the journal was published in Amsterdam.⁸ An English translation appeared in 1682, was reprinted in 1694, and was used by James Cook. In 1722 a French translation was published. In the 19th and 20th centuries a number of editions, translations and adaptations of the Tasman journal were published, most recently an adaptation and translation into modern Dutch, published in 2006 by the Dutch National Archives. A fictionalized version was published in 2012 by the National Library of Australia:⁹ its intended readership is mainly school children: for them and for their teachers the National Library provides on its website extensive reading notes and other material.

In the special collections department of the State Library in Sydney one can consult the manuscript journal. In The Hague that would be difficult, because there the journal is on display in a glass case in the exhibition area where the National Archives and their neighbour, the National Library, exhibit their treasures. Here, the Tasman journal – or rather the page with the illustration of Māori in their canoes in Murderers Bay, has been musealized which means that the status of the object has

changed through the change of context and the process of selection and display.¹⁰ However, one can consult the digital copy of the journal on the website of the National Archives, accompanied by a transcription provided through crowd-sourcing by a researcher.¹¹ The Sydney copy of the journal has been digitized too, and is available on the website of the State Library, without transcription or translation.¹² An English translation and a facsimile of the Dutch original were published in 1898 by Heeres – the book is available in five different libraries in Australia and in 9 libraries in New Zealand.¹³ A much better English translation of the part relating to New Zealand was published in 1942 to commemorate the tercentennial in New Zealand.¹⁴ The former English translation has been digitized for Gutenberg Australia and put on the web.¹⁵ Interestingly, none of these websites – The Hague, Sydney, Gutenberg – has a link to any of the others. By the way, New Zealanders can access the journal also at their National Library, which has microfilms and hard copies of various editions and translations of Tasman's journal. The important painting of Māori meeting the Dutch in Murderers' Bay (now Golden Bay) is at the heart of the project "View on Golden Bay" inviting artists, writers and researchers to remediate and 'reconstruct' this iconic image of Aotearoa from various perspectives.¹⁶

So, the Tasman journal of 1642-1643 is accessible in a library in Sydney, as a museum exhibit in The Hague, both remediated in digital form on the library's and the Dutch archives' websites, on microfilm and in printed editions available in various libraries. Do the differences between these "concept spaces" make a difference for the meaning of the journal?

While I was thinking about this question, I reread what I have written recently in the journal *Archival Science* about the meanings of archives: "Archival documents don't speak of their own accord, but of course they have something to tell, they have a meaning."¹⁷ Isn't that equally true for books, photographs, paintings and museum objects?¹⁸ Let me continue paraphrasing from that article, replacing "record" by object or artefact. The record and the museum object are a repository of meanings,¹⁹ some may be read in the record or object or inferred from the intertextuality that connects it to other documents and objects, and others have to be deducted from the context of its creation and use.²⁰ Another quote "Archivists" (and, may I add, librarians, museum curators and most other people) "take the meaning of an artefact for granted: it was created intentionally to hold meaning." However, the meaning of a record or of any other cultural artefact may be understood

in two different ways: the meaning *of* the object and the meaning *for* someone or *for* an occasion. The first views “the” meaning of an artefact in objectivist terms as the Idea (in the Platonic sense) of that artefact, which can be inferred from the object by whoever approaches it. The latter recognizes in subjectivist terms “that information resources do not ‘have’ meanings, but that different meanings are assigned to the same resource by different people at different times, and that ‘the’ conventional meaning of a given resource is a matter of intersubjective consensus.”²¹ Meaning is something made, not found.²² Any researcher, viewer, or user by assigning a meaning to an object, can find uses (or, vice versa, finding a use by assigning a meaning) that no creator, collector, archivist or curator ever imagined. The object is thus standing-in for the meanings people find in it.

Of course, an archival document, a book, a museum object, a painting has an authorial meaning given by the author, the sculptor, the painter. Let’s take two examples from the Tasman journal.

The journal relates that, after the first sighting of Māori, the guns on the upperdeck were “affgeblasen ende weder opgereijt.” What did the author mean? Heeres (1898) and nearly all his followers have translated this as “cleaned the guns ... and placed them again.”²³ However, Dutch “afblazen” of a cannon means: cleaning the cannon by firing a shot with loose gunpowder. Andrew Sharp’s “blown off the guns” (1968) is much closer to the Dutch. The literal meaning being established, it is up to the reader to infer what the statement meant and what it means, leading to, for example, the conclusion that the Māori indeed had cause to be alarmed by the firing from Tasman’s ships which might explain their behaviour the next day.²⁴

About the Māori the Tasman journal relates “they wore black hair right upon the top of their heads, tied fast in the manner and fashion of the Japanese at the back of their heads, but somewhat longer and thicker and surmounted by a large, thick white feather.” To uncover the writer’s meaning one has to understand what a 17th century Dutchman meant by “the manner and fashion of the Japanese”. Such exegesis is provided by the intertextuality between the journal and other texts, for example images of Japanese men in the 17th century. It is intriguing that the two versions of the picture of Māori in Golden Bay made for the Tasman journal show a slightly different hair dress, one with the white feathers the other – probably the oldest picture²⁵ – without, but we recognize the Māori topknot.²⁶ The hair is indeed longer and thicker than the Japanese who had a large part of their head clean shaven with

only a bundle of hair at the back. The ship's surgeon's account mentions that the Maori had a square plate round the neck (it might have been a hei-tiki) and a long white stripe across the chest – this is not pictured or mentioned in either of the copies of the journal.²⁷ We can only guess why Tasman's men left some details out and included others.

Finding meaning in archival documents, books, photographs, paintings and museum objects looks like mere information retrieval and the acquisition of knowledge, thus a cognitive act. Equally important, however, are what psychologists call the affective and conative modes of meaning construction. These modes were central in the research by psychologist Csikszentmihalyi and sociologist Rochberg-Halton who examined how and why Americans value objects in their home.²⁸ In their classic book "The Meaning of Things" they show how people in dealing with objects – furniture, art, photos, books, musical instruments, scrap books, family trees, papers, diaries – define who they are, or have been or want to be. In the affective mode, someone pays attention to an object and selects it from its environment. Thereby, so to say, psychic energy is liberated from the object. Such attention and affection for an object can bring someone in a state of flow: (s)he is completely taken up dealing with the object, losing any idea of time and finding great satisfaction in interacting with the object. This happens for instance when reading a book, browsing a photo album, rereading a diary or old letters, viewing a painting, connecting with an object.

The conative mode of constructing meaning refers to the outcome of the cognitive information retrieval and the affective attention: the intentions, the purpose, the goal which the user or viewer sees reflected in the meaning of the object. The outcome of, for example, looking at old family photos and heirlooms may be the confirmation and reinforcement of the family relations and the continuity through the generations.

Cognitive, conative and affective construction of meaning happen in what museologists Sheldon Annis and Gaynor Kavanagh call the cognitive, pragmatic and dream spaces.²⁹ Understanding this trilogy may help archivists, librarians, and curators in understanding and serving their clients better. In seeking meaning in records and objects, users are in different mental stages requiring different types of intervention and mediation. Some users will stay in cognitive mode; others may approach the artefact primarily with affection or with a particular motivation. Distinguishing (but not always separating) cognition, emotion and motivation may also help professionals when they set up websites and exhibitions and in other outreach activities. Also when they are making

descriptions of their holdings they should be equally “hospitable” to emotion and motivation as they normally are to cognition.³⁰ Other basic archival functions may benefit too. For example, some of the all too frequent misunderstanding between archivists and users about appraisal might be traced back to not understanding the different modes of meaning construction.

The author or creator has meant something when he or she wrote the document, sculpted the object, painted the painting. But by the very act of authoring they have relinquished their controlling presence, they cannot control what readers and viewers make out of the artefact. The recipient assigns a meaning while viewing and reading the artefact, in a particular context, time and space. Ann Rigney, in writing about the “dynamic turn” in memory studies argues

Meaning as such is never fixed once and for all, but is something that happens in the way events, texts, and other cultural products are appropriated (over and over again, always with a difference).³¹

We cannot read the Tasman journal as it was created in 1642-1643 because the authorial meaning has been overgrown by all the subsequent interactions, interventions, interrogations, translations, interpretations, and appropriations.³² Each of these activations of the object has added to its ever expanding semantic genealogy.

Each activation is an instantiation of meaning-making and finding meaning. Those meanings help the user, reader or viewer in structuring and restructuring the relationship between the self and the world and thereby in the formation of his or her identity.³³ But this presupposes that earlier activations of the artefact (what I have called its tacit narratives, what Heather MacNeil calls archivalterity)³⁴ are knowable, retrievable, and transparent. Normally when we view a painting or a museum object, only little of its genealogy is revealed by the label or caption or by the catalogue. Furthermore, the way the artefact is mediated, constrains the meaning making in cognitive, affective and conative modes. Mediation involves definition, selection, organisation, interpretation, representation and presentation.³⁵ The digital surrogates of the Tasman journal and the journal exhibited in a glass case will yield minimal affection, quite different from browsing the paper original. That is not to exclude the possibility of an affective engagement with the digital object “with feelings of emotional satisfaction comparable to those reported by users of analogue originals.”³⁶ However, the conative

mode of constructing meaning from the digital object will be restricted, or at least be different. Likewise the cognitive information retrieval from the artefact is affected by its mediation. The catalogue entry for the Tasman journal in the State Library in Sydney is very detailed, providing much contextual information which may assist the reader in his or her use of the journal in any of its versions.³⁷ However, for a transcription or a translation of the Dutch text one has to resort to other resources, for example the 1898 edition by Heeres of which there are three copies in the State Library. The entry for the original journal refers to that edition, but not the other way round: the description of the Heeres book does not mention the availability of the digital copies on the library's website and on Gutenberg Australia.

The journal's transcription is on the website of the National Archives of the Netherlands, but only accessible if one knows Dutch, not only because of the language of the journal, but also because the English version of the website does not yield a hit for Tasman! Neither provides the archives' website any contextual information relating to the journal. Even when one finds the way through the inventories to the item level, the description of one line merely gives the title and the dates of the journal, accompanied by a warning that the document is not available in the search room because it is exhibited.³⁸ There is not even a link to the digital copy elsewhere on the same website! The meagre description is according to Dutch archival standards. Normally, however, one would see the description embedded in the recordkeeping context, as part of a file, a series, and an archival fonds. Because the Tasman journal, acquired by the National Archives in 1867, seems to be not one of the six originals that were sent from Batavia to the Amsterdam VOC office in December 1643, it is considered by some archivists not to be part of the VOC archives.³⁹ The way it is presented on the website of the National Archives – in stark contrast with the extensive description by the State Library of NSW – reveals a weakness in the way archivists deal (or used to deal?) with their collections, often with a blind spot for what the user would want or would like to know. Archival methods (acquisition, description, and appraisal) traditionally focused on supply, rather than on demand. This has often been justified with the argument that an archival document may interest a variety of users, and that it is impossible to know what customers want now, and what others may want differently tomorrow. Other professions also have their own blind spots. Librarians still focus on the published word, distinguishing between book and non-book materials. The curator in a gallery or museum is a story teller, not

trusting the visitor's ability to draw meaning from the exhibit without the curator's conscious intervention.⁴⁰ Of course, these are stereotypes, but they serve here to acknowledge differences in professional values which have led to differences in cataloguing practices, metadata standards, resource discovery, and access procedures, as we have seen with the Tasman journal. Quite often, according to Joanna Sassoon, debates about GLAM convergence focus on what materials the institutions hold and what professionals do, rather than how they think.⁴¹ Before one can successfully converge practices at a collection level, one has to strive to understand what values underpin professionals' thinking. Convergence is not just a matter of technical standardization – which in itself is quite difficult⁴² –, because the differing professional practices are symbolic for different professional identities and cultures.⁴³

At the RLG Members Forum in 2005, Michael Fox said: "It is my observation that archivists, librarians, and museum curators as professional groups have significantly different beliefs as to how research should be (sic) supported and that these attitudes and perspectives impact the potential for and nature of cooperative work. Understanding those differences seems to me to be a prerequisite for creating programs built on collaboration and an integration of our respective worlds."⁴⁴

Indeed, "Awareness of differences in values and practices can help library, archives, and museum professionals understand one another better and collaborate more effectively over issues and initiatives of mutual concern."⁴⁵ But we should aim higher: beyond awareness of differences, GLAM professionals should work towards reconciling and harmonizing policies and practices, because users, visitors, clients, patrons will increasingly question GLAM's differing professional identities and cultures, as Robert Martin has argued:

The real challenge emerges when users go in search of the actual or authentic document (and the remarkable thing is that they quite often do), and they manage to locate the original in one of our collections. These new users are often mystified and feel defeated if they find that these resources are scattered across a wide range of agencies and institutions, each of which has its own peculiar rules and procedures, each with cultures and systems that may differ dramatically – all of which inhibits access. When they discover that the resources they found so accessible and easily manipulated in the digital context are so diffuse and difficult to approach in the real world, they often become frustrated. They may not understand—and come to question the value of – our differing professional identities and cultures.⁴⁶

And apart from questioning the value of different professional cultures, users will quit: "If It Is Too Inconvenient, I'm Not Going After It."⁴⁷

Harmonization of practices was the basis of the merger of the National Library and the National Archives of Québec (Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec).⁴⁸ Harmonization, it was felt, guarantees respect for the specificities of the disciplines, in this case of library science and archival science. In Québec harmonization was preferred over integration – the strategy used by the merged Library and Archives Canada, which basically meant the assimilation of disciplines: librarians would also be archivists and vice versa, possibly even leading to creating a new discipline. In the 70s and 80s UNESCO promoted harmonization of the training of librarians, archivists and other information professionals. "Broadly, the approach was to provide a separate training channel for each of the three professions, but to harmonize particular elements (for example, management studies or information training) wherever possible."⁴⁹ These early efforts in harmonizing professional training did not have much success globally. However, later developments in several countries have demonstrated the feasibility of training information professionals (in some schools: cultural heritage professionals) in a core curriculum combined with specialisations for libraries, archives etc.⁵⁰

Who are the GLAM professionals? A librarian is a librarian—a reference librarian, a systems librarian, or a cataloguer—whether he or she works for a university, an independent research library, a corporate or a public library, or a school.⁵¹ The same can be said of archivists. We share similar training, skills, and tasks no matter where we work. But, according to Deborah Whyte, there is no single professional title than encompasses everyone working in the museum, "curators, collections managers, conservators, registrars, art handlers, administrators, librarians, and archivists—all of whom have different interests, educational backgrounds, and job skills."⁵² If I were to ask you: what do you do for a living? Most if not all archivists and librarians would answer: I am an archivist, I am a librarian, while those working in a museum would say: I am an art historian, or, I work in the XYZ museum. This difference in professional ethos is something to take serious care of when embarking on collaboration projects in GLAM partnerships. The more so, because professional ethos entails professional ethics. There are several issues in ethics relevant to all GLAM professionals, for example issues related to conflicts of interest, political intrusion, equality of patrons, integrity in acquiring artefacts, commercialism, etc. But in each

of the GLAM sectors there are sector-specific ethical challenges.⁵³ All professionals are engaged in the protection of privacy and of cultural rights, but librarians and archivists have an extra duty to protect the privacy of users, while archivists moreover have to protect the interests of the record subjects: prisoners, asylum seekers, adopted children, patients, clients and all other people whose data have been recorded in the files which the archivist has to manage.

Thus, GLAM professionals are united in their differences. One should neither exaggerate nor downplay the differences. Gillian Oliver said at the Seventh International Conference on Conceptions of Library and Information Science, London 21-24 June, 2010 “Developing and fostering awareness of difference in GLAM domains provides an important platform from which to build similarities.”⁵⁴

This is a major challenge for any endeavour involving collaboration between GLAM. What is collaboration? In an OCLC report of 2008 Zorich, Waibel and Erway⁵⁵ distinguish 5 modes in a collaboration continuum: contact, cooperation, coordination, collaboration, and finally convergence.⁵⁶ One wonders if one should perhaps add competition,

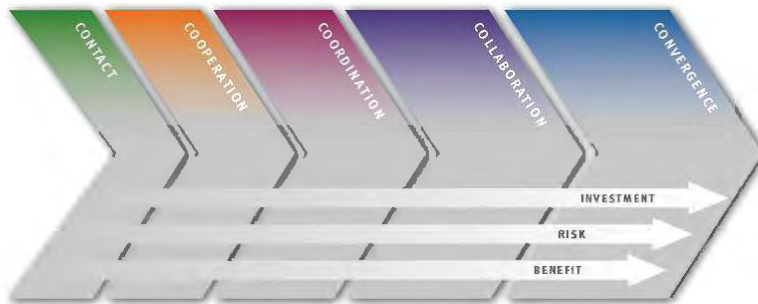


Figure 1: Collaboration continuum presented by Zorich, Waibel and Erway (2008).

healthy competition as a condition for collaboration.

Collaboration moves beyond agreements. It often starts with the question: “What can we do together?” It is a “process of shared creation” of “something that wasn’t there before.” That “something” is not just a new idea, but a transformation among the collaborating institutions. Collaboration can, according to the OCLC report, mature to the level of infrastructure and become, like our water or transportation networks, a critical system that we rely upon without considering the collaborative efforts and compromises that made it possible. That is real convergence

as defined by Dr. Johnson “To tend to one point from different places”. Convergency is what – not only in business – is called a merger: “the combination or amalgamation of a commercial company, institution, etc., with another, or the consolidation of two or more companies, etc., into one.”(OED). Such a merger in the GLAM domain is found in Hobart, Leeuwarden, Montréal, and Ottawa (New Zealand examples will follow).⁵⁷ Constructions which leave the converging institutions largely independent from each other but subject to a common executive (as for example the national libraries and archives of New Zealand and Singapore) resemble more a holding company than a merger.

Recently, five Canadian researchers Wendy Duff, Jennifer Carter, Joan Cherry, Heather MacNeil, and Lynne Howarth published an in-depth study *From coexistence to convergence: studying partnerships and collaboration among libraries, archives and museums*.⁵⁸ The study examines initiatives involving different forms of collaboration and convergence, and different stages of the process in two institutions in Canada and three in New Zealand: the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montréal, the Taylor Family Digital Library at the University of Calgary, the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, the National Library of New Zealand, Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa, and Archives New Zealand, Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga. The researchers found that the greatest challenges for professionals working in institutions undergoing convergence or collaboration are caused by the differences in professional cultures, values, and identities. They also found that the success of convergence projects seems to require that one finds the right balance between respecting professional expertise and merging systems. Collaboration and convergence, according to Duff and her colleagues, can be hampered or even fail because of not adequately recognizing and respecting the expertise of a particular discipline; of not sharing a common understanding of different work practices, processes and outputs; and of the difficulty of merging or reconciling variant standards.

I would like to add another factor contributing to the success of a merger. It strikes me that most, if not all, successful mergers between libraries and archives, sometimes with a museum too, have not happened at a national level, top down, but in places where they are embedded in a local or regional community with a strong sense of identification, self-understanding and commonality, like Friesland, Québec, and Tasmania.

This research could not give a definitive answer to questions like: How do we foster a culture of respect for different professional knowledge and skills while still promoting closer integration? Do problems the professions have in common also suggest that uniformly applicable

solutions are possible? What is the role of education and training in the midst of transformational change within libraries, archives and museums?

In July 2013 Shannon Wellington defended at Victoria her PhD thesis *Building GLAMour: Converging practice between Gallery, Library, Archive and Museum entities in New Zealand Memory Institutions*.⁵⁹ It not only contains a good literature review and a remarkable theoretical discussion, but also three case studies of Te Papa, New Zealand's national integrated museum and art gallery in Wellington; Puke Ariki, a self-defined converged library, archive, museum and information centre in New Plymouth; and Te Ahu, a converged cultural heritage concept in Kaitia, Northland, which includes the region's museum, library and information centre, little theatre, archives and conference facilities. Shannon – not unlike her Canadian colleagues – argues that “maintaining the integrity of the individual GLAM paradigms whilst looking for opportunities to build integrative layers on top of core GLAM functions” would be “a constructive approach to the development of future joined-up models of operation.”⁶⁰ Shannon strongly believes

that in order to project the future state of GLAM convergence, any attempt to theorise potential integrative pathways between the GLAM entities first requires those researching in the field [and policymakers! EK] to develop a solid understanding of the inherent differences and sameness between the GLAM paradigms.⁶¹

From her cases Shannon Wellington identified eight core principles which in each GLAM domain carry varying levels of importance. She mapped these on a scale of 0 to 10.

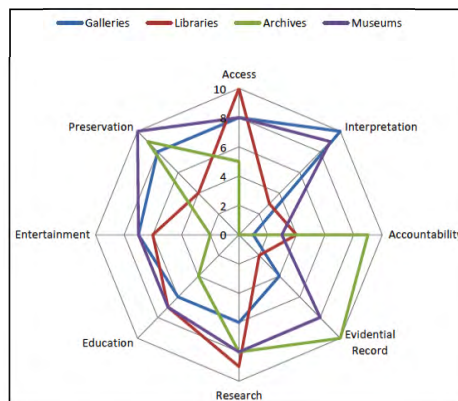


Figure 2: The GLAM Matrix (Shannon Wellington).

This matrix reflects the values as articulated by staff and in the documentation of the three institutions studied by Wellington.⁶² In other cases the matrix might show different values. I consider the matrix as a very valuable tool to identify the differences in core principles dividing professionals. I agree with Shannon that

“Uncovering the essence of GLAM entities in this type of framework provides a platform to consider where the potential for integration, as well as the elements of disconnect, reside.”⁶³

The matrix not only shows the differences in values, it also indicates the areas where professionals could learn from and contribute to colleagues. Librarians may learn from archivists to appreciate preservation, while archivists might demonstrate to their colleagues the value of historical evidence for accountability.⁶⁴ Librarians and archivists could benefit from the experiences of their colleagues in galleries and museums in interpretation, education and entertainment. Several libraries and archives are in fact providing a museum experience, as the Canadian archivist Hugh Taylor proposed as early as 1995.⁶⁵ A few years before, his colleague Ian Wilson – who was to become national archivist and in 2004 chief librarian and national archivist of Canada – had argued that there is “no reason why archives cannot emulate museums and provide structured, even entertaining, historical experiences for visitors.”⁶⁶ Such an experience is offered, for example, by the Dutch National Archives in an information and education space “The Memory Palace” where visitors can experience the power of documents and other artefacts from the past.⁶⁷

What, you may wonder, has a library or an archives to do with interpretation, education and entertainment? Remember what I said before on understanding the trilogy of cognitive, affective and conative construction of meaning. Our users, patrons, visitors are visiting our places and spaces seeking meaning – and thereby construction or reconstruction of identities – not only in a cognitive mode, but also with affection and with a particular motivation.⁶⁸ Just like Julian Spalding’s “poetic museum” – a museum “not just of facts but of feelings” – is to be judged “not by what it contains but by what it gives its visitors”⁶⁹ so should poetic galleries, libraries and archives, as I said, be “hospitable” to emotion and motivation. This should not lead GLAM professionals to depreciate cognition. A GLAM should continue to be a space where meanings are communicated – that is different from merely transmitting

information, as Eilean Hooper-Greenhill has argued.⁷⁰ She advocates the museum as communicator, and I believe that that would be equally valid for galleries, libraries and archives. Communication as education, backed by interpretation. Interpretation by curator as well as by visitor, constituting what I called an activation of the artefact. That artefact may be digital or physical: both will continue to be curated in galleries, archives, and museums, while in university and public libraries the emphasis will shift from physical to virtual collections.⁷¹

Of the four constituents I identified at the beginning, I have dealt so far mainly with three: GLAM materials, GLAM users, and GLAM professionals. Not because the fourth one, GLAM institutions, are not important, but for my purpose a gallery, a library, an archival institution and a museum are vehicles for carrying materials, users and professionals into the future. GLAM institutions considering collaborative undertakings will benefit from the research by Duff and her colleagues, Shannon Wellington's study and a couple of case studies, all of which indicate the opportunities and challenges, the benefits and the costs of collaborative activities on the continuum of contact, cooperation, coordination, collaboration, and finally convergence: a merger.⁷²

Duff and her colleagues discuss the factors driving collaboration and convergence:

1. To serve users better
2. To support scholarly activity
3. To take advantage of technology developments
4. To achieve budgetary and administrative efficiencies
5. To adapt to an evolving understanding of digital surrogates as objects
6. To obtain a holistic view of collections.

The three New Zealand institutions involved in this study all declared as the main motivation for convergence: to serve users better; to take advantage of technological developments; to take into account the need for budgetary and administrative efficiencies. But only the National Library was motivated by the wish to adapt to an evolving understanding of digital surrogates as objects. Obtaining a holistic view of collections was an important factor for Te Papa, not for the others.

It is clear that for GLAM institutions modern information and communication technologies offer "great opportunities for linking resources between these different types of collections, and may lead to exciting collaborations."⁷³ "Being digital" and being digital in conjunction with partner-institutions and in a smart way clearly enables

GLAM to serve users better, attract more users and to prosper in the battle of the fittest.⁷⁴ However, as a study of the virtual museum by the Canadian Heritage Information Network warns

One needs to be careful, however, to not let the technology drive changes in missions for these various types of organizations; professionals need to consciously evaluate and adopt mission changes, rather than merely accept them because of mission-drift caused by technology.⁷⁵

Being digital has enormous consequences for GLAM materials, GLAM users, GLAM professionals, and GLAM institutions, both at the front-end and in the back-office.⁷⁶ At the front-end people approach GLAM as an extension of their personal and community memories embedded in mediascape: "Online mementos, photographs taken with digital cameras or camera phones, memorial web pages, digital shrines, text messages, digital archives (institutional and personal), online museums, online conference message boards, virtual candles, souvenirs and memorabilia traded on e-Bay, social networking and alumni websites of archival material, blogs, digital storytelling, passwords, computer games based on past wars, fan sites and digital scrapbooks."⁷⁷ Nearly all of these follow what Lev Manovich has called the database logic, in which the world is represented spatially as a list of items and not sequentially, as a narrative.⁷⁸ Even when the digital media present a narrative, the "user" is "traversing a database, following links between its records as established by the database's creator."⁷⁹ This database logic, according to Manovich, is becoming the logic of culture at large, forcing GLAM to invent new forms of communication both on the premises and on the web. Indeed, "the digital age implies not only technological opportunities and challenges, but is foremost a social and cultural phenomenon."⁸⁰ Social media, mobility, connectivity, multimedia, e-business – these and more define the social and cultural ecology of which GLAM are a part. But the ecology has to be sustainable. I am referring to the challenges of enduring access to digital-born and digitized documents, books, art works, etc. Steve Knight from the National Library of New Zealand has argued that the complexity and challenges of digital preservation make it imperative for

individual disciplines to look at and transcend community-specific paradigms that have developed over time but that may not be appropriate in the digital context.⁸¹

This is true, but let's not be blind to the differences between for example digital publications and electronic records, differences due to distinct processes that result in the creation of digital publications and electronic records. As Library and Archives Canada has found out, convergence through combined digital asset management is possible. But

Beyond such systems procedures, the ingest of digital information assets, more generally, is a point of divergence in the acquisition and management of digital publications and electronic records.⁸²

Divergence is inevitable because "digital publications and electronic records differ in many particulars, including their descriptive metadata requirements, their volume and, in many cases, their logical file formats."⁸³

As Gillian Oliver remarks with regard to the different approaches of librarians and archivists to digital preservation: simply asserting "we do it differently" is not sufficient; professionals have to be able to communicate their community-specific understandings to each other.⁸⁴ For such communication Oliver recommends taking the information continuum model as a basis. Leaving all commonalities aside, one important feature makes the archivists' role in the information continuum specific: his or her involvement starts at the very beginning of the continuum, where records and archives are created. Unlike the museum curator or the librarian whose influence on the structure and context of the artefact can only be exercised from a rather late stage of the object's life, the archivist has to be involved at the first instance of creation of the record, to ensure its survival throughout the continuum. In terms of OAIS, the Open Archival Information System Reference Model: the curator and the librarian may wait until a digital object arrives, ready to be captured into the OAIS, while the archivist's endeavour starts long before the digital record arrives at the door of the repository.

The challenges and opportunities of the digital are too important to be left to the "techies". We need "digital savvy" curators, librarians, archivists, museum and other information professionals.⁸⁵ They will all be responsible for digital curation. Tibbo and Lee propose a digital curation curriculum for GLAM professionals across a wide range of GLAM contexts that will teach skills that are necessary regardless of institutional context, but taking into account the particular ways in which the skills are applied in each of the GLAM domains.

Digital curation, according to Lee and Tibbo, is "stewardship that provides for the reproducibility and re-use of authentic digital data and other digital assets ... Digital curation extends far beyond repository

control and involves attention to content creators and future users.”⁸⁶ But apart from digital curation (or, if you like, digital asset management) GLAM professionals will continue curating analogue materials. Both forms of curation are concurrent, that is (I quote the OED as I did in the beginning) contributing to the same effect, side by side, but harmonious, acting in conjunction. Both forms of curation will be carried out taking into account the differences in core values and practices of GLAM professionals. These differences should be acknowledged, even celebrated, provided that the work towards reconciling and harmonizing policies and practices is taken seriously. That is the duty GLAM professionals and GLAM institutions owe to the other constituents: GLAM materials and GLAM users, visitors, clients, and patrons. Communicating to users the materials as repositories of meanings, their profounder, more elusive meanings,⁸⁷ is the ultimate purpose of concurring curation for a poetic GLAM that is

a place of ‘dreams’, of re-enactment for both the user and the archivist (curator), who together always are engaged either passively or actively in the process of refiguration that is never ending.⁸⁸

Endnotes

1. Keynote address at the seminar “A GLAMorous Future? Reflecting on integrative practice between galleries, libraries, archives and museums”, Victoria University, Wellington, 6 September 2013. Different versions were presented at a seminar of the Centre for Organisational and Social Informatics, Monash University, Melbourne, 10 October 2013, and the conference “Archives: The Future” of the Australian Society of Archivists, Canberra, 16 October 2013.
2. Michael Fox, Three in one: archives, libraries and museums under one roof. RLG Members Forum: Libraries, Archives, & Museums—Three-Ring Circus, One Big Show? July 2005. <http://worldcat.org/arcviewer/1/0CC/2007/08/08/0000070504/viewer/file997.html>
3. ISO 30300, 2011, 3.1.7.
4. B.J. Slot, Abel Tasman and the discovery of New Zealand (Otto Cramwinckel, Amsterdam 1992); Grahame Anderson, *The Merchant of The Zeehaen*. Isaac Gilsemans and the voyages of Abel Tasman (Te Papa Press, Wellington 2001); R.D.J. Collins: Abel Tasman in New Zealand waters: the pictorial record, *Bulletin of New Zealand Art History*, 12 (1991), pp. 4-28; Anne Salmond, *Two worlds. First meetings between Maori and Europeans 1642-1772* (University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu 1991); <http://viewongoldenbay.com>. In 2012 the Netherlands ambassador in New Zealand Arie van der Wiel convened a seminar where scholars in various disciplines presented new insights on Tasman’s visit to Golden Bay; see the summary by Penny Griffith, Abel Tasman’s visit to Golden Bay: new insights, *Journal Nelson Historical Society* 7,5 (2013) 53-61 and <http://newzealand.nlembassy.org/news/2013/03/abel-tasman-370-seminar-report.html>
5. R. Posthumus Meyjes, *De reizen van Abel Janszoon Tasman en Franchoy Jacobszoon Visscher ter nadere ontdekking van het Zuidland in 1642/3 en 1644*. (Nijhoff, 's-Gravenhage 1919), p. LXIX.
6. Letter from Martinus Nijhoff in The Hague to the Turnbull Library (Wellington), 19 June 1925, inserted in the Turnbull’s copy Pf910.4 TAS of J.E. Heeres, Abel Janszoon Tasman’s journal of his discovery of Van Diemens Land and New Zealand in 1642: with documents relating to his exploration of Australia in 1644... (Frederik Muller & Co, Amsterdam 1898).
7. According to G.C. Woide, who translated the journal for Sir Joseph Banks in 1776: original draft in Turnbull Library, MS-2119, fair draft in British Library, Add.ms 8947.
8. E.H. McCormick, *Tasman and New Zealand: a bibliographical study* (Government printer, Wellington 1959) lists 30 editions of the journal. See also Andrew Sharp, *Voyages of Abel Janszoon Tasman* (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1968), pp. 341-349; Günter Schilder, *Australia unveiled: the share of the Dutch navigators in the discovery of Australia*, (*Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, Amsterdam 1976), pp. 139-157.
9. Vibeke Roeper and Diederick Wildeman, *Het journaal van Abel Tasman, 1642-1643* (Den Haag: Nationaal Archief; Zwolle: Waanders, 2006); Christobel Mattingley, *My father’s islands:*

- Abel Tasman's heroic voyages (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2012); <http://www.nla.gov.au/education/my-fathers-islands/>
10. André Desvallées and François Mairesse, *Key concepts of museology* (Armand Colin, s.l. 2010), p. 50, available at <http://icom.museum/professional-standards/key-concepts-of-museology/>
 11. http://www.gahetna.nl/collectie/archief/inventaris/gahetnascan/eadid/1.11.01.01/inventarisnr/121/afbeelding/NL-HaNA_1.11.01.01_121_0001. It seems that the earlier transcription by Posthumus Meyes (see note 5) has not been used.
 12. <http://acms.sl.nsw.gov.au/album/albumView.aspx?acmsID=423571&itemID=852933>
 13. A facsimile of the 1898 book was published in 1965 by N.A. Kovach in Los Angeles.
 14. Abel Janszoon Tasman & the discovery of New Zealand (Wellington, Department of Internal Affairs 1942) contains J.C. Beaglehole, *The place of Tasman's voyage in history* (pp. 11-43) and M.F. Vigeveno, *Tasman's journal or description* (pp. 45-64). Vigeveno translated the 17th century Dutch text as published by Posthumus Meyes (see note 5). The 1942 publication was republished in 1985: *Discovery of Tasmania* (26 November 1642): extracts from the journal of Abel Janszoon Tasman (Hobart, Government Printer 1985).
 15. <http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks04/0400771h.html>
 16. <http://viewongoldenbay.com> See also www.theprow.org.nz/the-first-meeting-abel-tasman-and-maori-in-golden-bay
 17. Eric Ketelaar, *Cultivating archives*, *Archival Science* 12 (2012), pp. 19-33; Wendy M. Duff et al., *Contexts built and found: a pilot study on the process of archival meaning-making*, *Archival Science* 12 (2012), pp. 69-92 provide an overview of theories of meaning-making and report a pilot project of how students navigate the archival systems and records and how they identify relevant material.
 18. Gaynor Kavanagh, *Dream spaces. Memory and the museum* (Leicester University Press, London and New York 2000), p. 22; Eileen Hooper-Greenhill, *The power of museum pedagogy*, in: Genoways, Hugh H., ed. *Museum philosophy for the twenty-first century* (Rowman Altamira, 2006), pp. 235-245.
 19. The art object is "a cluster of interpretive repertoires that have created and sustained it as art": Cheryl Meszaros, Twyla Gibson, Jennifer Carter, *Interpretation and the art museum. Between the familiar and the unfamiliar*, in: Juliette Fritsch (ed), *Museum gallery interpretation and material culture* (Routledge, New York and London 2011), pp. 35-49, here p. 35. Ivo Maroevic talked about a museum object with "all the layers of meaning deposited through time, many of which are illegible or incomprehensible because the cultural contexts of the objects' life have been changed": Ivo Maroevic, *The museum message: between the document and information*, in: Eileen Hooper-Greenhill (ed) *Museum, Media, Message* (Routledge, London and New York 1995), pp. 24-36, here p. 24.
 20. Eric Ketelaar, *Tacit narratives: the meanings of archives*, *Archival Science* 1 (2001), pp. 143-155.
 21. Jonathan Furner, *Philosophy and the Information Sciences*. In: Bates MJ, Maack MN (eds) *Encyclopedia of library and information sciences*, Third edition (Taylor & Francis, London 2010), pp. 4153-4165, here pp. 4155-56; see also Meszaros, Gibson, Carter, "Interpretation and the art museum", pp. 43-46.
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 29. Kavanagh, "Dream spaces".
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