Title: Historical World Map Sets from The Army Map Service

- Department
  
  Documents Department, Map and Imagery Library

- Date needed by & reason (class, exhibit, donor request)
  
  Ongoing

- Source of funds (departmental endowments, donor, grant, etc.)
  
  Library Funds

- Departmental priority
  
  High

- What is the initial project idea?

  The topographic maps done by the Army Map Service make up a rich and valuable historical resource. The maps come from all over the world and many were done in the 1940s which is of particular importance in Europe. Even to this day, they are some of the most detailed maps available for certain parts of the world such as China.

  In 2008, a geographic search interface was developed to make these maps and other topographic sets in the library more accessible to university researchers and the general public. This user-friendly spatial interface allows patrons to search the availability of topographic maps in the Map & Imagery Library by country, scale, and longitude/latitude. The interface increases patron access to our collections by providing information about which specific sheets we have within a large topographic map set. This interface also allows us to make available scanned versions of the maps and in particular, the Army Map Service (AMS) maps.

  In preparation for this, the Digital Library Center has already digitized 27 topographic map sets from the AMS and related government agencies though there are still at least 160 map sets to scan. This project would call for the rest to be scanned as time and resources permit. This will act to preserve these historic maps, utilize the great opportunity the interface provides, and provide our patrons with access to a highly useful resource.

- For the project, how much, how many, of what will be digitized?
There are at least 160 map sets left to be scanned after the initial 27 previously scanned map sets scanned by the DLC. The remaining sets contain a total of approximately 4400 individual maps.

- For each item to be digitized, costs will be determined by:
  - Type of material: maps
  - Type of content: color pages
  - Media Format: paper
  - Size: Though the size varies from set to set, average dimensions are 24” X 36”
  - Uniqueness: We are aware of a large collection of the same kind of maps that were digitized by the University of Texas’s Perry-Castañeda Library, but have excluded their list of digitized maps from our count.
  - Condition: Fair. In addition to increased access, preservation is also an issue. Many of these sets were published over 60 years ago and digitization would help to preserve the maps. We have found that patrons are often satisfied with a digital image, thus reducing wear and tear on the originals.
  - Copyright status: non-copyrighted
  - Metadata available (catalog record, spreadsheet, none, etc.). Is there a title, author, and date for each item? If not, is there a finding guide with this information? Each map set currently has a record in the library catalog but that does not include any information about which map sheets within the sets are available in our collection. The interface that has been developed to enhance the catalog will allow patrons to access information about individual sheets and therefore, the digital images associated with them. A database contains the metadata about the individual sheets including the coordinates which allows the interface to map out the index for the series. Information about the title, date, and publisher for each sheet is also recorded there.

- How will users interact with the end product?
  This is to see if any changes in the existing infrastructure are required.
  - In answering this, please explain if this is primarily for access, or is this about preserving rare or delicate materials (users will now be able to “handle” them more with the zoom technology?) and/or is this about something extending from the digital materials (data mining, etc)? Users will interact with these digitized maps through the topographic interface which has already been developed thanks to a library mini-grant and through the library catalog. Having these maps digitized will increase access to the Map & Imagery Library collection.

  - Does the material benefit from being digitized within a digital collection to create something new (information in context, mapped, in motion, data mining, new
Yes. The recent development of a geographic information system topographic interface will be used to access the digital maps and was created using funds from the 2007-2008 library mini-grant “Developing an online GIS Interface for the topographic map collection”.

- **How does this collection enhance existing library collections, departments or research at UF?** Existing collections that would be enhanced by digitizing these maps are the Latin American Collection and the Judaica Collection. In reality, because AMS maps provide world-wide coverage, any department or collection that is regionally specific is sure to benefit directly from this project. Research almost always has a spatial component to it, a place to tie the study to. These detailed topographic maps are an invaluable resource that we can grant researchers unlimited access to.

- **Who is the audience for this digital project?** In addition to University and local attention, we also know there to be a global interest. For example, we recently (11/12/08) received a request for an AMS map that would be digitized for this project from a patron in Italy. We have also had many inquires into the system from other librarians around the country. In particular, key contributors to the Alexandria Digital Library Project have expressed excitement in what we are accomplishing here at UF with this interface.

- **Which departments, colleges, and particular researchers at UF and in the state of Florida?** Specific departments to benefit from this project would be the Center for African Studies and the Center for Latin American Studies.

- **Is the material already digitized and online? What other libraries or groups may be digitizing it or in partnering (local museums, public libraries, publishers, community groups)?** At this time, we have been unable to locate the maps we would like to digitize anywhere else online. We are aware of a large collection of the same kind of maps that were digitized by the University of Texas’s Perry–Castaneda Library, but have excluded their list of digitized maps from our count. Others have scanned the indexes for the AMS maps but not the sheets themselves. Every precaution will be taken to avoid duplication of effort.

- **What impact will digitization have on your daily workload and on other units?**
  - Metadata is required for the collection and each item. Will this be supplied? Will Special Collections need to create a finding aid? (No) Will cataloging need to catalog materials and if so, how much will be original cataloging? Can you commit to creating this material and if so, what will the impact be for your unit? All of these map sets are cataloged and should have a minimal impact on our
daily workload while being digitized. We are utilizing community service students to create metadata for the map sets.

- For sustainability, future grant development, patron and partner assistance, and all of the digital collection management requirements, are you able to commit resources, both for initial creation and for ongoing maintenance and support? Completion of the topographic interface grant shows that we are willing and able to commit resources to this project. Our patrons’ interest in these topographic maps, and the usefulness of the interface to staff as a management tool, ensures the ongoing maintenance of this resource.