



How to start a digitization project?

Our Americas Archive Partnership: *A digital library project in review*

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TLA program: Going Digital, April 3, 2009

Key Factors

- Identify user needs
- Nature of materials to digitize
- Technical infrastructure needs
- Funding
- Develop project plan (goals, tasks and timeline)
- Evaluation

Partnership

- Our Americas is a collaboration between
 - University of Maryland's Institute for Technology in the Humanities
 - Rice University's Humanities Research Center and Fondren Library
 - Instituto Mora, Mexico

Scholarship Vision

- Adopt a new paradigm for the **study of American cultural and literary history** that situates them in the context of the American **hemisphere** rather than the nation state.
- Focus is the **cultural transformation** that spans the five hundred year period that saw the making of modern and colonial cultures in the Americas.
- Because of its range, the archive promises to reinvigorate the study of American literary and cultural history by creating surprising juxtapositions, emphasizing different models of periodization, and suggesting new avenues of **cross-cultural influence**.

User Needs Assessment

- Surveys
 - Scholars' Research Practices
 - Focal groups from Humanities summer seminars
- Expert advisory board
- Participatory design

Collections Descriptions

- **Early Americas Digital Archive (1492-1820)**
is a electronic texts collection of originally written literary-historical narratives in or about the Americas.
- **Americas Digital Archive (1597-1920)**
includes approximately 25,000 pages of original letters, broadsides, pamphlets, printed materials and books documenting the political and cultural relationships between the United States, Mexico, Central and South America, Cuba, Spain, and Portugal.
- **Fondo Antiguo Biblioteca Ernesto de la Torre Villar**
is a collection of rare materials from the XVI to XIX centuries as part of the “Iberoamericana” library.

Technical Infrastructure

- Each collection is digitally stored in technically diverse environments
 - Early Americas Digital Archive is html based transcriptions
 - Rice's Americas Archive resources are shared through DSpace, an open source digital repository system

Funding

- OAAP project is funded by a 2007 National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).
- 3-year grant of nearly \$1 million and is matched by equivalent funds from the partnership among Rice's Fondren Library, the Humanities Research Center (HRC) and the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities (MITH).

Pre proposal efforts

- Pilot Summer 2006
 - Confirmed material selection
 - Physical review of materials for digitization
 - Scanned sampling
 - Provided qualitative data for estimating workload used in grant proposal
- Landscape review
- Demo to IMLS
- Adhere to grant guidelines

Project Proposal

- Define how user needs are being meet
- Landscape review
- Material selection
- Define project goals
- Identify specific deliverables and outcomes
- Define key personnel
- Outline critical project tasks
- Schedule of completion

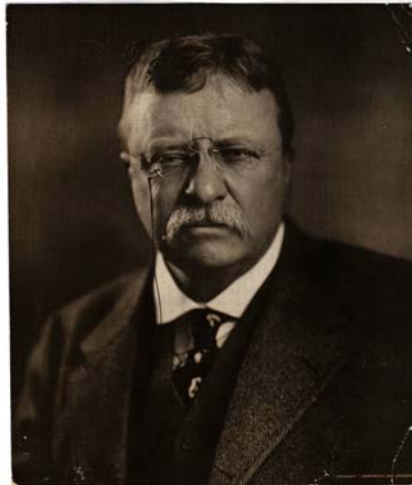
Project Goals

- Building a digital collection of scholarly source materials to serve the interdisciplinary field of American Studies, focusing on a hemispheric view of the Americas
- Development of a technical infrastructure to provide federated searching of multiple repositories using Web 2.0 technologies, enabling scholars to find and share digital resources residing at different locations on the Web

Commitments

- Imaging – 25000 page images
- Metadata – Qualified dublin core for approx. 500 items
- Text conversion to TEI-lite standard including 1800 manuscript pages
- Translations – 80 documents
- Key Terms supplied by scholars
- Research Modules – 25-50

Example Record



I think Mexico would have gone in with ^{us} ~~us~~ in each case where I have ^{actually} interfered - Cuba, Santo Domingo and Panama, for instance - I have had to exercise the greatest care in order to keep public opinion here with me so as to make my interference effective, and I have been able to lead it along as it ought to be led only by minimizing my interference and showing the clearest necessity for it. In the other cases I have mentioned, the need was great, it was not as great as those in which I did take action, and the need could not have been as clearly shown ^{to our people}. Our prime necessity is that public opinion should be properly educated.

Any time you are here, do not fail to let me see you.

Sincerely yours,
Theodore Roosevelt

Dr. William Bayard Hale,
The Times,
New York, N.Y.

[View Metadata \[Cataloging Info\]](#)

Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to William Hale of the New York Times, 12-3-1908 [Electronic version]

Contents

[MS Number:518 \(Box 5, Folder 18\)](#)

[THE WHITE HOUSE](#)
[WASHINGTON](#)

MS Number:518 (Box 5, Folder 18)
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 3, 1908.

Dear Dr. Hale:

Title: Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to William Hale of the New York Times, 12-3-1908

Creator: Roosevelt, Theodore, 1858-1919

Format: Correspondence

Original Date: 1908

Place: United States (nation)
Latin America (general region)

Subject: United States -- Politics and government -- 19th century
United States. President (1901-1909 : Roosevelt)

Key Terms: Borders
Colonialism
Diplomacy
Inter-American relations
Nationalism

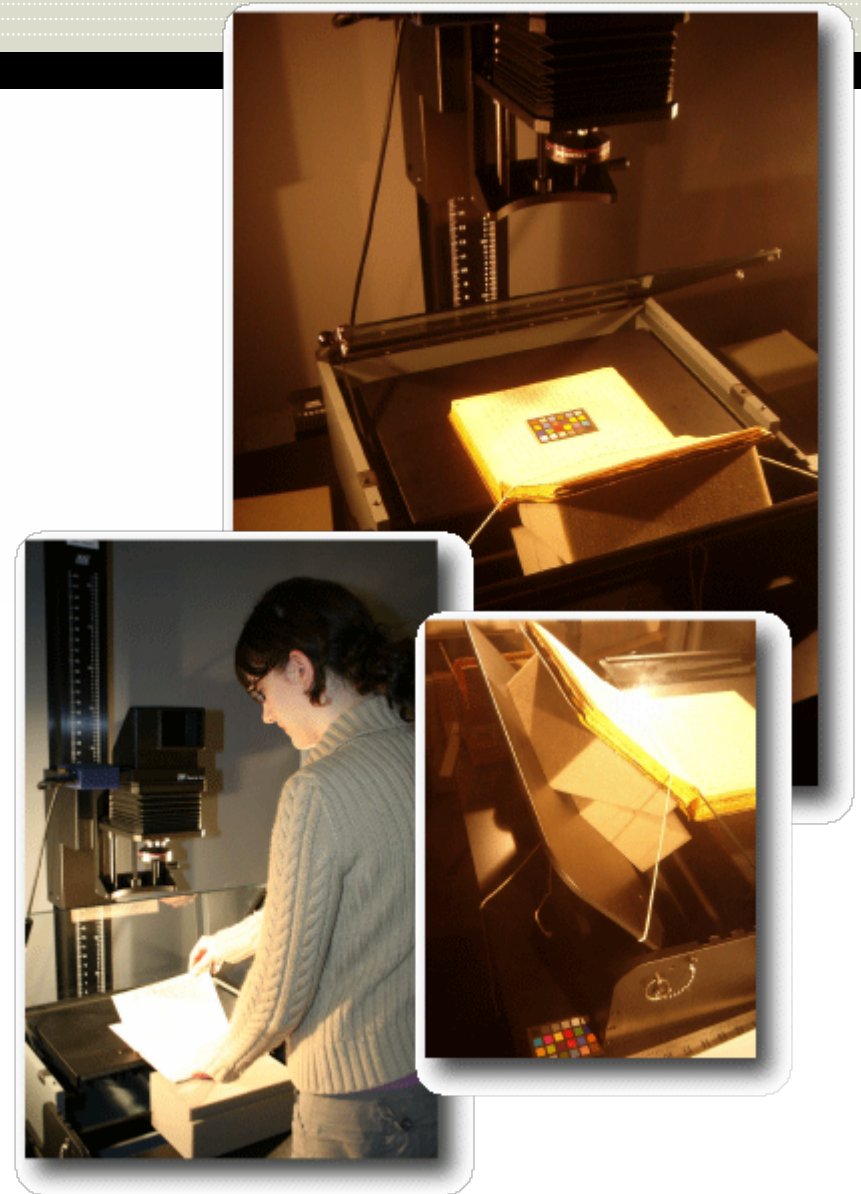
- TEI file
- Digital Image
- Metadata

Project start up

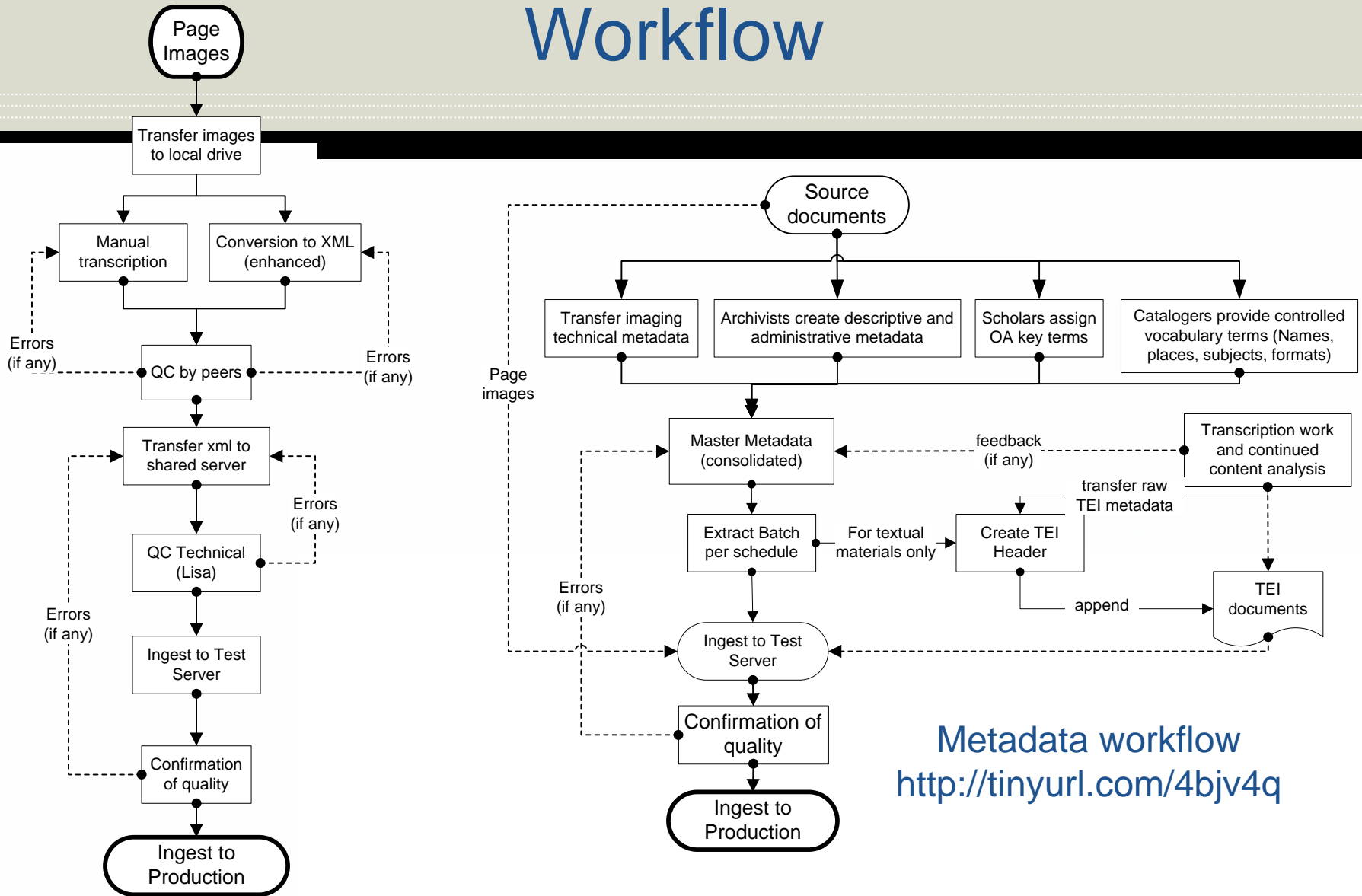
- Review of project plan
- Comments from grant reviewers
- Agreed to communication avenues
- Documented discussions for digitization
 - Metadata definition “application profile”
 - Imagining practices
 - Text mark up encoding practices

Goals - Image capture process

- to achieve a **faithful representation** of the original artifact
- Create **preservation quality** digital images
- And provide **access versions** to patrons



Workflow



Metadata workflow
<http://tinyurl.com/4bjv4q>

Procedures for Textual Materials
<http://tinyurl.com/5jl8mc>

Challenges

- Revisions to standards and best practices
 - Qualified Dublin core
 - Major update to TEI P4 to P5
- Re thought on depth of description
- TEI vendor negotiations

Tools & Utilities

Communications



Perl
Script

Tracking

Digitization



OAAP Discovery Tool

The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window displaying the OAAP Discovery Tool website. The browser's address bar shows the URL `del.icio.us`. The website header features the title "Our Americas ARCHIVE PARTNERSHIP" with the subtitle "HEMISPHERIC APPROACH TO INTER-AMERICAS STUDIES" and a compass rose logo. A "Login or Register" link is located in the top right corner. Below the header are three buttons: "Browse", "About", and "Collections".

The main content area is divided into two sections:

- Browse the Archive by OAAP Tag:** A list of tags including: borders, colonialism, conquest, conservatism, constitutionalism, development, diplomacy, emancipation, federalism, gender, historiography, history, indigenuity, inter-american relations, labor, liberalism, migration, nationalism, neo-constitutionalism, race relations, religion, revolution, slavery, technical borders, technology, and war. A link "(switch to web-user tag cloud)" is provided below the list.
- Search the Archive:** A search bar with a magnifying glass icon.

The footer contains the copyright notice "Copyright © 2009 [copyright info]" and logos for the University of Michigan Library, RICE, and MITH (MITELAND INSTITUTE FOR TECHNOLOGY IN THE HUMANITIES).

Done

Search Page

Mozilla Firefox
File Edit View History Bookmarks Diigo Tools Help del.jcio.us

Our Americas
ARCHIVE PARTNERSHIP

Login or Register
Username Password

Search

Collections About Browse

< Prev Displaying results 1-20 of 244 Search returned 244 of 244 records Next >

Advanced Search
Category Filter by:
None (show all documents)
Add a new filter:
Title Add
Clear All Submit

Browse by OAAP Tag
borders colonialism conquest
conservatism constitutionalism
development diplomacy emancipation
federalism gender historiography history
indigenuity inter-american relations
labor liberalism migration nationalism
neo-constitutionalism race relations
religion revolution slavery technical borders
technology war
(switch to web-user tag cloud)

All Results (244) Text Only (162) Image Only (82) Timeline Satellite

Annexation of Texas and Boundary with Mexico. Message from the President of the United States.
1837 Martin Van Buren, John Forsyth
Rice Americas Archive, Rice University
Details Link

Boundary - United States and Mexico. Message from the President of the United States of America.
2008-03-03T13:25:54Z Martin Van Buren
Rice Americas Archive, Rice University
Details Link

Plan de Iguala
1821 Agustin de Iturbide
Rice Americas Archive, Rice University
Details Link

Done

Evaluation

- Role of assessment in digital projects:
 - motivate and guide project design and development decisions
 - keep developers honest. Requiring review of actual results against user defined needs rather than purely technological challenges.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the technical architecture in meeting user needs and including the usability of the site/interface itself.

Thank you!

A historical map of the Americas, showing the continent in a light brown, aged paper style. The map includes a grid of latitude and longitude lines and various geographical features like rivers and coastlines. The text is overlaid on the map.

*Our Americas
Archive Partnerships
1492 - 1920*

oaap.rice.edu