Celebrating Cuba! Collaborative Digital Collections of Cuban Patrimony

In 2016, the University of Florida expanded its historical collaboration with Cuban institutions by signing an agreement with the Biblioteca Nacional de Cuba José Martí (BNJM) to create broad and deep open access to Cuban Heritage materials through Celebrating Cuba! Collaborative Digital Collections of Cuban Patrimony.

Materials from the Cuban Heritage initiatives are available at BNJM and through Celebrating Cuba! Collaborative Digital Collections of Cuban Patrimony (www.ufdc.ufl.edu/CUBA) which is part of the Digital Library of the Caribbean. Digital files are also be available to partner institutions who wish to locally host materials. Specific current priority projects and links to digital collections for each one are below. If you are interested in learning more about specific initiatives or wish to participate in one or more of the projects, please contact CubaSteering@uflib.ufl.edu.

Celebrating Cuba! Collaborative Digital Collections of Cuban Patrimony, as of January 2019

Cuban Newspapers and Periodicals
www.ufdc.ufl.edu/cubanserials

The goal is to collaborate with international partners to identify and digitize serials, primarily newspapers and journals, published in Cuba for which we have or can secure the right/permission to reproduce and provide public access.

Collection highlights include important newspapers and magazines published in Cuba, including Bohemia, Diario de la Marina, Noticias de Hoy, and Revista de Cayo Hueso. We are working with partners to digitize Carteles, El Crisol, and Prensa Libre, and we will be expanding the collection to include other Cuban and Cuban exile newspapers.

There are already over 4,800 issues of the cultural magazine Bohemia available online (http://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00029010/00001).

Cuban Monographs
www.ufdc.ufl.edu/cubanimp

The goal is to collaborate with international partners to identify and digitize Cuban imprints for which we have the right/permission to reproduce and provide public access. The scope includes all monographs published in Cuba, as well as the publications of important Cuban intellectuals published outside of Cuba. There are already 554 digitized monographs available online.

Embedded in the collection of Cuban monographs is a special collection of the works of Cuban Thinkers and Intellectuals whose works are showcased to raise awareness and understanding of the evolution of Cuban thinking. These philosophers, scholars, clergy, scientists, and other intellectuals advocated new ideas and significantly influenced the development of Cuba, particularly in the 19th Century. Several were interested in human rights and many, including Father Félix Varela, were abolitionists who had to
publish in the United States because their writings on slavery were contrary to Cuban policy. The works published outside of Cuba are included to document the full range of their ideas and influence. In addition to Father Varela, the leading Cuban thinkers represented in this collection include José Martí, José Antonio Saco, José de la Luz y Caballero, and Domingo Del Monte, among others. These volumes are part of the Cuban monographs collection, but also accessible as a separate collection (www.ufdc.ufl.edu/cubanthinkers).

Cuban Judaica Materials
www.ufdc.ufl.edu/caribbeanjudaica

The goal is to collaborate with international partners to identify and digitize Jewish cultural heritage and historical materials published in Cuba or relating Judaism to Cuba. This initiative began with digitization of the publications of the Agrupación Cultural Hebreo-Cubana, a group that was founded by members of the Synagogue Bet Shalom in Havana. Prominent among its publications is Martí y Las Discriminaciones Raciales. The Agrupación also published the Catálogo de la Exhibición de Publicaciones Hebreas de Cuba and UF is digitizing all items listed in catalog.

In 2018, UF began a project with the Synagogue Bet Shalom, which is part of the Patronato de la Casa de la Comunidad Hebreo de Cuba, to digitize materials from its library that have been identified as Cuban Judaica. The top priority is the unique and rare holdings of the library, which include the newspaper Vida Habanera (Habanera Lebn), the newspaper Israelia, and other community commemorative pamphlets and publications. A second phase of scanning will prioritize works published in Cuba relating to Jewish life in general or outside of Cuba. To date, 63 titles have been scanned and added to the online collection. These include extremely rare ephemeral materials relating to the history of the Jewish community of Havana such as The Golden Anniversary, 1906-1956 and Síntesis Histórica de los hebreos de Cuba (both of which are only available in a few world libraries), items representing the rich social and cultural life of the community, such as the journal Hebraica, as well as works of literature reproduced and read by the community, such as the rare El Hebreo de Verona, a work of Italian Jewish fiction.

Cuban Legal Materials (Cuban Legal Patrimony Project)
www.ufdc.ufl.edu/cubanlaw

The goal to collaborate with international partners to identify and digitize Cuban legal materials, including Cuba’s constitutions, laws, statutes, and regulations. This project was initiated by LLMC-Digital (www.llmc.com) in 2016 in collaboration with UF. To date LLMC has identified over 1,200 titles for digitization and the collection already contains nearly half a million pages of Cuban legal content, including versions of Cuba’s numerous constitutions, a number of early treatises, and longer series like the Colección Legislativa. In addition to LLMC member libraries and other U.S.-based collaborators, the BNJM has agreed to assist in identifying and adding documents to the collection that cannot be found elsewhere. Once digitized these materials are available to users worldwide interested in studying and researching Cuba’s legal history from LLMC-Digital, BNJM, and Celebrating Cuba!

323 titles are already online, representing 3,973 volumes.
Maps of Cuba
http://www.ufdc.ufl.edu/cubanmaps

The goal of Maps of Cuba is to collaborate with international partners to identify and digitize maps of Cuba and to make them publicly accessible through a shared digital collection. The main geographic focus of the collection is the area now known as Cuba. Regional maps of the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean, Antilles, and West Indies are also included. Maps of other geographic areas may also be included when Cuba is specifically depicted or implied. The collection now includes over 500 maps spanning five centuries. In the Fall of 2018, 136 new maps of Cuba were added to the collection through our partnership with the Library of Congress and 105 maps from the University of Miami.

US Government Documents Relating to Cuba
www.ufdc.ufl.edu/cubancoe

The goal is to collaborate with international partners to identify, catalog, and digitize US government documents relating to Cuba. In 2017, UF agreed to serve as a Center of Excellence (COE) for the Collaborative Federal Depository Program managed by the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL). As the COE for Cuba, UF will catalog, preserve and make available both print and digital collections of all available U.S. government documents relating to Cuba, regardless of the publishing agency.

To date, over 7,800 items within 73 titles have been added to the digital collection.

NOTE: Access to Catalog Records of the Biblioteca Nacional de Cuba José Martí (BNJM)
Over 135,450 catalog records from BNJM are now in OCLC WorldCat to enable global discovery, to facilitate the creation of a comprehensive bibliography of Cuban resources, and to assist efforts to identify unique BNJM holdings to prioritize for digitization. Over 97,000 of the records contributed to date show BNJM as the source of the cataloging record. UF contributed the records to OCLC and established the new “BNCJM” holding library code as a sublibrary of UF. At some future time, when BNJM is able to become an OCLC member, these records will be transferred to and managed by the BNJM, but currently the records include the holding location, “University of Florida BNCJM.” Interlibrary Loan is not available for these items, but the digital surrogates for many of these items will become available for public access through these initiatives.