

Docs For Digital Humanities

An Example That Could Launch New Possibilities

As part of a class on Europe after WWI, the library helped create an interactive assignment in which students looked at geographic and political changes in European countries as a key to understanding the effects of WWI. Based on government publications, students created and annotated digital maps to show how the Treaty of Versailles redrew country boundaries and changed governmental alliances.

The experience contains valuable lessons on how we position government publications in the near future.

Laura Baker

User Experience & Assessment Librarian
Abilene Christian University
bakerl@acu.edu

LIBRARY

Provide the base maps to feed into the app. Obtain Treaty of Versailles maps. Digitize at super-high resolution. Edit in Photoshop to remove names of countries and cities to act as a map template.

Original scanned maps available at <https://archive.org/details/treaty-versailles-maps>

STUDENTS

Use Adobe XD to trace boundary changes and government structures.

Project: tiny.cc/interactivemaps

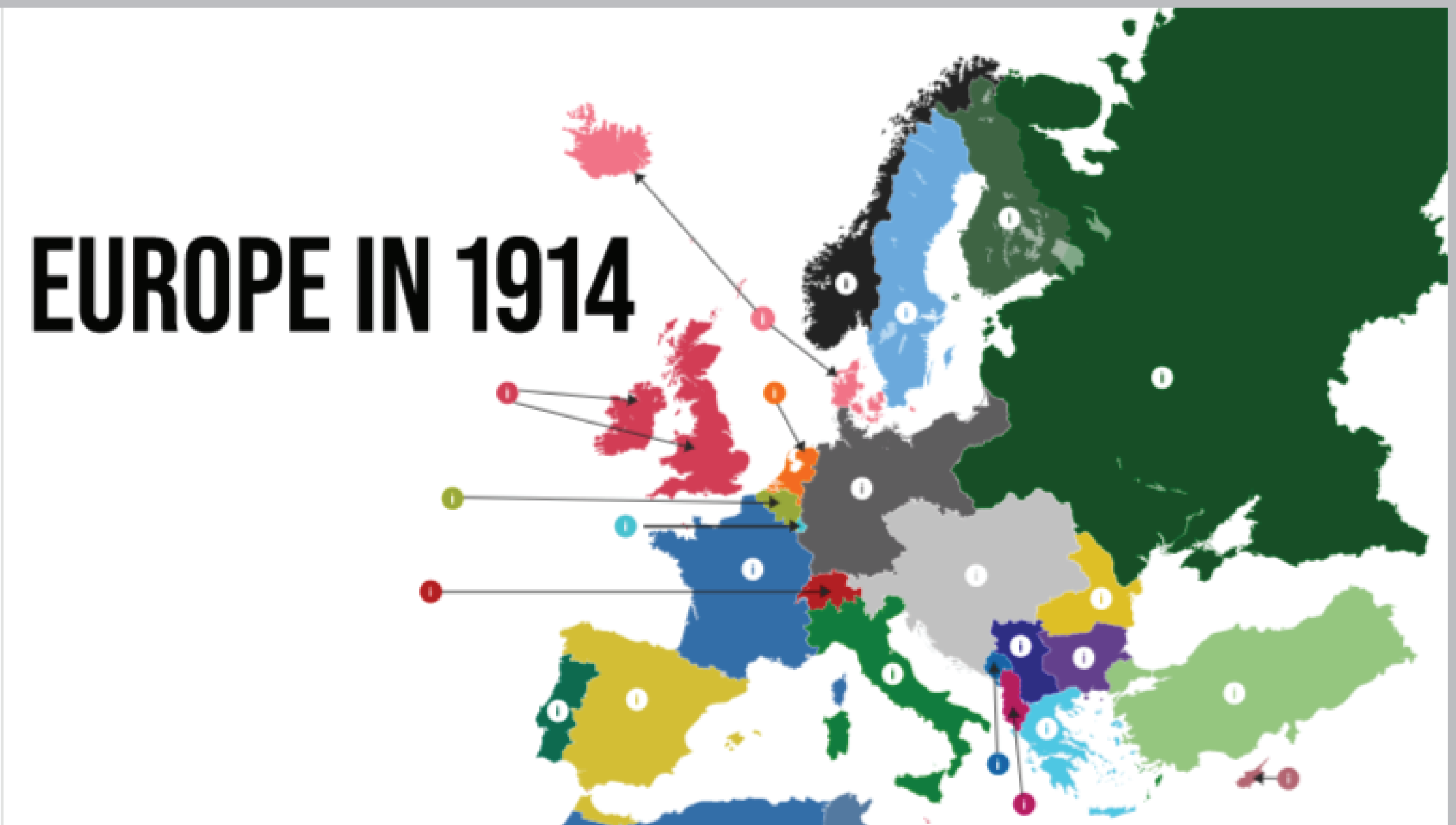
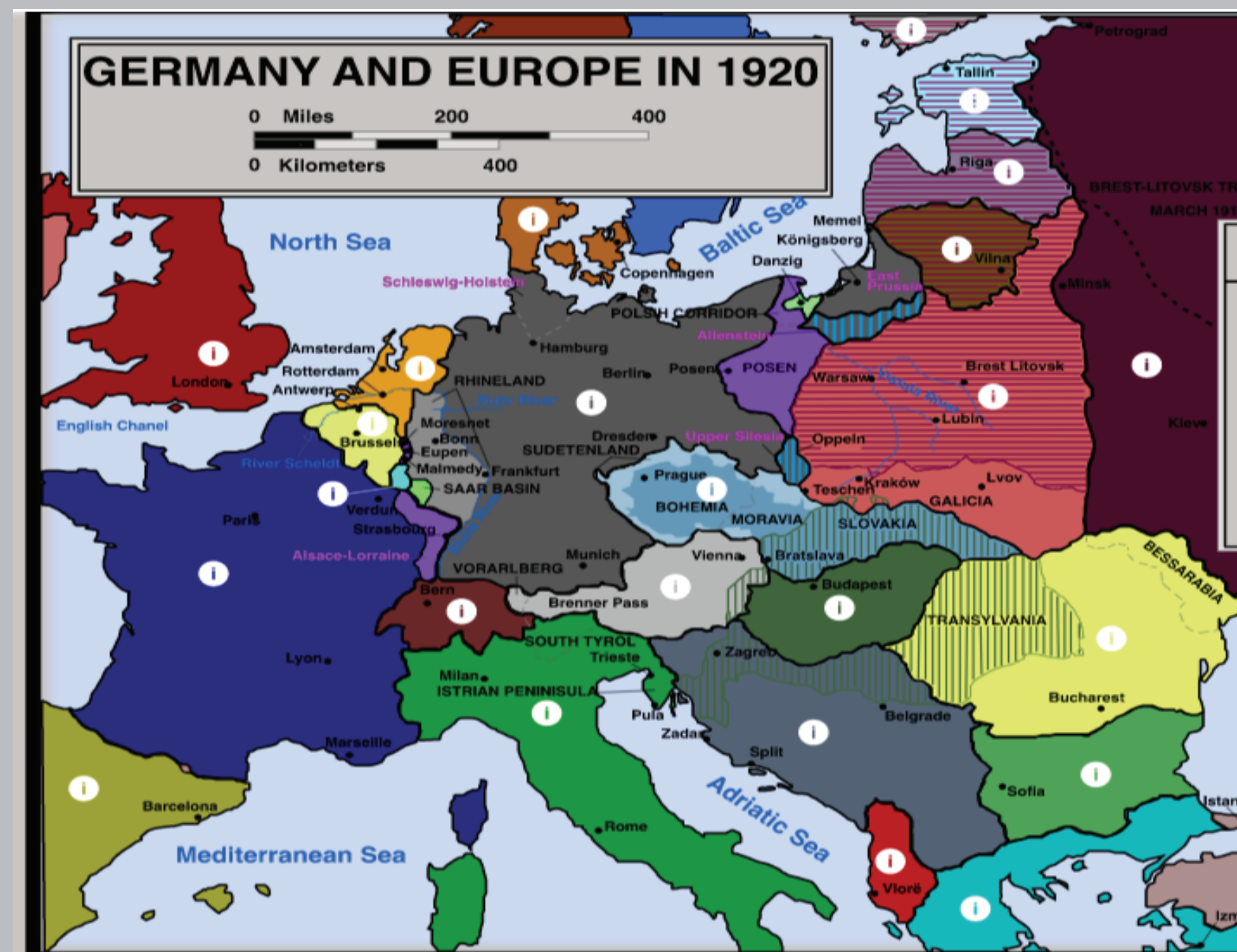
OUTCOMES

"... the activity developed skills that can be harnessed in our future careers"

"I had always heard of the Treaty of Versailles, but this is the first time I got to look at the real thing."

"This method of learning ought to be pursued more widely..."

-- from students in the course



TAKEAWAY 1

Education on state of digital docs

Treaty of Versailles maps were not already digitized nor were they part of several known subscription packages. This was a good opportunity to educate constituents that not everything is online.

TAKEAWAY 2

Govdocs promising future in digital humanities

Researchers need noncopyrighted, digital, authoritative sources. Govdocs meets the criteria. Perhaps we should market our collection more to this group.

TAKEAWAY 3

Govdocs as Special Collections

Government publications can be unique, rare, and valuable, just like a library's Special Collections though they are not thought of as such. Perhaps stressing our similarities would foster improved understanding and support.