

A Living History – A Crowdsourcing Platform
Cmpe352-451 Project Description
(2018)

Living history refers to the history that is relayed by people. For example, consider the history of Rumelihisarüstü. If you talked with people who live here now, lived here before, what would they tell you about what they know or what they have been told?

In this project, you will create a crowdsourcing application for documenting stories of people. It will allow living history posts, including location, time, and story. Living history stories may refer to tangible things or not, such as a trolleybus (Figure 3) or how people used to visit each other during holidays. Stories are often related to a given time, people, and location. Support for such information must be given.

Users will be able to create new memory items, search for existing items. They will be able to comment, like, and annotate existing items. Annotations may support various purposes, such as elaboration, translation, meta information, question, and answer. Your application should provide recommendations to users. Memories will have descriptions and support images, audio, and video. As memories are often related to places, you must support the description of and presentation of locations on the map. The media files may exist on other platforms so long as the user has permission to share them.

Figures 1, 2, and 3 show examples of experiences of people from different places and different times. Figure 4 shows online content that gives information about an archaeological site. Figures 5 and 6 show annotations for the Gutenberg bible and a song from the US civil war. Users will be able to annotate images with explanations, questions, answers, geographical references, and links. The links may be to semantic resources to provide more detailed information about the story.

The W3C *Web Annotation Data Model* is a Web recommendation for creating and managing annotations. Its associated *Web Annotation Protocol* (based on LDP) will be used to store annotations. The World Wide Consortium (W3C) [4] who works on all Web standards has introduced standards for representing annotations and their management. The Web Annotation Data Model [2] describes the vocabulary and its characteristics. The annotations should be stored and retrieved in accordance with the the protocol [3]. This protocol is based on Linked Data Platform [8], which addresses the



Figure 1: Dresses made from feed sacks and instructions. 1947. Due to economic crisis, feed companies would package feed in fabric that could be repurposed into clothing.



Figure 2: The game pong , 1976.

needs for Linked Data¹ [5, 1, 7]. Annotations must be stored and retrieved with an API that is compliant with the standard. The annotations should be tested to assure validity. JSON-LD should be used for annotation representation as described in the W3C documentation. As expected, open source software with appropriate use permissions may be used, so long as it is properly attributed and documented.

Some applications with annotation supports are Adobe Reader² for editorial comments, Genius [6] for annotating web pages, label.me³ to label images for research, and many more. Digital libraries utilize annotations⁴. A significant issue is that various applications have different and often proprietary representations yielding annotations that are not interoperable, which

¹See <http://linkeddata.org/toexaminesomeofthedatapresentonlinkeddata>.

²https://docs.adobe.com/docs/en/cq/5-4/wcm/default_components/annotations.html

³<http://labelme.csail.mit.edu/Release3.0/>

⁴See <http://labs.europeana.eu/api/annotations-scenarios> for good use cases examples



Figure 3: Trolleybuses in Istanbul were a common sight prior to 1980. This one is Bebek/Taksim line.

is not desired in open data contexts. The use of the Web Annotation Data Model results in interoperable annotations will be created to facilitate further processing.

References

- [1] Linked data - connect distributed data across the web, 2016. <http://linkeddata.org/>.
- [2] Web annotation data model. <https://www.w3.org/TR/annotation-model/>, 2016. Accessed: 2016-04-14.
- [3] Web annotation data model, w3c candidate recommendation. <https://www.w3.org/TR/annotation-protocol/>, 2016. Accessed: 2016-04-14.
- [4] *World Wide Web Consortium*, 2016. accessed at July 2016.
- [5] C. Bizer, T. Heath, and T. Berners-Lee. Linked data-the story so far. *Semantic Services, Interoperability and Web Applications: Emerging Concepts*, pages 205–227, 2009.
- [6] Genius. Genius web annotator. <http://genius.com/web-annotator>, 2011. Accessed: 2016-09-07.
- [7] T. Heath and C. Bizer. Linked data: Evolving the web into a global data space. *Synthesis lectures on the semantic web: theory and technology*, 1(1):1–136, 2011.



Figure 4: The manual annotation of an image for an archaeological site named Sira Kasturi Rangappa Nayaka Fort in Tumakuru by Digital Heritage Forum.

- [8] S. Speicher and J. Arwe. Linked data platform 1.0. <http://www.w3.org/TR/ldp/>, 2015. Accessed: 2016-09-07.

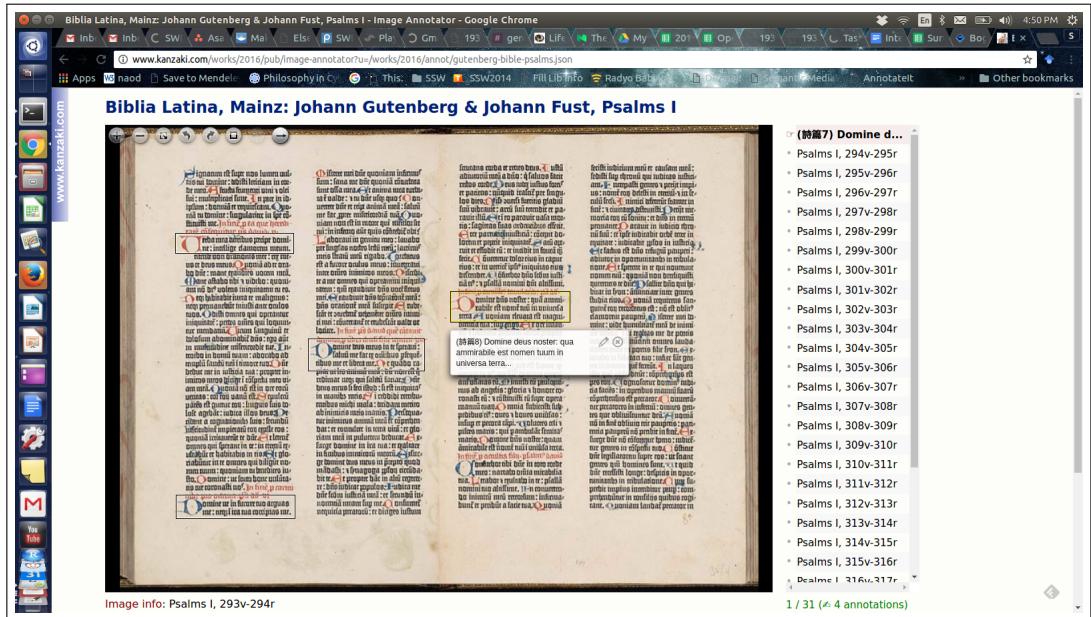


Figure 5: Annotation of a page in a Gutenberg bible.

The song's narrator worked on the railroad in Danville, Virginia, which was an important supply line and stop for trains during the Civil War. General George Stoneman was notorious for raiding these supply lines and destroying the tracks.

In the closing days of the war, Stoneman's cavalry crossed into Virginia not to fight the Confederate army, but to destroy the civilian infrastructure under General Sherman's orders. Stoneman's Combahee River Raid was going on in the war at the time - Sherman's famous "march to the sea", and Grant's Siege of Petersburg with a hundred thousand men - Stoneman's raid was but a footnote.

But the choice of Stoneman adds to the verisimilitude of the tale. To a Danville railroad worker, Stoneman would have represented everything he hated about the Union far more than the distant figures of Sherman and Grant. Even today, his name is vilified in that region.

Figure 6: Annotation of a song during the US Civil War in Virginia.