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# Review: Mini Lazarillo.

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# Review: Mini Lazarillo

A review of Mini Lazarillo, a minimal digital edition of Lazarillo de Tormes, created by Susanna Allés-Torrent, Alex Gil, Armando León, Falls Kennedy, Fiona Kibblewhite, and Taewan Shim

*by Gimena del Rio Riande*

last released 2 years ago

## Project

Mini Lazarillo

## Project Team

Susanna Allés-Torrent, "Minimal Editions" Instructor, Un
Miami

Alex Gil, "Minimal Editions" Instructor, Columbia Univer

Armando León, Web Developer, Columbia University
Falls Kennedy, XML Markup Specialist, Barnard College
Fiona Kibblewhite, Project Manager, Columbia University
Taewan Shim, Cartographer, Columbia University

**Project URL**

https://minilazarillo.github.io/

**Project Reviewer**

Gimena del Rio Riande, Seminario de Edicion y Crítica Textual of the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET)

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# Project Overview

**Susanna Allés-Torrent and Alex Gil**

The Mini Lazarillo project is a pedagogical experiment we undertook in the Department of Latin American and Iberian Cultures a University during Spring 2016. The main goal was to intro to the full stack of skills needed to create a simple digital e according to MLA Guidelines for Editors of Scholarly Edit *Lazarillo de Tormes*, was chosen based on the relevance of

(founding literary work of the picaresque genre in Spain), the relevance of the story for students (it narrates the misadventures of a young man), and the ecdotical and textual tradition of the text (multiple extant early editions from the 16th century). While we, as course instructors, guided the general workflow of the project, the main responsibility of the digital project was handed to the students. To organize this work, they chose roles reflected in the project team list, such as “project manager,” “web developer,” “XML markup specialist,” and “cartographer.”

When creating the project, we had three main theoretical axes: ethical, technological, and scholarly.[1] First, we think digital humanities should be conceived from the ethical and minimal perspective, so that anyone, despite lack of funding or other constraints, should be able to undertake and execute a digital scholarly project. The creation of Ed., a Jekyll template for digital editions, used in this course was precisely one possible solution.[2] Second, our use of technology focused on free and standard web services and technologies and on the idea of
we made available all datasets, scripts, and even the infras
our case on GitHub). It is worth noting, however, that whi
costs are low, technical barriers to entry increase and the

remains consistent. Third, the art of editing needs to be r

scholarly paradigm and a critical approach to primary sources. Therefore, the project offers three different versions of the text: a reading edition, an annotated edition, and a facsimile edition. Complementing the text, the project includes a section on historical contextualization, a map of places mentioned in *Lazarillo*, a search option, and documentation of the technologies used.

The team used GitHub as a repository and collaboration space and used GitHub Pages to publish the edition online. The Jekyll Ed. theme was customized for the project using HTML, CSS, and Javascript. We also used balloon.css for the the bubble annotations, which imported TEI elements about characters and places; odyssey.js for the creation of the map; and Lunr.js for the search engine. The team encoded the texts in TEI, which we transformed into Markdown using an XSLT script (the Jekyll template requires Markdown format).

The audience is twofold: pedagogical and scholarly. Mini Lazarillo serves as a resource for teaching, both for students and faculty. A showcases the possibility of using minimal computing inf

an editing project. We hope that the example of Mini Laza

new venues for low-cost publication under significant constraints.

[1] See the abstract submitted for the 2016 Digital Humanities Conference in Krakow, Poland: https://dh2016.adho.org/abstracts/412.

[2] See the Ed. theme for Jekyll: https://elotroalex.github.io/ed/.

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## Project Review

**Gimena del Rio Riande**

The Mini Lazarillo project was a pedagogical experiment undertaken by Susanna Allés-Torrent of the Department of Latin American and Iberian Cultures at Columbia University with her colleague Alex Gil from Columbia Libraries during Spring 2016. Its main goal was to introduce students to skills needed to create a digital scholarly edition and to the principles of minimal computing or "computing done under some technological constraints."[1] Allés-Torrent and Gil chose literary work of the picaresque genre in Spain, the anony century novella *La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes y de sus fortu adversidades*.
The humanistic claims of the project align the technologi

scholarly. Digital editing and publishing, in the project, is conceived from an open, equitable, and minimal perspective. This means that anyone, including those with a lack of funding, could potentially learn the technological skills to execute a digital scholarly project. The project was designed to emphasize collaboration with students; project development was handled by the students, who chose different roles to undertake, such as “project manager,” “web developer,” “XML markup specialist,” and “cartographer.”

Use of technology in the project is equally aligned with the idea of open and collaborative practices. This is evident in the publication of the edition itself; in the availability of datasets, scripts, and the project infrastructure on GitHub, a collaborative version control site that is commonly used to host open source projects; and in the use of GitHub Pages to publish the texts online. The site template also reflects open and collaborative choices; the Ed/Jekyll template designed by Gil, along with Allés-Torrent, Terry Catapano and Johann Guillium, was c
the students deploying HTML, CSS, and Javascript. The M
can be accessed online in two different versions: a readin
facsimile edition. Complementing the text, a historical co

section, a search option, and a bibliography are offered. T

places within the text, however, is currently down.

These important interventions aside, it bears mentioning that while the texts were encoded using the standard for digital scholarly editions — the TEI markup — the encoding had to be transformed into Markdown through an XSLT script, as the Jekyll template uses only Markdown. This approach, therefore, is quite different than the standard publishing practices of digital scholarly editions.

Allés-Torrent presented the project in a minimal computing workshop at the Second International Conference of the Asociación Argentina de Humanidades Digitales (AAHD) in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 2016.[2] Scholars felt empowered by the possibility of working autonomously on their own editions, and minimal computing was understood as a solution for the development of projects in the Global South, where access to infrastructure such as web hosting or even reliable and affordable Internet access is almost non-existent for humanities students and faculty. Currently, projects undertaken at HD CAICYT Lab Argentina) use minimal computing and GitHub-based sol digital scholarly editions, and a minimal edition course w

joint initiative between the University of Maryland (USA)

Universidad del Salvador (Argentina) in 2020.[3]

The Mini Lazarillo thus serves as a good example of the activities of the Global Outlook::Digital Humanities Minimal Computing Working Group and the Ed/Jekyll team. Minimal computing, in this project, operates both through technical infrastructure and as a shared set of values: use of open and equitable technologies, shared ownership of data and code, and a collaborative DIY approach. In that sense, a project initially developed in the North has successfully engaged audiences from the South, raising awareness about the different kinds of digital humanities around the world.

[1] Minimal Computing Working Group, "About," https://go-dh.github.io/mincomp/about/.

[2] See https://susannalles.github.io/workshops/edicion-con-Jekyll.html.

[3] See http://hdlab.space/La-Argentina-Manuscrita/ and https://globalmaryland.umd.edu/content/welcome-globa

*Editors' Note: We are pleased to report that the issue with the r the reviewer has been corrected by the project team.*

COMMENTS • 0

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