



## Scope and Scholarly Objectives

Between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries, many Europeans and Americans traveled to the Middle East for a number of reasons. Some came to conduct archaeological expeditions or tour religious sites, while others hoped to investigate ancient cultures or pursue geopolitical interests. These travelers documented their visits through narratives and images, and today these documents provide invaluable resources for students and scholars in a variety of disciplines, ranging from literature and women's studies, to archaeology, religion, history, and postcolonial studies.

Until now, these materials have been scattered throughout libraries and private collections around the world, and systematic research on these documents has been time-consuming and expensive. However, TIMEA, the Travelers in the Middle East Archive, provides greater access to many of these rare materials as well as sophisticated analytical tools, thereby enabling new modes of scholarship focused on these textual, visual, and geographical resources.

TIMEA offers digitized travel narratives encoded in [TEI-Lite](#), museum catalogs, photographic and hand-drawn images, and both historical and interactive GIS (Geographical Information Systems) maps. In addition, TIMEA provides teaching and research modules that set the materials in context and guide users through the process of conducting research.

## Focus

Although eventually we plan for TIMEA to include materials encompassing the entire Middle East, currently the archive focuses on Egypt. One of the regions most visited and commented upon by Western travelers, Egypt is home to key archaeological sites and possesses important cultural assets that are displayed in museums and represented in museum catalogs, card collections, and stereographs. Moreover, focusing on Egypt enables us to draw upon a rich local collections and expertise. Dr. Paula Sanders, associate professor of history at Rice University, has built an extensive collection of rare texts, images, and artifacts related to Egypt that she has agreed to have digitized so that they may be more widely accessible. Some of the materials in Dr. Sanders' collection are so hard to find in a single location that researchers and students would have great difficulty getting access to all of them were they not in a digital, freely accessible format. Rice University's [Fondren Library](#) also holds some significant historic works about Egypt, and we are grateful to be able include materials from Houston Public Library's [Milsaps Collection](#) and the University of South Florida Library. A few resources related to Cyprus are also included, reflecting an earlier pilot project and our goal to expand the focus of TIMEA to the entire Middle East.

## Goals

- to enrich research by enabling richer discovery, analysis, and commentary on unique or hard-to-find sources
- provide valuable resources for teaching
- improve information literacy and research skills
- offer a model for building learning communities that use electronic resources
- develop innovative mechanisms for using GIS (Geographic Information Systems) tools in cultural heritage projects.

## Audience

TIMEA aims to reach a diverse audience, including:

- **Scholars** in a range of disciplines such as history, literature, religion, archaeology, women's studies, geography, and anthropology. For instance, European women travelers created both vivid works of literature and were pioneers in the field of archaeology. They and others like them preserve a record of material culture that has largely vanished. Scholars will find our successive editions of travel guides and museum catalogs an aid to understanding the history of museums, of Egyptology, and of collecting practices in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Anthropologists will find the material to be useful primary source data. Accounts of contemporary spiritual practice contained in the archive offer a resource for religious studies scholars exploring Islam, Judaism and eastern Christianity. Historians engaged in the study of European society and colonialism will find rich material on European attitudes and interaction with the native population of the early modern Middle East.

**Students and teachers:** In addition to making available primary source materials—original texts, maps, and images—TIMEA also provides [educational modules](#) that explore different aspects of the research process, such as [understanding satiric works](#), [studying biography](#), and [identifying unknown elements in visual materials](#). Modules also provide background information on materials included in TIMEA and suggest research questions.

- **Museum professionals:** TIMEA includes multiple editions of museum catalogs such as Mariette's [Album du Musée de Boulaq](#) and [Notice Des Principaux Monuments Exposés Au Musée De Gizeh](#), making it an invaluable resource for museum professionals and scholars in museum studies. TIMEA also contains [L'architecture arabe des Khalifes d'Egypte à l'Exposition Universelle de Paris en 1889. La Rue du Caire](#), the catalog of the Egypt exhibit at the 1889 Paris Exhibition
- **Contemporary travelers, both armchair and actual:** The Web is enabling a new means of virtual exploration (although it somewhat resembles the virtual travel conducted between 1860 and 1920 through viewing [stereoscopes](#)). We hope that modern-day travelers will use these materials to compare past and present Egypt. What places did travelers visit in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century? What attitudes did they have toward the places they explored?
- **Digital library/ humanities computing professionals:** TIMEA is building on the work of other groundbreaking digital humanities projects in the humanities such as [Perseus](#) and [Valley of the Shadow](#) by exploring how to incorporate digital resources into teaching and research and experimenting with GIS (Geographic Information Systems) technologies. In addition, we are adapting the DSpace open-source institutional repository system for use with digitization projects, implementing the [Manakin user interface](#) and developing our own tools for displaying XML texts. All code that we develop will be contributed back to the DSpace community. We welcome opportunities for collaboration and for sharing expertise.

## Types of Content

TIMEA includes:

### Texts

- **Multiple editions of museum and exhibition catalogs.** These [catalogs](#) provide invaluable information not only for historians of ancient Egypt, but also for historians of cultural institutions and intellectual historians, as well as scholars concerned with the relatively new field of museology. The catalogues contain not only descriptions of objects (some of which are no longer in publicly accessible collections), but also include floor plans, schematics, and drawings or photographs of objects on display. Our digital editions include all plans, schematics, drawings, and photographs included in the print editions. Such information is essential to understanding how objects were classified and displayed, and reveals contemporary methods of analysis and interpretation that are essential for reconstructing the history of museums, Egyptology as a discipline, and the history of 19th century epistemologies.
- **Multiple editions of travel guides.** Many libraries contain one or perhaps two editions of famous travel guides, but few contain all available editions of certain guides. Scholars and students will benefit from easy access to all editions of the English Baedeker's Egypt.
- **Travel narratives**, including works by [Sir E. A. Wallace Budge](#), [Lady Lucy Duff Gordon](#), and [Sir John Gardiner Wilkinson](#).
- **Cultural studies of Egypt and Cairo**, such as Douglas Sladen's [Oriental Cairo](#), Edward Lane's [An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians](#), and Eustace Reynolds-Ball's [The City of the Caliphs](#).

### Images

- **Historic photographs**, particularly antique postcards and stereoviews that are contemporary with many of the catalogues and travel accounts. Currently TIMEA contains approximately 200 such views. Egypt is very rich in historic places, and it was an early and favorite spot for early photographers to pursue their vocation. Egypt's ancient monuments were not the only subject of early photographers, who also trained their lenses on the medieval religious architecture of Egypt and particularly of Cairo. By the late 19th century, Egyptologists, engineers, and architects had begun numerous conservation and restoration projects that dramatically altered the visual landscape of Cairo and Egypt. Pre-restoration photographs, properly dated and identified, and widely available, are an invaluable aid to research on ancient Egyptian monuments, Coptic monuments, and Islamic monuments. They are an invaluable aid to researchers focusing on the history of architectural conservation, as well as architectural students at both the undergraduate and graduate level, and those interested in the history of photography.
- **Book illustrations:** Many of the books included in TIMEA are richly illustrated with photographs, etchings or

drawings. These images document a range of phenomena, such as artifacts, daily life, archaeological sites, landscapes, and architecture.

## GIS Maps

Currently TIMEA contains contemporary interactive GIS (Geographical Information Systems) maps of [Egypt and Cyprus](#). These maps include information such as historical sites, religious sites, place names, water, elevation, and political boundaries, thus enabling [researchers in the humanities](#) and social sciences to visualize and understand geospatial phenomena. Users can zoom in on details and search for specific place names. We hope to add more data to these maps in the future, such as nineteenth-century population figures, changing political boundaries across time, and sites of major archaeological finds.

## Historical Maps

In addition, TIMEA offers over 100 [historical maps and plans](#), most of which were drawn from travel guides. These maps and plans cover areas such as Cairo, the Nile, Theban temples, and Egypt both in the ancient period and nineteenth century.

## Educational Modules

Moving beyond the conventional digital archive, TIMEA also offers guidance for conducting research and provides a framework for incorporating digital resources and related commentary into teaching or research collections. Incorporating instruction and materials on basic research skills is critical to the substantive intellectual value of any digitization project. Yet as many studies have found, students lack basic skills in finding and using these resources. Thus TIMEA not only makes available an archive of electronic texts, images, and maps, but also provides research guides and case studies that demonstrate the research process. By providing access to research materials, TIMEA is developing research skills and scholarly methodologies among undergraduates and even graduate students at the same time that it gives access to a particular body of material. More than just a listing of resources, the TIMEA guides illustrate the process a researcher uses to generate and answer a set of research questions. Thus TIMEA will become a valuable resource for developing information literacy and skills in critical analysis. The educational modules are authored and presented online using [Connexions](#), a collaborative, community-driven approach to authoring, teaching, and learning that seeks to provide a cohesive body of high-quality educational content to anyone in the world, for free.

## Principles Guiding Selection of Materials

- **Provide key texts.** TIMEA contains works by some of the leading Egyptologists, including Auguste Mariette, [Gaston Maspero](#), and [James Henry Breasted](#). Some of the most significant travelers to Egypt are represented, such as [Sir E. A. Wallace Budge](#), [Lady Lucy Duff Gordon](#), and [Sir John Gardiner Wilkinson](#). TIMEA also includes travel guides by some of the top publishers, such as Baedeker and Thomas Cook.
- **Include hard-to-find materials.** Many of the books included in TIMEA are held by fewer than a dozen libraries.
- **Include multiple editions where appropriate.** By providing multiple editions of the Baedeker guides, museum catalogs, and other works, TIMEA makes it possible for scholars to do sophisticated comparative work. For instance, one could trace changing publishing practices as evidenced by the changing physical form that volumes take, examine evolving attitudes toward Egypt across multiple editions of the Baedeker guides, study the descriptions of new archaeological finds in successive editions of museum catalogs, or study the conventions of description, organization, and presentation of objects in museum collections.
- **Provide a range of materials:** Rather than focus solely on texts or images, TIMEA includes books, postcards, stereographs, maps (primarily drawn from books), and book illustrations.
- **Focus on works in the public domain.** TIMEA includes materials from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that are in the public domain, without copyright restrictions.

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