THE HISTORIAN'S GUIDE TO USING SEARCH ENGINES

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DR. MARC ABBOUD

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THE HISTORIAN'S GUIDE TO USING SEARCH ENGINES

Dr. Marc Abboud

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PREAMBLE

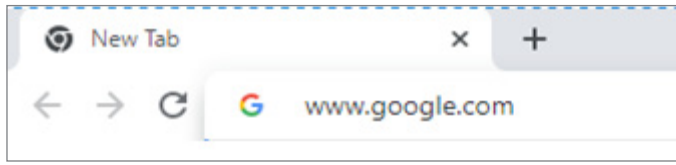
With the rapid technological development that we are experiencing, the Internet has become a sea full of knowledge where diving therein requires a skill that many people do not possess. Our studies have often preoccupied us from delving into the techniques of the electronic search engines, despite the importance of internet search for every historian.

Historical studies require a lot of effort and patience to output proven scientific facts. As historical researchers, we need to perform the investigator's job; in order to confirm the information that we obtain; thereby reaching the abstract truth, if possible.

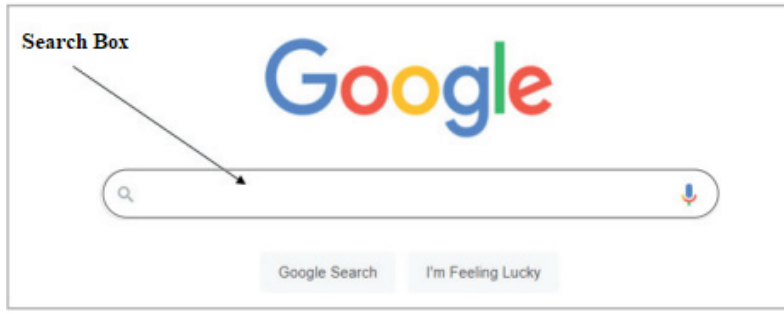
What concerns us in this Guide is the Historical Research via Google's Search Engine. If we want to get the most out of Google, we must use it and benefit from its various search tools and available operations and not just suffice with the usual search; as Google search operations contain special characters and indicators that we can use; in order to obtain more accurate and detailed results.

First, let's assume that we are doing a historical study on the **French Campaign in Egypt led by Napoleon Bonaparte**, and we started searching for historical information on this subject with the help of Google's Search Engine.

First, we write **www.google.com** in the address bar of the Google Chrome browser[1], and then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard:



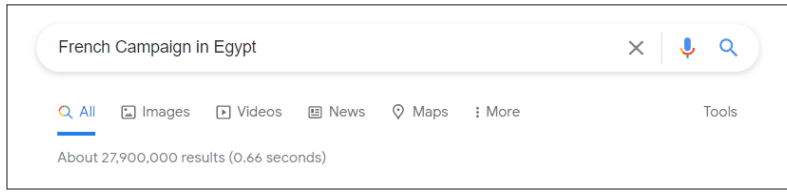
It will take us to the following page:



Afterwards, we type French Campaign in Egypt in the search box, and then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard.

1- In our presentation of this topic, we will use Google Chrome browser chrome, and we will support this Guide with illustrations of what we do, to make it easier for the reader to apply them afterwards.

We will get 27,900,000 results[2] as indicated in the following figure:



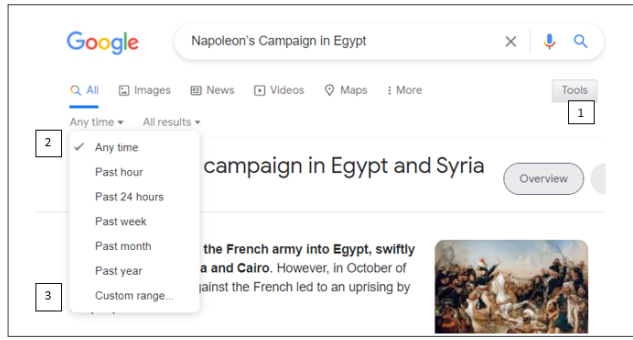
Trying to obtain information from all these results will be difficult and a waste of time and energy, and that is where the search assistant operations come in; in order to help in converting this large number of results into a much smaller number that is easier to manage. This allows us to easily select the websites we want to access. Therefore, we will showcase several Google-specific methods and sites that will help us in completing our historical research.

2- The number of results changes; as it is linked to the search engine updates.

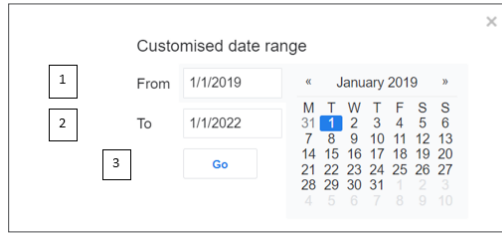
FIRST: FILTERING THE SEARCH RESULTS BY DATE

Let's assume that we are searching for a recent research on **Napoleon's Campaign in Egypt** and we just want results from the past three years. If we filter by date, we can be sure that old links will not get in the way of our search results, and that is through the following steps:

1. We write, for example, Napoleon's Campaign in Egypt, then we click on (Tools), then (Any Time), and then (Custom Range).



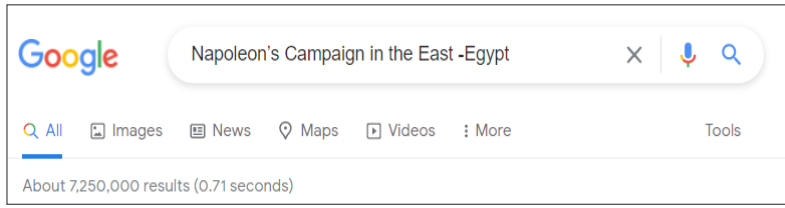
2. Afterwards, the window (Customised Date Range) will appear, where we can enter the start and end dates beside the calendar. And then, we click on (Go).



With this simple process, we can specify the search results we want, and ensure that we do not get results outside the specified timeframe.

SECOND: EXCLUDING KEYWORDS THAT WE DO NOT NEED

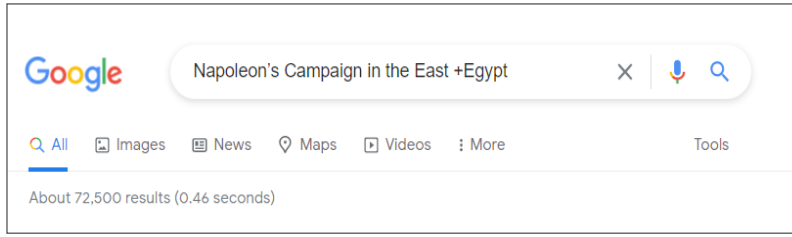
If we want to exclude specific words from our Google search, we just have to put a minus sign **–** before the word we want to exclude. For example, if we have enough references and sources about **Napoleon's Campaign in Egypt** and we just want to search for **Napoleon's Campaign in the East** without getting into topics about Egypt, we write Napoleon's Campaign in the East -Egypt and then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard.



The search results on the topic will appear without any mention of **Egypt** in them. This simple process helps us narrow down the search scope; in order to access the information within a short period of time.

THIRD: EMPHASIZING THE KEYWORDS WE NEED

On the other hand, if we put the plus sign **+** before any word, this means that we want to emphasize its importance in the search. If we take the previous example, but slightly change it by emphasizing the importance of searching the topic **Egypt**, we write Napoleon's Campaign in the East +Egypt in the search box, and then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard.

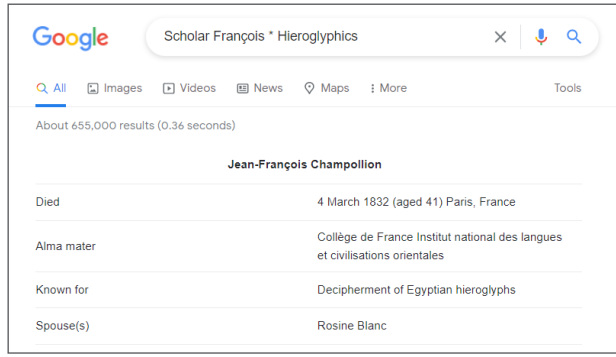


Fewer results will appear, which means that Google has exclusively shown the results of **Napoleon's Campaign**, which mention the word **Egypt**. This process helps us narrow down the information, especially if there are a large number of sites and information regarding the general subject of our study.

FOURTH: FINDING IMPORTANT INFORMATION THAT IS PARTIALLY UNKNOWN TO US

If we are seeking important information that we only know parts of, Google will help us fill in the gaps. All we need to do is use the asterisk sign ✱ in place of any missing words or letters, and then Google will find the right answer for us. For example, if we are looking for the scholar who solved the mystery of the hieroglyphic writing during Napoleon's campaign, and we only know that his name is François, we write the following in the search box: Scholar François * Hieroglyphics

Afterwards, we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard.

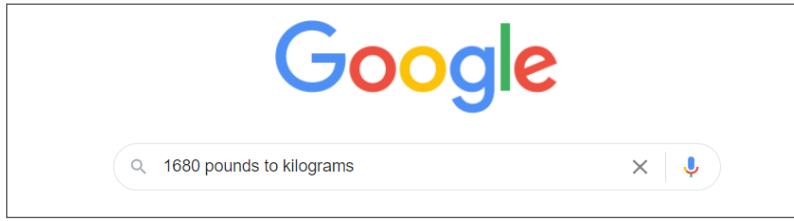


Once it appears that the scholar's name is **Jean-François Champollion**, we may then continue our search by trying to find out more details about this famous scholar.

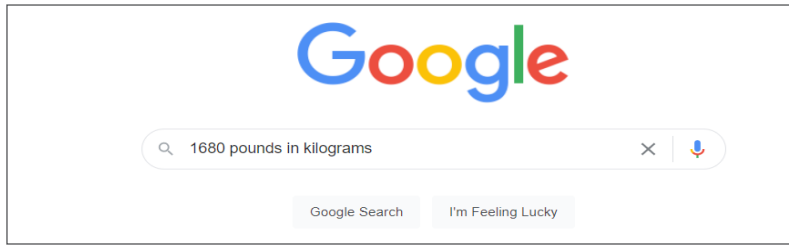
FIFTH: USING TO/IN IN THE GOOGLE SEARCH BOX

We can also convert the measurement units used in one country into units used in other countries, such as converting pounds into kilograms, miles to kilometers, etc., and that is by using the To /In technique in the Google search box. For example, the Rosetta stone discovered during Napoleon's campaign in Egypt weighs about 1,680 pounds. If we want to know the weight in kilograms, we should do the following:

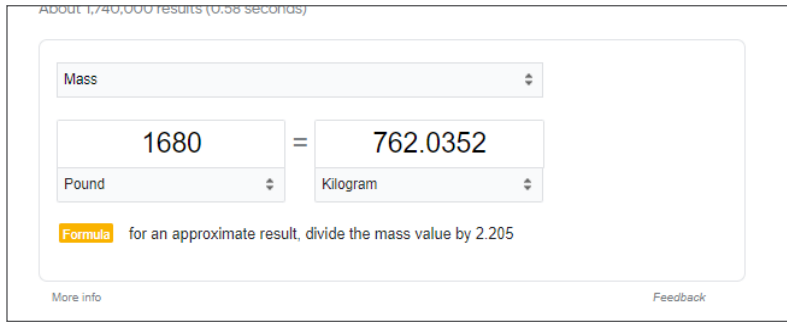
1. We write 1680 pounds to kilograms in the Google search box.



Or 1680 pounds in kilograms.



2. Then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard.



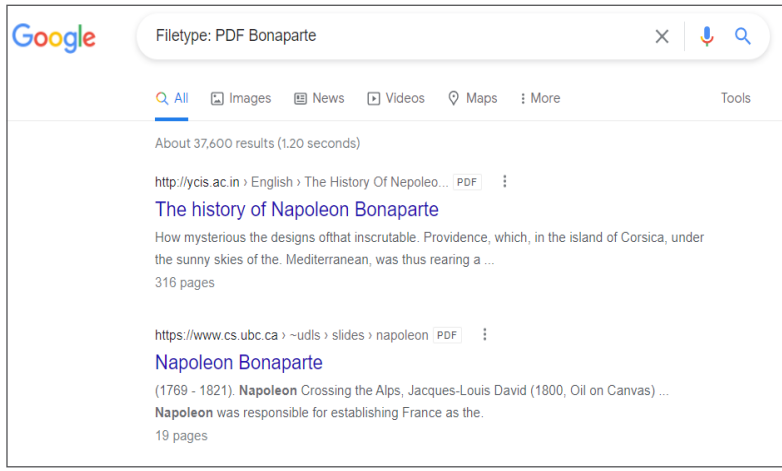
With that, we get the result; which states that the Rosetta stone weighs about **762.0352 kg**. We can follow the same method to convert other measurement units including speed, area, currencies and others.

This conversion method for the measurement units provides us with accurate, effective and quick results; in order to come up with a reliable and coherent analysis for the information we have collected to enrich our historical studies.

SIXTH: SEARCHING FOR FILES

However, if we want to obtain research, books, periodicals, magazines, etc., rather than information on websites or social media platforms, we write **filetype**: in the Google search box and then the file format we are looking for, whether it is PDF, Word (.docx), Excel (.xlsx), or other formats.

If we want to find studies on **Bonaparte's campaign in Egypt** in PDF format, we write Filetype: PDF Bonaparte in the search box, then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard.



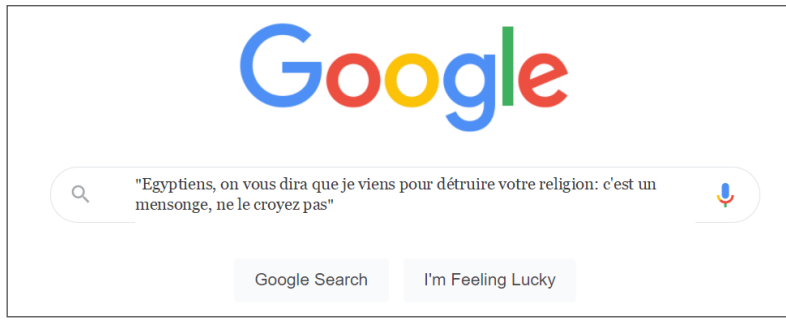
Thus, we can limit the results to files that can be downloaded in PDF format, whether they are books, research, or magazines.

SEVENTH: ACCESSING EXACT QUOTES

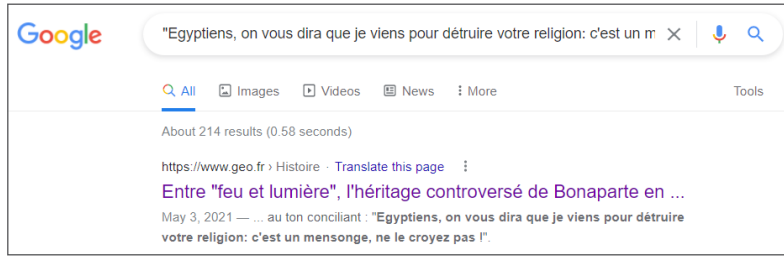
We can also enrich our historical studies with accurate quotes said by specific figures; in order to be investigated and documented, and that is by putting the text between two quotation marks. If we apply this to **Napoleon's statement to the Egyptians**:

"Egyptiens, on vous dira que je viens pour détruire votre religion: c'est un mensonge, ne le croyez pas"[3].

We write the quote in this manner in the Google search box, and then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard:



The search results will show us websites that contain the written text in the same manner, while excluding the websites where the text was written in another manner.

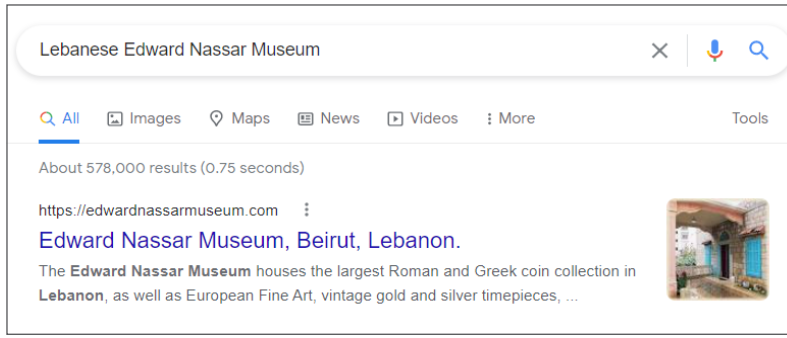


3- "O Egyptians, you will be told that I came to destroy your religion. That is a lie, do not believe it"

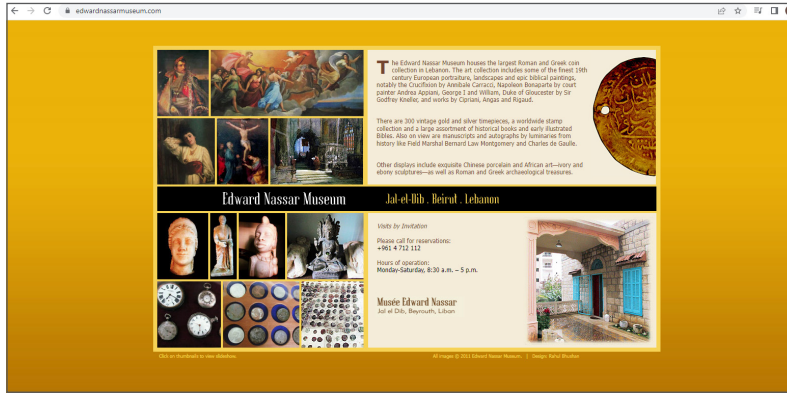
EIGHTH: USING BOOKMARKS

Google's Bookmark tool can be used to save any link we want to re-access, and that is by following these steps:

1. First, we have to access the website that we want to save its full URL[4]; for example, if we write Lebanese Edward Nassar Museum in the Google search box, and then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard, it will give us the following results:

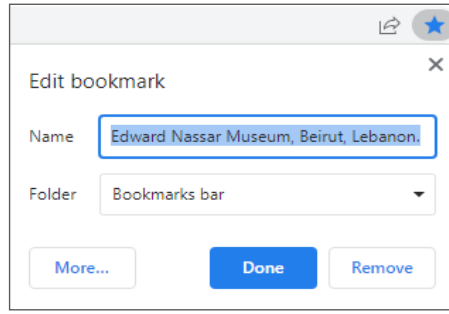


2. By choosing the first result, it will take us to the following website.



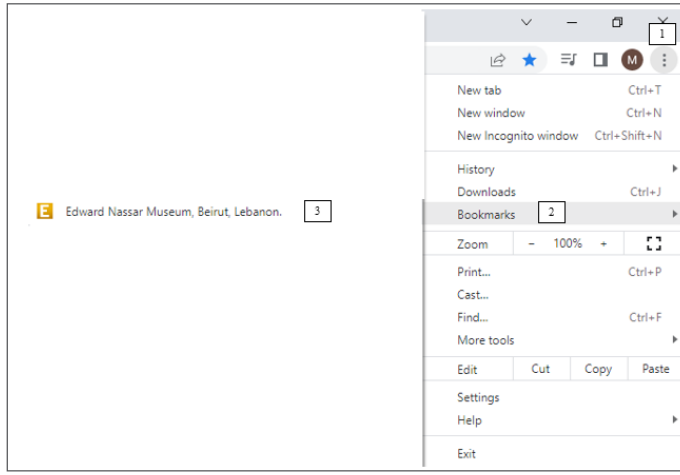
4- URL: the address/link of a web page.

3. We just have to click on the (Star shape) at the top of the page on the title bar, which will display the following:



4. Then we click on (Done), which will save the URL within Google Chrome browser.

After a while, if we want to go back to this URL, all we have to do is click on the three dots at the top of the browser, and then we click (Bookmarks); afterwards, the names of the previously saved websites will be displayed, and we may choose the URL we want to access.

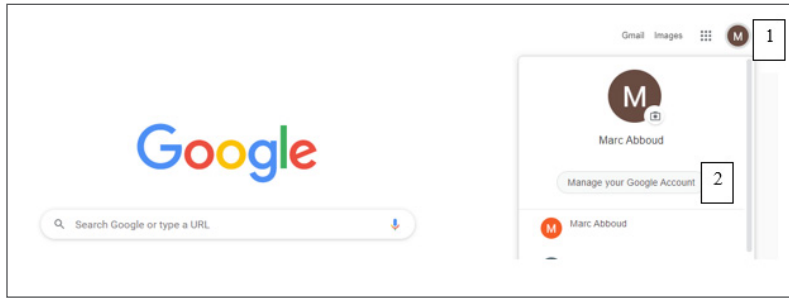


NINTH: CHECKING OUR SEARCH HISTORY

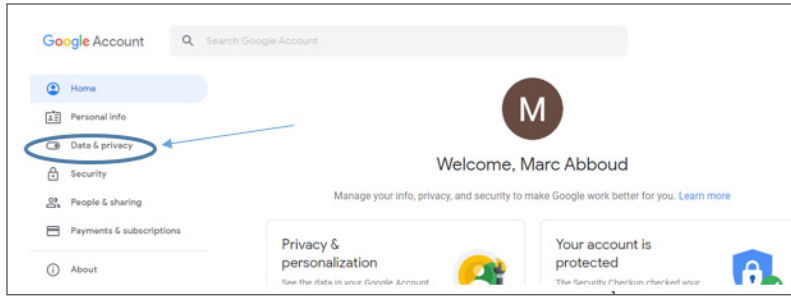
If we visit a website, but we do not save it or bookmark it, and then as we make progress in our study, we find that the website contains important information for our research, and we want to return to it, we should access the web history as it provides a record of the sites which we have visited, a timeline, etc.

If we want to know this timeline, we visit (My Activity Page) through the following steps:

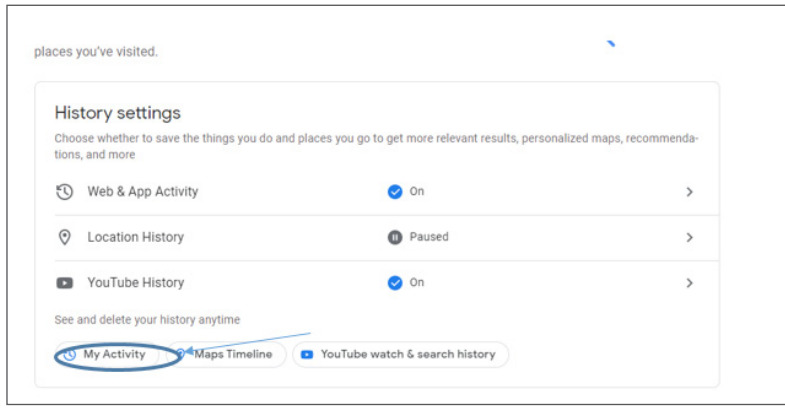
1. We click on the (circle) at the far right, and then click on (Manage your Google Account).



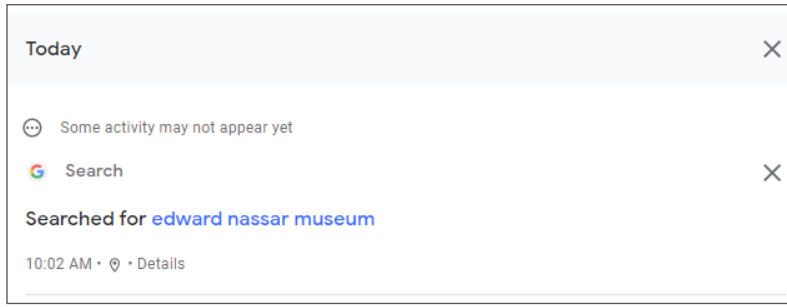
2. Then we click on (Data & Privacy).



3. Then we select (My Activity).



It will then show us the history of the websites we have visited.



This process saves a lot of time and effort in re-searching sites that we have previously visited, if we did not add them to our archive.

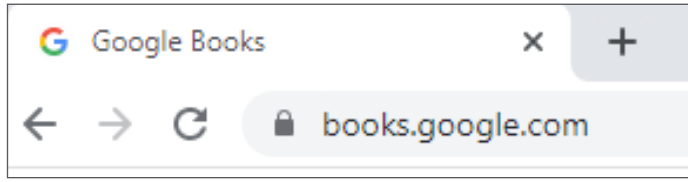
TENTH: USING THE GOOGLE VIRTUAL LIBRARY

We can read, download or preview some books and publications on Google Virtual Library, and if we find a book that we want to use in our research, we may have several options, such as reading and downloading the book, buying it online, or borrowing it from a nearby library.

1. Viewing Publications in the Google Virtual Library

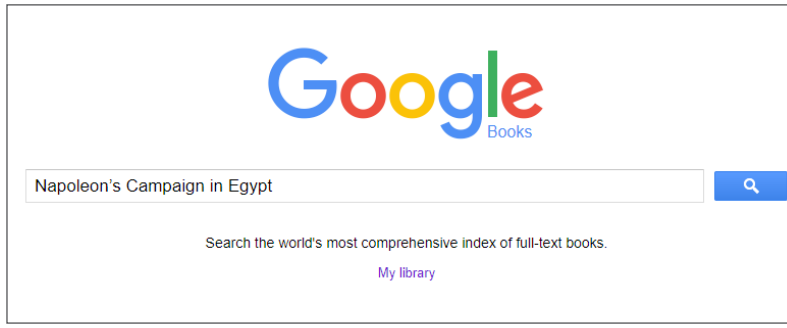
If we want to find some studies on **Napoleon Bonaparte's Campaign** on the Google Virtual Library; in order to view or download[5] it, we must go through the following phases:

A. We type the following URL in Google Chrome's address bar **books.google.com**, and then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard:

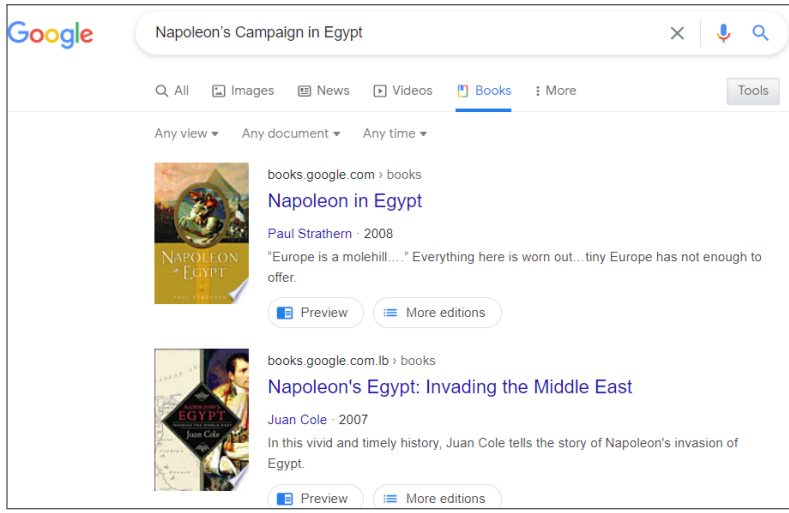


5- It should be noted that not all books and publications are allowed to be downloaded; as some can be downloaded, while some can only be read either in full or some of its pages, and others will only show the research headlines.

B. We type our research keywords[6] in the Google search box; for example, Napoleon's Campaign in Egypt, and then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard.

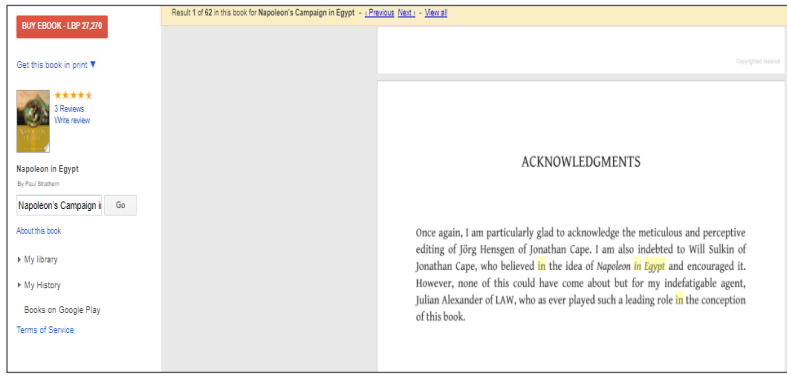


The results will show several books about Napoleon's campaign in Egypt.



6- We can also search using a particular book name, author name, or ISBN number.

C. If we click on the name of the book shown here, which is **Napoleon in Egypt**, it will open the following page:

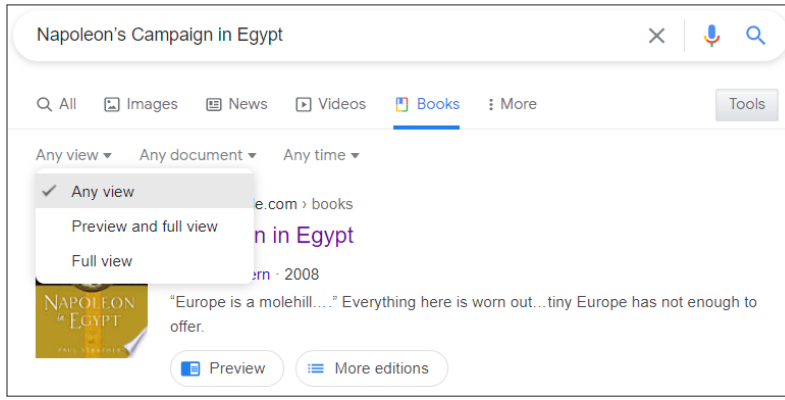


On this page, we see information about the book, such as the author's name, the publication date, the number of the book's pages, and other information of interest to the researcher; along with highlights on the keywords we were looking for. In this example, the word **Egypt** was highlighted in any page mentioned in the book. This means that the information will be easily accessible, if the book is made available to us, either electronically or as a hard copy.

2. Search Assistant Operations in Google Virtual Library

• Views

3 types of views can be shown for the documents in the Google Virtual Library. If we click on (Any View), 3 options will be displayed:



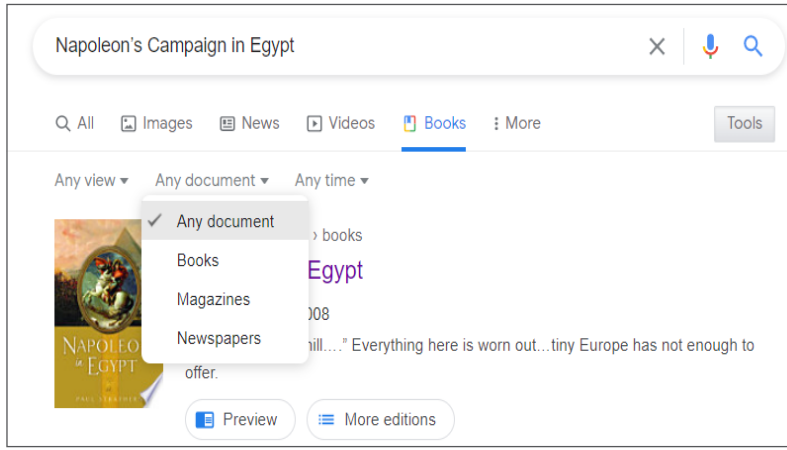
❍ **Any View:** Displays all of the documents which resulted from the search

❍ **Preview and Full View:** Shows the documents that may be partially or fully viewed

❍ **Full View:** Shows only the documents that may be fully viewed

• **Document Types**

We can also choose the type of document that may be filtered from the Google Virtual Library by clicking on (Any document), which will display the following options:



❍ **Any Document:** If we want the results to show any type of document, whether it is a book, a magazine, or a newspaper.

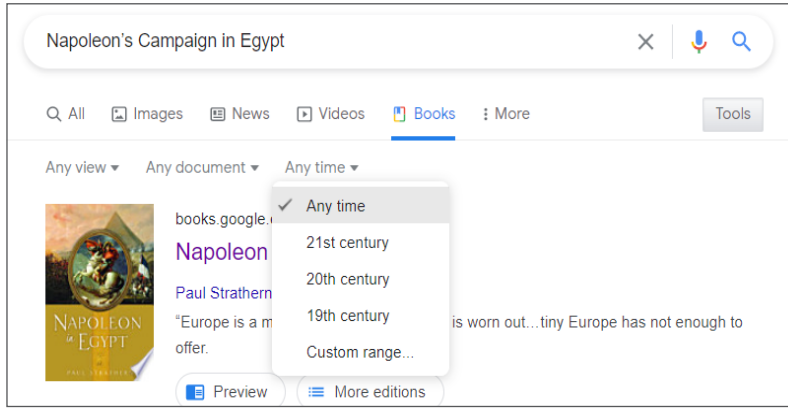
❍ **Books:** Shows books only.

❍ **Magazines:** Shows magazines only.

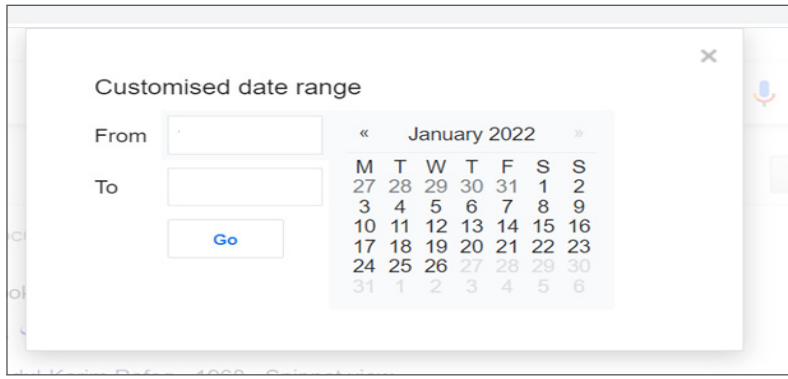
❍ **Newspapers:** Shows newspapers only.

- **Release Date**

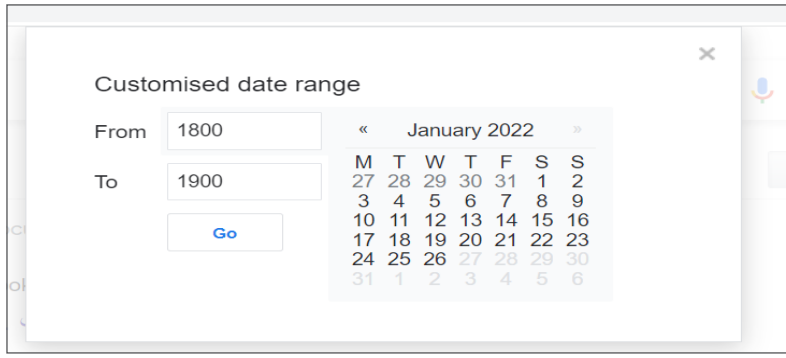
We can also determine the time period for our search in the Virtual Library to access editions for a specific period; and that is by clicking on (Any Time):



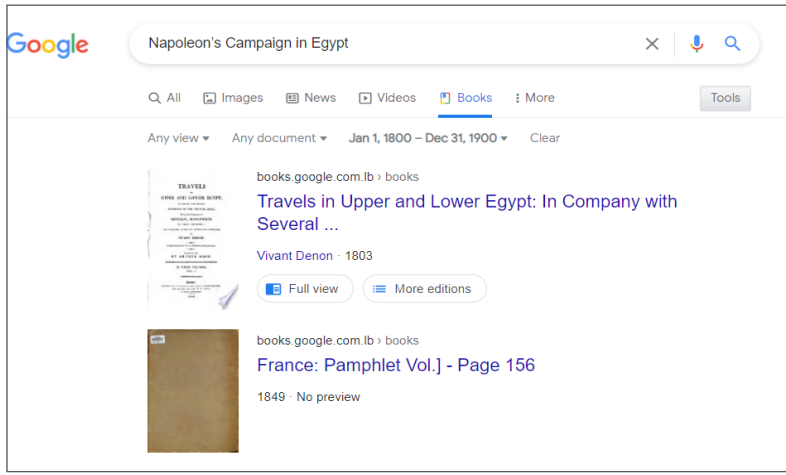
We can select editions either from the 21st century, the 20th century, or the 19th century editions, or choose Custom Range, which will display the following:



We can select a specific time period; for example, if we want books published about **Napoleon's Campaign in Egypt** between the year 1800 and the year 1900, we must write 1800 in the (From) field which means **From the year**, and 1900 in the (To) field which means **till the year**. Afterwards, we click (Go).



This will show the editions published between these two dates.

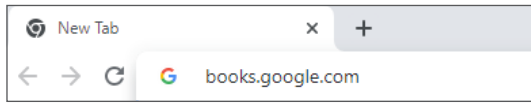


These previous options will greatly help the historical researcher in dividing his research system based on specific time segments.

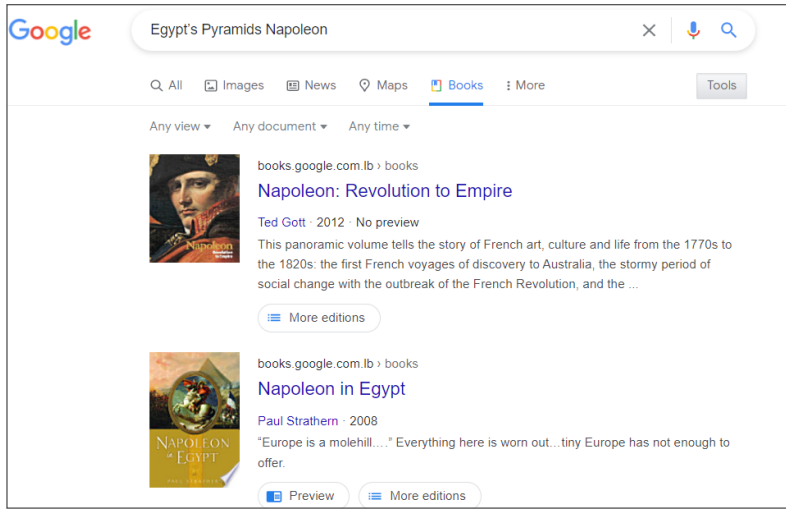
3. Practical Application

If our historical research requires information found in a **book** about **Napoleon's visit to the pyramids in Egypt** within the **21st century**, which we can **read in full**, we should follow these steps:

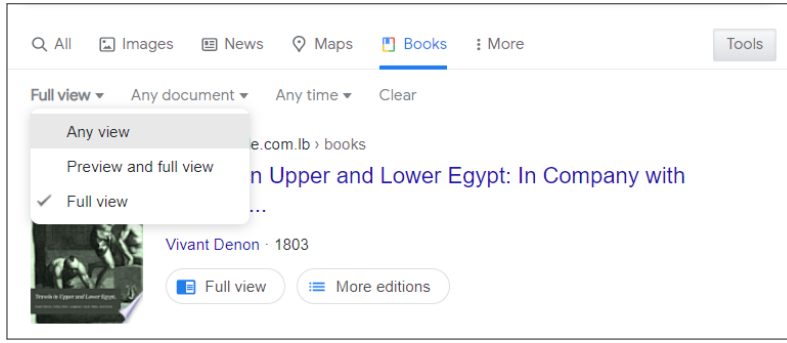
A. We type **books.google.com** in our Google Chrome address bar, and then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard.



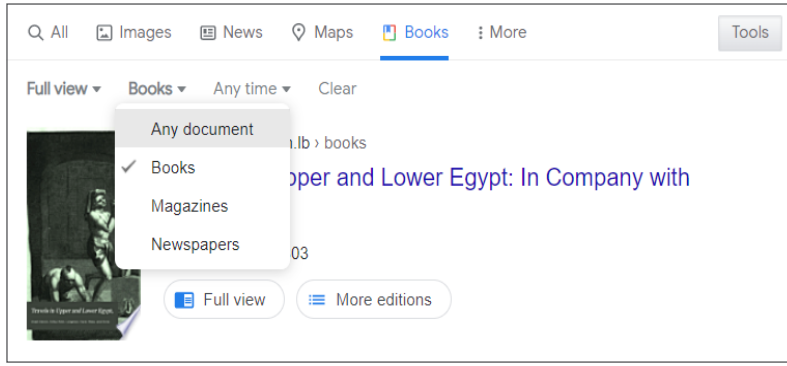
B. We write the appropriate keywords in the search box, for example, Egypt's Pyramids Napoleon, and then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard. Many options will be displayed for books, magazines and other types of publications.



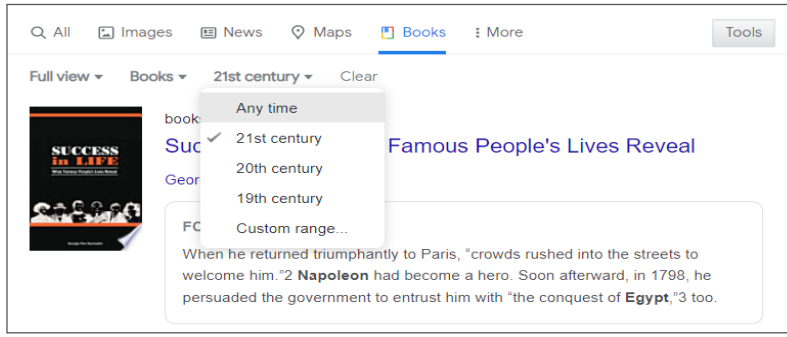
C. We start filtering these results; in order to obtain full previews only, and that is by clicking on (Any View), and then selecting (Full View).



D. Then we continue to filter the results and select (Books) from (Any Document); in order to obtain results that contain books only, while excluding any magazines and newspapers.



E. We specify books published only in the 21st century by clicking on (Any Time), and then selecting (21st Century).



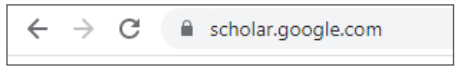
Afterwards, we will obtain the book that may help us with our research. Here, we can click on the **Exploring the Interior: Essays on Literary and Cultural History** book by **Karl W. Guthke** to see if its topic is useful for our research.

After accessing the book's link, we find that we can read the entire book; because we have previously selected (Full View); and that it was issued in 2018; i.e. the 21st century, because we have selected (21st Century); and that it is a book because we have also selected (Books).

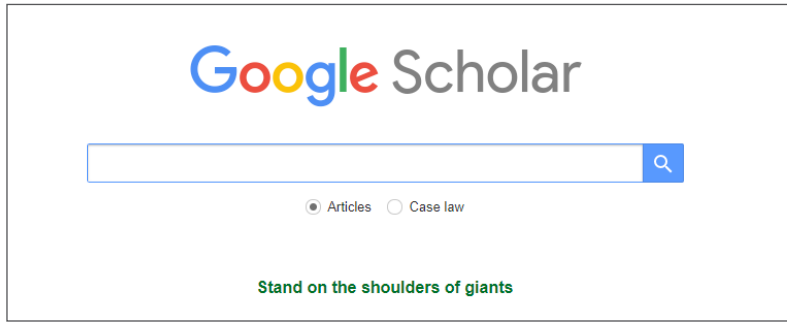
ELEVENTH: USING GOOGLE SCHOLAR

Google also helps researchers through a search engine for scientific and university literature, articles, theses, summaries, etc. To access and search this website, we apply the following steps:

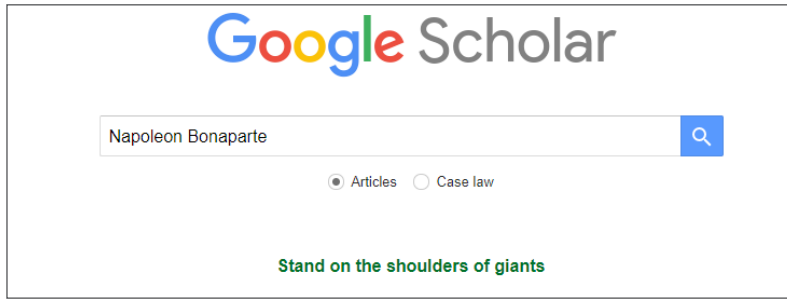
1. We write **scholar.google.com** in the address bar.



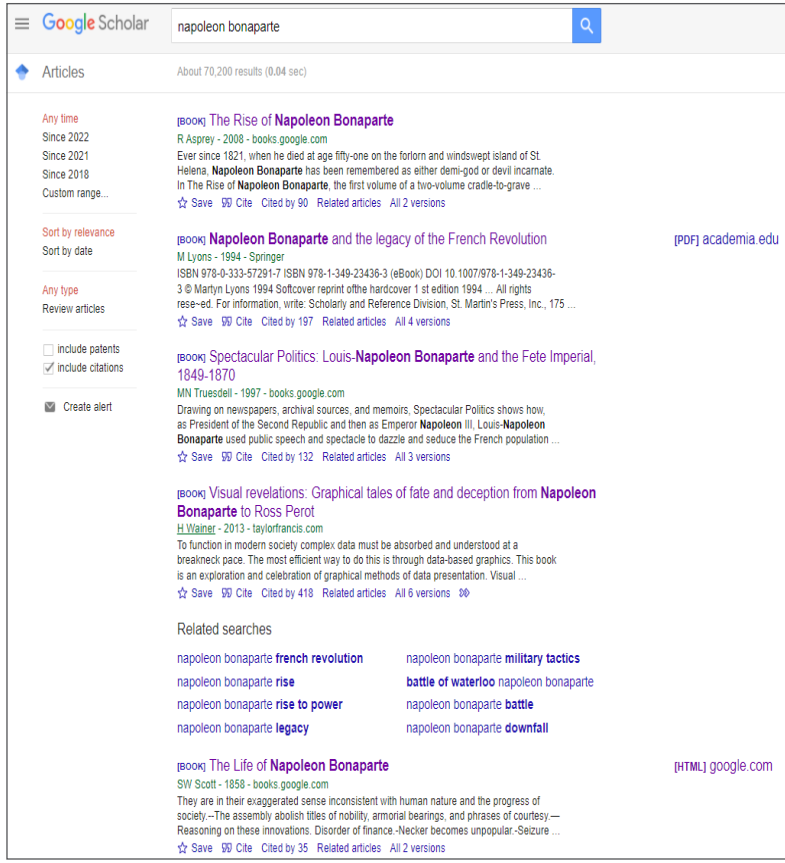
2. Then we press the (Enter) button, which will show the following:



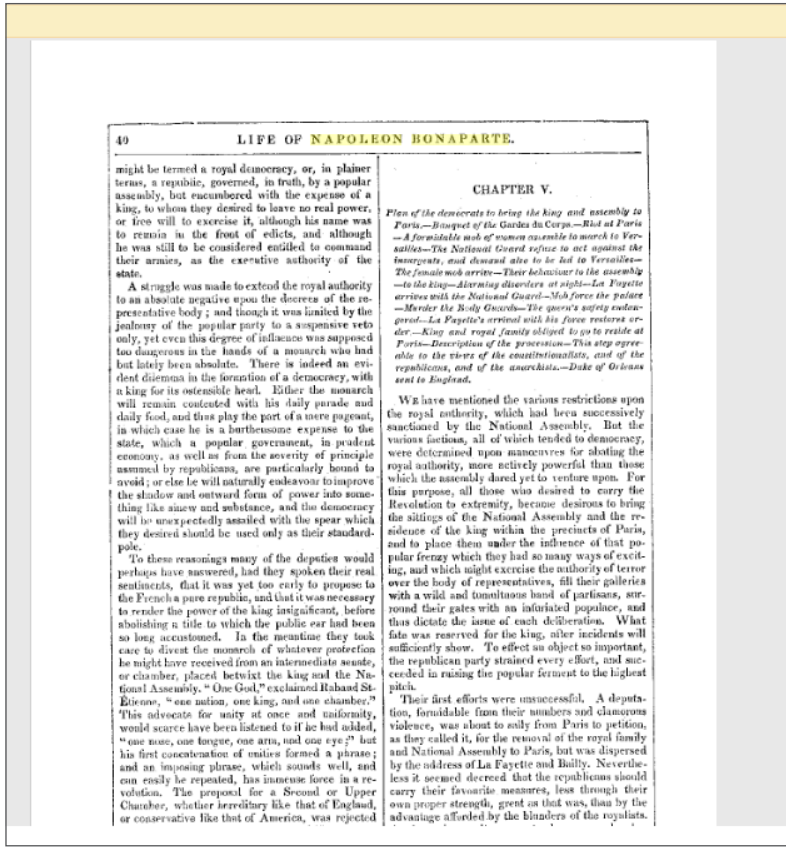
3. Afterwards, we write what we want to look for in the search box; for example, Napoleon Bonaparte, and then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard.



4. We will get several results from different sources, all we have to do is click on the link that may benefit our historical research.



5. We select, for example, **The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte,** by clicking on the title link; and so the result will load automatically, and the research below will open as follows:



40 LIFE OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.

might be termed a royal democracy, or, in plainer terms, a republic, governed, in truth, by a popular assembly, but encumbered with the expense of a king, to whom they desired to leave no real power, or free will to exercise it, although his name was to remain in the front of edicts, and although he was still to be considered entitled to command their armies, as the executive authority of the state.

A struggle was made to extend the royal authority to an absolute negative upon the decrees of the representative body; and though it was limited by the jealousy of the popular party to a suspensive veto only, yet even this degree of influence was supposed too dangerous in the hands of a monarch who had but lately been absolute. There is indeed an evident dilemma in the formation of a democracy, with a king for its ostensible head. Either the monarch will remain contented with his daily parade and daily food, and thus play the part of a mere pageant, in which case he is a burthensome expense to the state, which a popular government, in prudent economy, as well as from the severity of principle assumed by republicans, are particularly bound to avoid; or else he will naturally endeavour to improve the shadow and outward form of power into something like sinew and substance, and the democracy will be unexpectedly assailed with the spear which they desired should be used only as their standard-pole.

To these reasonings many of the deputies would perhaps have answered, had they spoken their real sentiments, that it was yet too early to propose to the French a pure republic, and that it was necessary to render the power of the king insignificant, before abolishing a title to which the public ear had been so long accustomed. In the meantime they took care to divest the monarch of whatever protection he might have received from an intermediate senate, or chamber, placed betwixt the king and the National Assembly. "One God," exclaimed Rabaud St. Étienne, "one nation, one king, and one chamber." This advocate for unity at once and uniformity, would scarce have been listened to if he had added, "one muse, one tongue, one arm, and one eye;" but his first concatenation of unities formed a phrase; and an imposing phrase, which sounds well, and can easily be repeated, has immense force in a revolution. The proposal for a Second or Upper Chamber, whether hereditary like that of England, or conservative like that of America, was rejected

CHAPTER V.

Plan of the democrats to bring the king and assembly to Paris.—Banquet of the Gardes du Corps.—Riot at Paris —A formidable mob of women assemble to march to Versailles—The National Guard refuse to act against the insurgents, and demand also to be led to Versailles—The female mob arrive—Their behaviour to the assembly —to the king—Alarming disorders at night—La Fayette arrives with the National Guard—Mob force the palace —Murder the Body Guards—The queen's safety endangered—La Fayette's arrival with his force restores order —King and royal family obliged to go to reside at Paris—Description of the procession—This step agreeable to the views of the constitutionalists, and of the republicans, and of the anarchists.—Duke of Orleans sent to England.

We have mentioned the various restrictions upon the royal authority, which had been successively sanctioned by the National Assembly. But the various factions, all of which tended to democracy, were determined upon manœuvres for abating the royal authority, more actively powerful than those which the assembly dared yet to venture upon. For this purpose, all those who desired to carry the Revolution to extremity, became desirous to bring the sittings of the National Assembly and the residence of the king within the precincts of Paris, and to place them under the influence of that popular frenzy which they had so many ways of exciting, and which might exercise the authority of terror over the body of representatives, fill their galleries with a wild and tumultuous band of partisans, surround their gates with an infuriated populace, and thus dictate the issue of each deliberation. What fate was reserved for the king, after incidents will sufficiently show. To effect an object so important, the republican party strained every effort, and succeeded in raising the popular ferment to the highest pitch.

Their first efforts were unsuccessful. A deputation, formidable from their numbers and clamorous violence, was about to sally from Paris to petition, as they called it, for the removal of the royal family and National Assembly to Paris, but was dispersed by the address of La Fayette and Bailly. Nevertheless it seemed decreed that the republicans should carry their favourite measures, less through their own proper strength, great as that was, than by the advantage afforded by the blunders of the royalists.

Accordingly, we benefit from all the research related to our research topic, and those that preceded it; in order to get the best possible result.

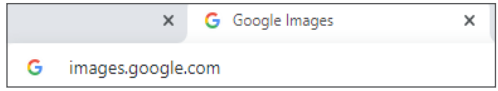
TWELFTH: USING THE GOOGLE IMAGES SEARCH FEATURE

If we want to verify the credibility of a particular image[7] found on the Internet, confirm its source, and find out whether it is real or not, Google has a reverse image search feature to find out which websites have previously posted such images, and whether or not they can be used.

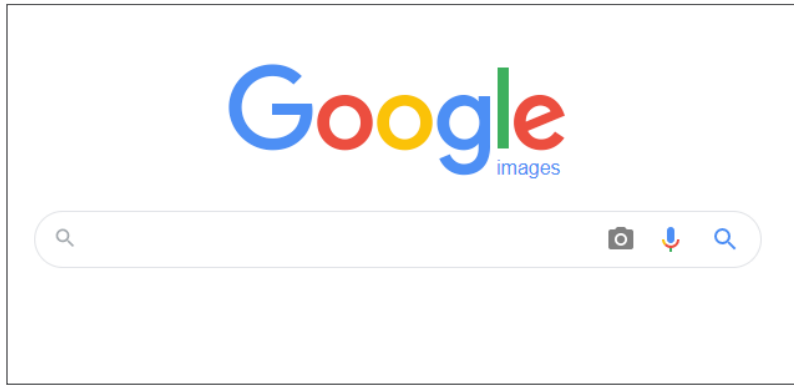
We can upload the image to Google Images; in order to find the same or similar images. To do so, we have to follow the following steps to find this image of the Pyramid of Giza:

7- Some authors still use images obtained from search engines in their books/articles without taking into consideration copyright issues.

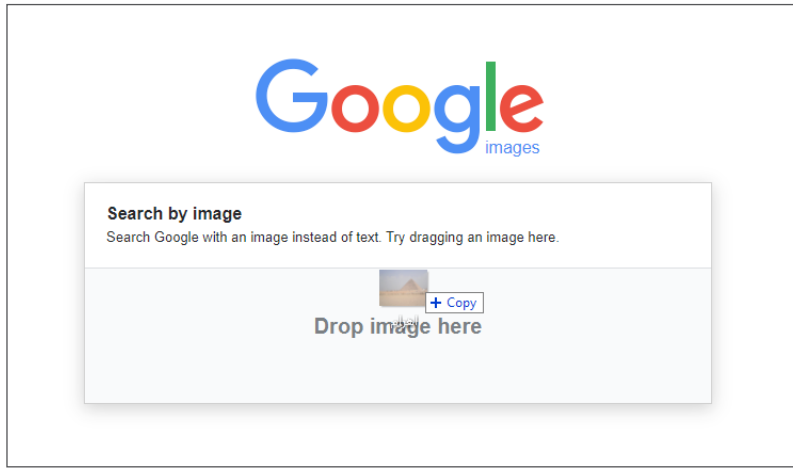
1. We type **images.google.com** in our Google Chrome's address bar, and then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard.



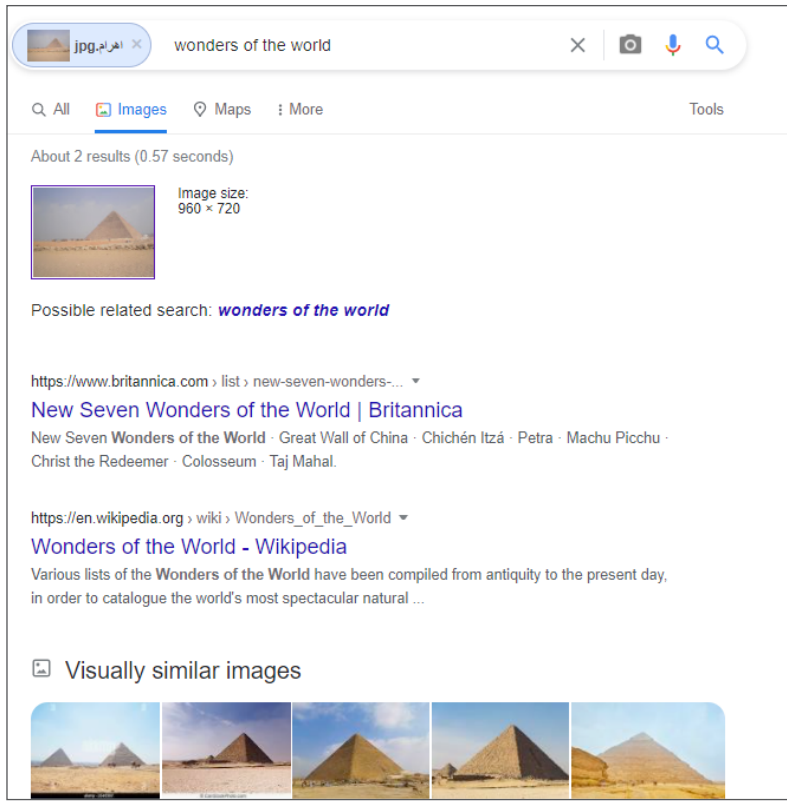
A Google search box will appear that is dedicated for images:



2. We click on the image we want to verify, and then we drag and release it in the search box as follows:



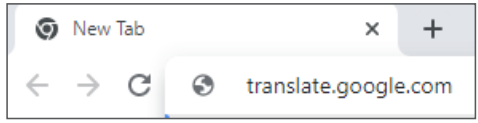
Finally, we will get several results through which we will know the websites where this image or similar images are located.



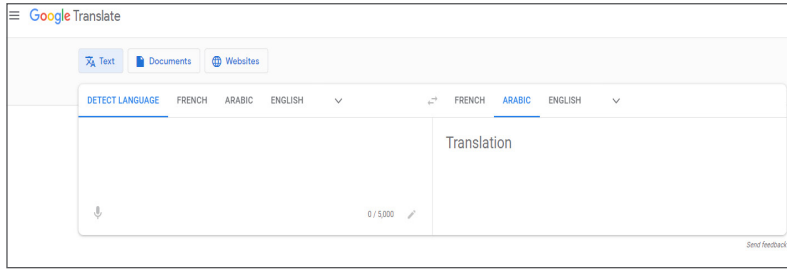
THIRTEENTH: USING THE GOOGLE TRANSLATE TOOL

Through its translation app, Google provides the feature of translating text, and detecting the original language of the text to be translated if we do not know its original language, thus saving the researchers' effort, and reducing the professional translation costs. To do this, we follow these steps:

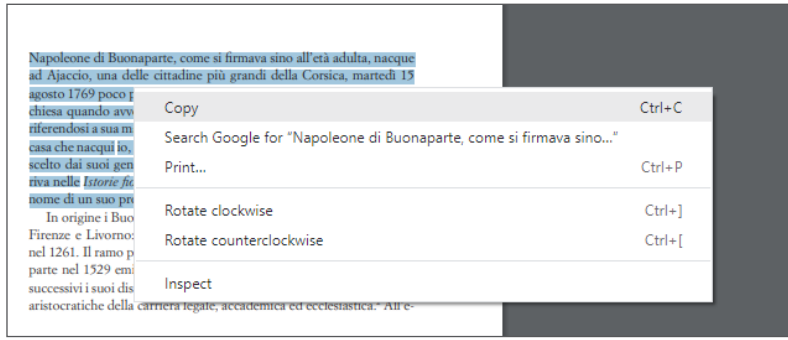
1. We write on our Google Chrome's address bar **translate.google.com**, and then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard.



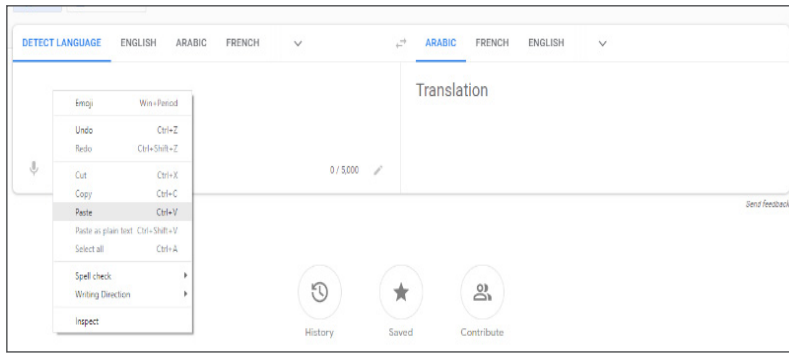
2. The following window will be displayed to us. If we do not know the original language of the document, we click on (Detect Language), and in the second box, we select the language that we want to translate the text into; for example, Arabic.



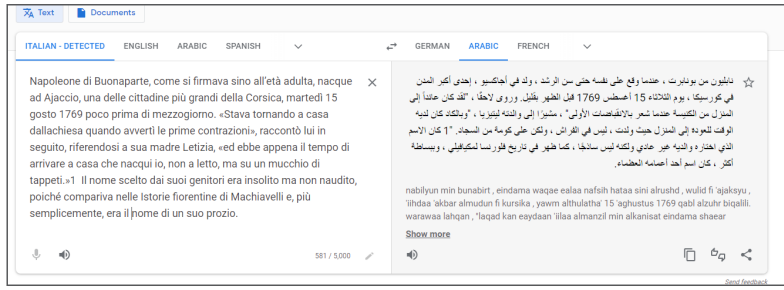
3. If the text in our document is selectable, we select and copy the text by right-clicking on the mouse, and choosing (Copy) as follows:



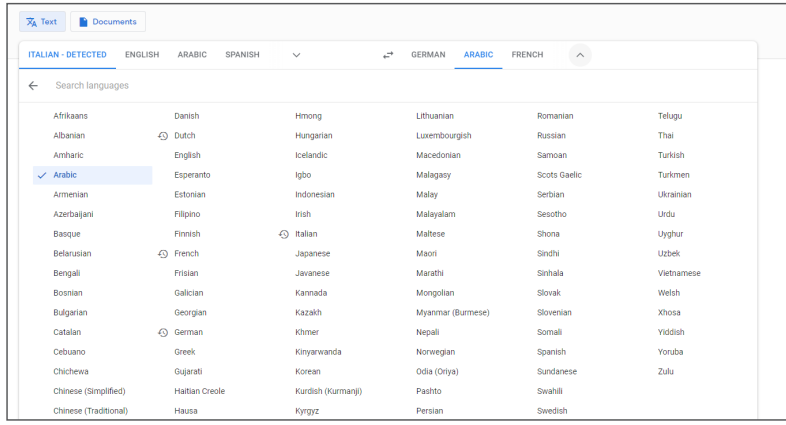
4. Afterwards, we go to the Google Translate page, then we do a right click, and select (Paste) as follows:



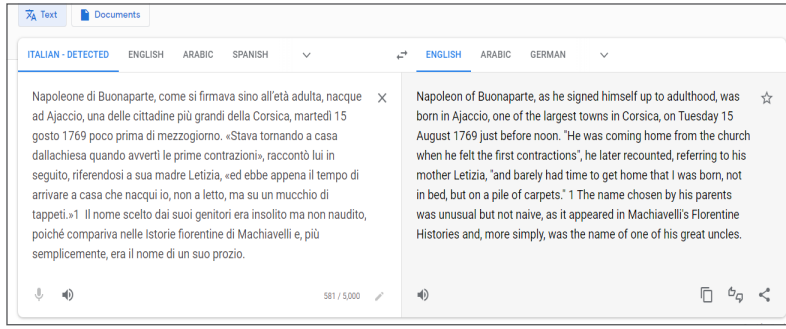
That way, we will make a copy of the selected section, and it will be translated directly into Arabic. In the following image, we notice that Google has automatically detected the original language of the text (ITALIAN-DETECTED):



If we want to translate the same text into another language, all we have to do is press the arrow in the translation side, and it will give us several language options, which the original text can be translated into as shown in the following figure:



If we choose English, Google will directly translate the text from Italian into English as follows:



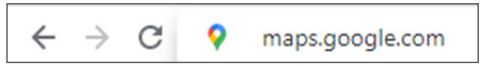
Based on the foregoing, we must clarify that the Google Translate feature can help us understand the topic in general, but it does not provide a professional translation; therefore, it is not fully reliable.

FOURTEENTH: USING GOOGLE MAPS

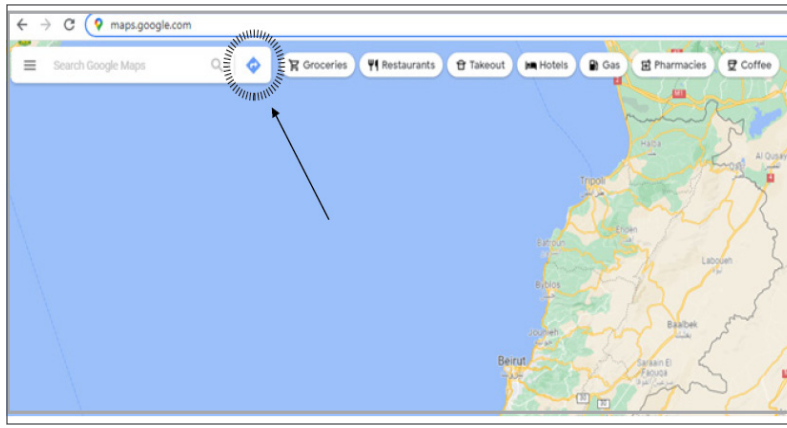
In order to find an estimate of the time it took Napoleon to travel from Alexandria to the Pyramids of Giza; taking into account the changes in the road map and the various means of transportation over time, we can use Google Maps, which helps the historical researcher calculate the logical time for invasions, communications, and other matters.

As for finding out the time required to walk on foot from Alexandria to the Pyramids of Giza at the present time, we may do the following:

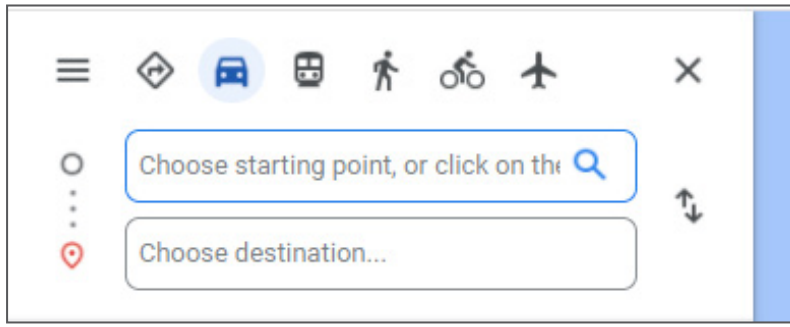
1. We write **maps.google.com** in Google Chrome's address bar, and then we press the (Enter) button on the keyboard:



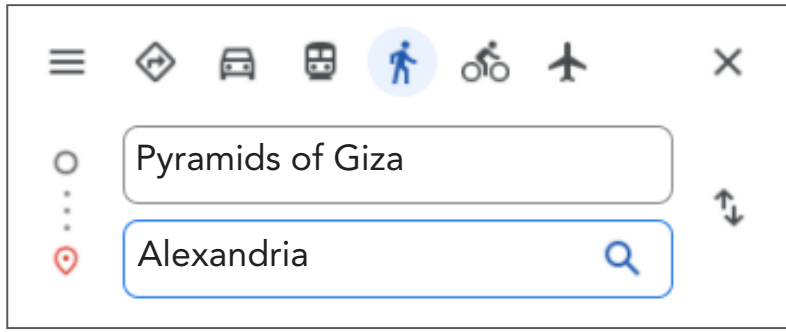
The following will be displayed:



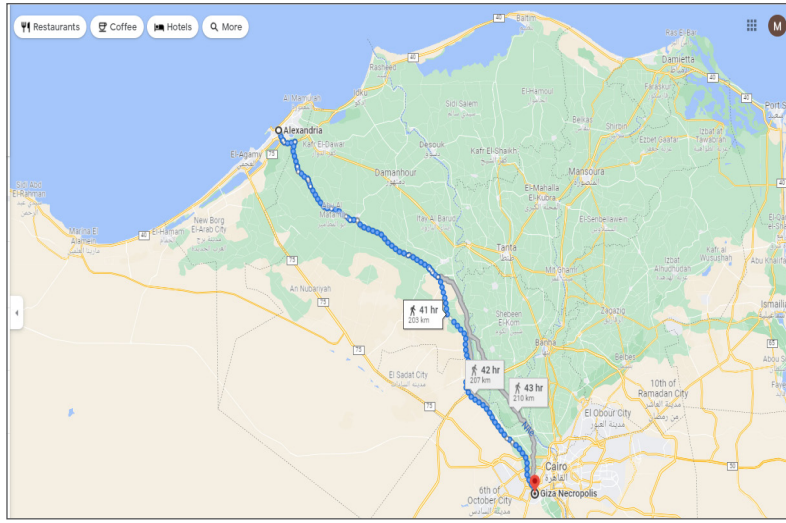
2. We click on the arrow displayed on the screen, and we will see the following:



3. We choose the means of transportation to be (On Foot), and fill the two boxes as follows:



4. We press the (Enter) button on the keyboard, and it will show us the map of Egypt, the available directions, and the time we need to get to the Pyramids of Giza from Alexandria.



Google Maps helps a lot in our historical research, but we must all take into account the geographical variables that have occurred over time.

CONCLUSION

In our current era, we must rely on modern technology to make use of our time as much as possible to complete as many credible historical research as possible, and this by no means dispense with paper documents from books, magazines, newspapers and documents. Therefore, as researchers, we should keep pace with the rapid technological development and be ready to learn new technologies that will help us with our work, studies and research.

All that was presented in this Guide greatly helps the historical researcher to speed up and organize the search operation, and any researcher can expand further in studying the Google techniques mentioned here, or even use the other tools that it provides.

Through the operations and tools mentioned in this Guide, we are now capable of searching for documents and records in a faster manner, and in all the languages. Therefore if we properly use these tools, they will help us come up with rich research that contribute to the field of history, and shed light on the historical facts that have been forgotten.

REFERENCES

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This book serves as a guide for historians to master the ability to use search engines, and improve their historical research skills. The book covers the necessary steps involved in using the various tools and operations that help in accelerating the acquisition of valuable information.

The link, which this book creates between the historical research and the plethora of knowledge found online, assists history students, researchers, and historians in releasing more research and findings within a short period of time, and that is through easily accessing references and sources from publications, books, magazines, documents, and websites.

DR. MARC ABBOUD

LEBANON 2022