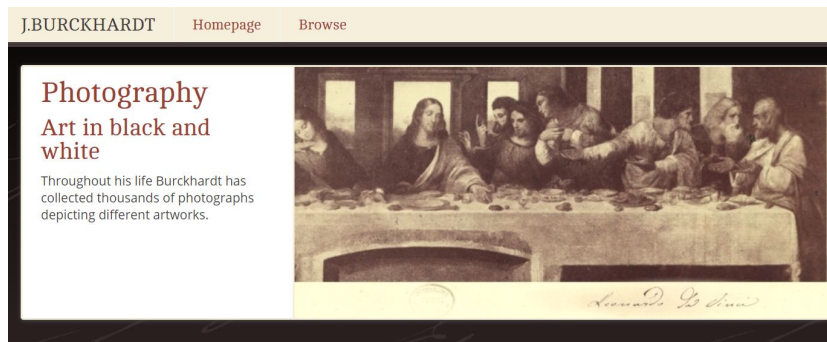


Burckhardtsource.org

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An open, semantic, digital library, burckhardtsource.org provides access to the critical edition of letters written between 1843-1897 by members of the European intelligentsia to the Swiss art historian Jacob Burckhardt (1818-

1897). Although many of Burckhardt's letters have been published, this collection of correspondence primarily consists of letters written to Burckhardt that do not currently exist on any other platform. The letters provide an intimate look into Burckhardt's relationships with contemporary academics, artists, politicians, and supporters of the arts, and offer a broader look at nineteenth century cultural and socio-political movements and structures. Researchers will appreciate the rich content found within the text of the letters, including specific details about artistic, social, or political events, philosophies concerning art and art history, and conversations about influential personalities. Students who are new to using correspondence as a primary source may be drawn to the curated collections that offer commentary about topics explored within the letters. In addition, any art historians or enthusiasts who are interested in nineteenth century European culture will find value in the information offered on this website. The project was funded by the European Research Advanced Grant Project (EUROCORR) and coordinated by the art historiographer Maurizio Ghelardi of the Pisa Scuola Normale Superiore. The initial grant (2010-2015) covered the creation of the site which included about 1100 documents from over 400 creators.

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Burckhardtsource.org is easy to navigate and provides a variety of pathways depending on the visitor’s intent. The site is responsive and mobile-friendly. The home page provides portals to six anthologies, or collections of letters that focus on overarching themes, including women, music, art photography, international correspondence, the state of Europe, and correspondence with Wilhelm von Bode (1845-1929), a noted art scholar in Berlin. The “Browse” page (which would be better labeled a search page) offers plenty of relevant filters and facets, including references to places, people, artworks, and a variety of bibliographic sources (see image 1). Rich, item-level metadata allows for easy browsing and searching.

Each letter provides an abstract and access to a “semantic edition” (TEI annotated text), “philological version” (image of the manuscript with transcription), and “metadata.” Users should note that not all of the records include an image of the manuscript, but they always include a transcription. The narrative text on the website has been translated into English, but the letter transcriptions are only displayed in their original languages including German, French, Italian, and English. Visitors can publish TEI content directly to the semantic edition of the texts by logging into Pundit, a web application that allows users to apply annotations to online sources. A useful addition to the site would be the ability to create and download PDF versions of the letters. Every level of highlighted content is accompanied by descriptive text that identifies the significance of the points of view offered by a variety of letter-writers.

The screenshot shows the website's interface for a letter. At the top, there are three tabs: "Semantic Edition" (selected), "Philological Version", and "Metadata". To the right of these tabs is a "CITE" button. Below the tabs is a navigation bar with "Pages", "« Previous page", and "Next page »" buttons. To the right of this is a "Page 1" dropdown and a "Variants" dropdown. The main content area is split into two columns. The left column contains an image of the original handwritten letter, dated "Florence Juin. 15 1860". The right column contains the letter's text in modern French, starting with "Mon bien cher et excellent ami," and "Bien qu'à la veille de lever l'ancre, je me me réfuserai pas le plaisir de vous décrire la joyeuse et douce surprise que m'a causé votre bonne et affectueuse épistulette du 9 de ce mois; je ne m'attendais g/ll/ks à ce bouquet, – cher et précieux à mon coeur, – le jour même que j'étais en train d'ébaucher mon 74^{ème} anniversaire! Quoique souffrant et rudement tourmenté pendant tout l'hiver, que j'ai passé sans désertier le foyer de mon petit cloître, et au mépris d'une prétendue cure aux eaux d'Evian,

The richness of the content is emphasized by the simple yet effective design of the site. However, at time of review, many links within the narrative and project documentation were broken, as well as the link to the advanced semantic view of the project, which is offered as an important asset. In addition, the introduction offers a tantalizing description of an interactive map that doesn't appear to exist. Many of the letters were unpublished before the creation of

this resource and the project editors indicate that they intend to add more letters in the future, including those written by Burckhardt. However, it seems that the site has not been maintained since the initial grant period ended. It is disappointing that such a valuable resource has been left to languish without an apparent maintenance or sunseting plan. Still, burckhardtsource.org in its current state offers a healthy description of and access to the content, and provides a compelling case for the importance of providing access to Burckhardt's papers.