

Introduction (excerpt)

Many times lost, rediscovered many times, Greece as a nation is part of our heritage. What would be Europe without it? Greece has many faces: Archaic Greece of the mythical ages; Ancient Greece of one of the golden ages of human spirituality; Byzantine Empire born as the second Rome; Modern Greece born out of the 19th century war of liberation, and facing nowadays what became the Turkish Republic, almost ten times more populated. Wounded by multiple wars and political adventures, it is today on the front line of brutal immigration and tensions on energetic resources in the Mediterranean Sea.

In modern times, the invention of the Mediterranean "Grand Tour" anticipated by a few years the early ages of photography. This kind of journey was first the prerogative of royals or of aristocrats. They were accompanied by scholars and artists, who brought back many stories, images and... archeological discoveries. From the end of the 19th century to before and after the First World War wealthy bourgeois could afford the cost of a cruise to the Holy Land. From the 1930s, it is difficult to count the innumerable cruises, which en route to the Near East, Egypt or North Africa, made at least one stopover in Piraeus, Crete, Cyprus, in mainland archaeological sites like Olympia or on islands like Delos.

Travel did not wait for photography. Both have their own story. But photographers, from their first steps, brought a complementary vision to that of the traditional arts (drawing, painting and engraving). From the middle of the 19th century, the production of photographic albums seems to exceed that of travel accounts, insofar as one can establish a comparison.

The joint trip from Italy to Egypt by Gustave Flaubert, writer, and Maxime Du Camp, photographer and writer, remains an exception. Some will try to reproduce it towards the end of the 20th century, in places that had become popular: Rome, Greece and Near East. By the way, Flaubert and Du Camp published separately and partially their own accounts.

Photographers collaborated more systematically with archaeologists or epigraphists from the creation of the French School of Athens in 1846, during short visits or systematic campaigns (via dedicated research programs, etc.).

This issue is a result of our activities in the Patrimoines & Voyages (Heritage & Travels) group, created in 2019 within the French Stereo-Club (SCF). It originates from the search of our friend Efstathios Zafrañtzas, a member of the SCF and of the Stereoscopic Society, to identify the author of an unpublished batch of stereoscopic and panoramic views on glass plates.

These views were taken in 1907, during a cruise organized by the *Revue des Sciences pure et appliquées* on the liner-yacht Île-de-France, chartered by Société générale de transports maritimes (see Letter #1030 of April 2020) from Marseille. The 1926 cruise, which we are also presenting, takes place about 10 years after.

The 1930s will see the development of mass tourism and the preference by amateurs for techniques which were more spectacular (color) and easier to use (films in reels). Professionals (archaeologists, architects, etc.) will continue to take stereoscopic views until the emergence of optical techniques enabling a quantitative leap in the analysis of spatial data, at the end of the 20th century.

Stereoscopy never completely disappeared from amateurs and professionals photography. The pictures taken by foreign (non-Greek) amateurs in particularly those of the French Stereo-Club are numerous. However nowadays the main thrust for 3D seems to be in movies, virtual reality and experiential art, each having its own attitude viz actual 3D or S-3D (stereoscopic-3D). Full adoption seems to be a matter of time.

J. Yves Gresser, Heritage & Travels Group Leader

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