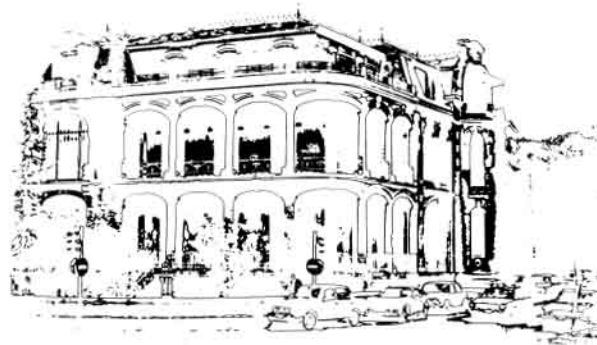


Armenopoulou Street. The Rotunda in the background.

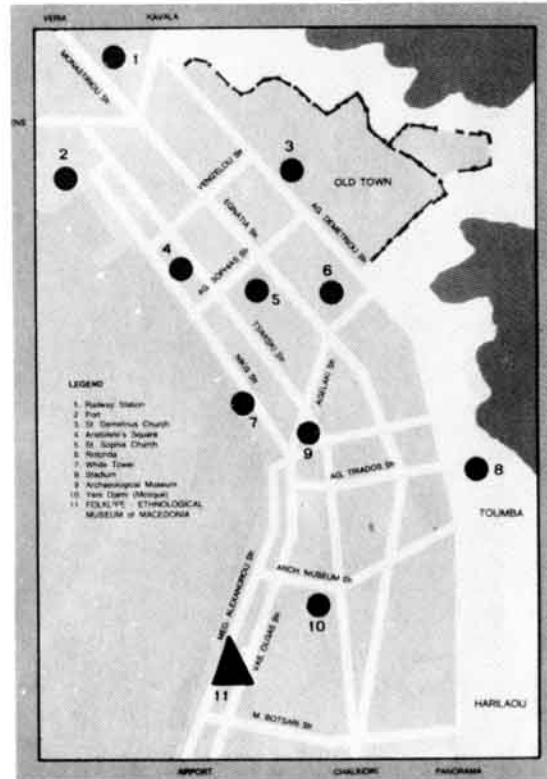
- 1912 Thessaloniki liberated by the Greek forces
- 1913 End of Second Balkan War (Treaty of Bucharest)
- 1914 World War I begins
- 1916 Triumvirate of Venizelos, Koundouriotis and Daglis establish «National Defence»
- 1917 Fire destroys greater part of the city
- 1918 World War I ends
- 1919 Treaty of Neigy



The church of St Demetrius after the fire.



Mr Yannis Constantinidis, born in Thessaloniki and professor at the University of Geneva, after examining the Boissonnas archives bought those photographs of 1913 and 1919 relating to Thessaloniki. In 1988 out of love for his birthplace, Mr Constantinidis donated these photographs to the Folklife and Ethnological Museum of Macedonia. The museum and the «Diagonios» publications with the financial backing of the Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace, have undertaken to publish an album of the gift under the title «Thessaloniki 1913+1919». All of these photographs have been on exhibition (on the second floor of the Museum) since May 1990.



May 1990

MINISTRY OF MACEDONIA & THRACE
FOLKLIFE AND ETHNOLOGICAL
MUSEUM OF MACEDONIA



FRED BOISSONNAS
AND
THESSALONIKI, 1913+1919



68, Vas. Olgas Av. - Thessaloniki - 546 42 - Greece
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Fred Boissonnas in Budapest (1880) and in Geneva (1940).



Fred Boissonnas was born in Geneva in 1858 and died in 1946. Following his father's profession, he studied at the best photographic studios in Germany and Hungary. With the help of his brother Edmond-Victor, —a chemist who perfected the photographic plate— he became famous through numerous highly successful exhibitions held abroad and in his own country.

Despite the adverse conditions (during the period of the Balkan Wars and World War I) Fred Boissonnas, together with his friend, the well-known writer Daniel Baud-Bovy, from 1903 to 1923 made thirteen journeys to Greece. He took photographs of mainland Greece, Crete, the islands, Macedonia and Thessaloniki (1913+1919).

Living in the intensely philhellenic climate of Geneva, he helped promote Greece abroad through the publication of his photographs and his many other activities. The Greek government in recognition of his services awarded him the Cross of Commander of the Royal Order of Phoenix.

«...We guessed that we were approaching a large port. Sailing ships passing by in ever increasing numbers...

We were beginning to make out the white mass of the city. It lies well in the arms of a wide bay protected by the promontories of Vardar and Karaburnu. It rises from the waterfront in amphitheatric fashion. An old castle dominates. The bright candles of the minarets and the dark halls of the cypress trees, mark out the clear order of its houses which are draped in blue shadow. To the east, along the seafront and among the trees lie the new outskirts...

At times we would wander round the gravestones in the Turkish cemetery, their shapes like turbans... other times sitting at a quay-side cafe we would watch the dark climb up the slopes of Olympus... and then we would walk down the aisles of St Demetrius... to recapture the imposing majesty of Byzantium».

Daniel Baud-Bovy

After the fire of 1917 a committee of architects from home and abroad under the Frenchman Hebrard draw up the new town plan. In accordance with this an extended network of roads connects the three sectors of the city (West: industrial area, stations, the port, workers housing. Centre: administration buildings, housing. East: housing, recreation) and shows to advantage —according to prevailing tastes of the period —public buildings and monuments, while the same plan sets up the rules for further extension of the city.

Despite its disorderly post-war development, Thessaloniki complies with the basic dicta laid down by the Hebrard Plan.



Fred Boissonnas with Daniel Baud-Bovy (Geneva, 1908).



A section of the exhibition.

The exhibition «Fred Boissonnas and Thessaloniki, 1913+1919», is based on the photographs Boissonnas took in 1913 and 1919 during his two journeys to the city. His photographs constitute not only historic documents but real works of art. The exhibits cover four distinct rooms in the building:

The first room forms the introduction to the subject. It presents the photographer through photographs of his life, articles, and various publications of his work. His relationship with Thessaloniki is stressed over the historical background of the city during the period 1913 to 1919.

In the second room are his photographs of 1913, while in the third those of 1919 —two critical years in the history of the city (1913 was the first year of the city's liberation by the Greek forces and its subsequent incorporation into the Greek state, while 1919 was the year of efforts to rebuild Thessaloniki after the great fire— the drafting of the new city plan).

The fourth room presents photography as a medium —a larger-than-life model of a camera creates the «inverted image», while next to it are shown various types of cameras together with dark-room equipment of the period.

The photographs exhibited are complemented by other museum pieces, newspaper cuttings, and slides which are projected on the walls of the museum's main staircase. The selection of these slides was based on the subject matter of Boissonnas' photographs depicting the monuments and the streets of Thessaloniki.