

The French rediscover Famagusta (1878-1912)

Lucie Bonato

After the Ottoman conquest, Famagusta was more or less forgotten or ignored by French travellers – with some notable exceptions – until the arrival of the English in 1878, which provoked a new curiosity about the whole island. That year many magazines published articles not only for scholars but also for a larger public. If Famagusta was to be rediscovered, of course it would be by Camille Enlart's publication of his famous monograph in 1899. We must not forget that two years earlier, in 1897, the *Revue générale des sciences appliquées* organized the first "Croisière des savants" to the Orient with a stop in Famagusta on the 19th of September. Until 1912, the city was frequented by French visitors arriving on cruise ships or coming on their own. Unfortunately, only a few of them published travelogues. Though the corpus is rather small, its literary quality is significant as most of the authors were distinguished scholars or 'hommes de lettres'. The authors expressed their astonishment to discover a gothic city which looked like a French one, but under the sky of the Orient. These accounts also show how Famagusta impressed the French, and in this paper I will link these texts to the 'poétique des ruines'. I will also take the opportunity to examine the illustrations and, in particular, the photographic reproductions within these books.