Chapter 3
THE GRECO-TURKISH WAR (1897)
The first war to be filmed and faked

Until relatively recently it has been thought by most historians that the first war films (i.e. news films about war) were shot in 1898-1900 during the Spanish-American and Boer Wars. But more detailed research now reveals that the first scenes filmed on or near a battlefield were taken during a small war in the Spring of 1897 in Greece, a year before the Spanish-American War had even started. What makes the filming of the Greco-Turkish War doubly interesting is that this was also the earliest war to be *faked* on film. But if filmmakers proved remarkably prescient in producing both actuality and reconstructed or fake films of this war, exhibitors were equally quick to make exaggerated, sometimes dishonest, claims for such films. The issues seen here in 1897 for the first time, notably those of truth, artifice and deception, were to dominate the representation of war in the visual media for years to come, and this war therefore may be seen as setting something of a pattern for all future coverage of warfare by the moving image.

INTRODUCTION

By the 1890s Greece and Turkey were old rivals. Part of Greece had gained independence from Turkey in the 1820s, but two thirds of Greeks still lived in lands under Turkish control, including in Crete. The Greek majority on the latter island were subject to brutal Turkish rule, and the efforts of Greek nationalists to help them only increased Turkish repression. In early 1897, following massacres of Greeks in Crete, the major powers in Europe (the 'Concert of Nations') sent forces to the island to control the situation. But conflict continued, because many Greeks in Crete and in the other Greek-populated lands still under the Turkish yoke dreamed of freedom from Turkey, desiring incorporation in a greater Greece – the so-called 'Megali idea'.[1] Matters reached a head when forces from the two sides faced each other on the mainland frontier, and following hostile incidents, full-scale war was declared on 18 April.

The disorganized Greek army was militarily no match for the German-trained Turkish forces which began a push southwards through Thessaly. Despite a few successes, the Greeks were generally routed. The entire conflict was brief and was brought to a close through an armistice arranged by the European powers (which didn't want Greece to be swallowed up as a province of Turkey) on 18 May, exactly a month after it began – hence it soon became known as the 'thirty days war'.[2] The Greeks were forced to pay reparations and lost some small areas of territory to Turkey; but later that year, after British pressure, Crete became an autonomous province with a Greek governor.[3]

The press

There had been enough warning of coming war for many of the European and American newspapers to send correspondents to cover hostilities, and a considerable number of these scribes and adventurers (mainly men, but also two women) descended on Greece in April 1897.[4] They were present in force, excessively so on some occasions: one observer, for example, noticed some 30 war correspondents in Larissa after the Greek retreat there.[5] Hearst's New York *Journal* alone despatched three reporters to the front to cover this small war.[6]

Press photographers too were quite active, and the stereographic firms in particular released a number of stereo photographs of the war.[7] One intrepid photographer 'obtained some really wonderful pictures of the Greek troops in action', claimed a colleague, and among his images was one depicting, 'a skirmish at Tyrnovo on the Turkish frontier', as Greeks sheltered behind a barrier from the Turkish bombardment. This anonymous photographer, 'necessarily underwent great risks, and sustained several narrow escapes' but his success, we are told, inspired his colleagues to try to cover future wars with cameras.[8] There were also magic lantern slides produced of the war, and lantern lectures given later in 1897.[9] In addition, a Pooles Myriorama show on the 'Turko-Greek War' could be seen, promising, 'Blockade of Crete. Bombardment of Canea. The Great Battles of Melouna, Mati, and Velestino.' [Fig. 1] In Germany a showman advertised that he would exhibit a panorama of the conflict.[10] In short, the media coverage was quite extensive, including, for the first time, in films too.

FILMING THE WAR: FREDERIC VILLIERS

By the Spring of 1897, though the film medium had been in existence for only a year, both fiction and non-fiction films were being produced. Some news events too, such as public ceremonies and sports events (like horse races), were starting to be filmed. It is scarcely surprising therefore that the idea was mooted that this coming war too should be filmed. In March and April 1897, two British photographic journals, in listing some of the many possible uses to which the new cinematograph might be put, suggested filming this war. 'Why', asked the *Photographic News*, should not one of the film producers 'furnish a special war correspondent with an instrument, and give us animated photographs of the Turco-Hellenic war? These would certainly be a big draw'.[11]

Villiers: The first war cameraman?

But did anyone actually go to film the war? There is no indication of this in any standard history of early cinema or in any accounts of the history of the war film. About the only clue in a later source that someone did film this war appears in an article published in 1950 about the history of news filming written by the newsreel pioneer, Kenneth Gordon, who refers to: '...the London *Times* report of filming the action in Crete in 1897 by the war-correspondent, F. Villiars [sic]'. He notes that this constitutes 'the first coverage of war news'.[12]

This name ‘F. Villiars’ is not listed in any of the traditional books covering the early cinema, neither can one find any appropriate reference in *The Times* (even by searching the recent digital version), but I eventually tracked him down in *Who Was Who*. It turns out that his name was in fact Frederic Villiers (1851-1922). He was a war artist and special correspondent for the *Illustrated London News* and the *Standard* (among other periodicals) in what might be called the ‘golden age’ of war correspondents, when this profession was dominated by a number of adventurous Britons. Of this group, Frederic Villiers was among the most colourful and the best known. The character Dick Heldar, a war correspondent in Kipling’s novel and stage play *The Light that Failed*, is said to have been based on him, and Forbes-Robertson came to Villiers for advice when playing the role on stage.[13]

Villiers began as a war correspondent in 1876, working for *The Graphic*, and by the eve of World War I he had covered more campaigns than any other correspondent and ‘seen more battles than any soldier living and endured more privations’.[14] His obituary in *The Times* said: ‘Although not one of the best, he was one of the most prolific and ubiquitous of the old school of war correspondents, and he always carried with him into the lecture room that air of the swashbuckler which was at one time considered the correct comportment for the soldier of the pen’.[15] Pat Hodgson, in *The War Illustrators*, is more candid, describing him as a ‘poseur’, contributing much to his own legend.[16] Villiers was indeed something of a showman, and would appear at his lectures in full battle-dress, with his collection of medals and ribbons prominently displayed. His friend and fellow correspondent, Archibald Forbes, complained that in the field Villiers would go to bed wearing his spurs, believing that this ‘contributed to his martial aspect’. As an artist he was only ‘of moderate ability’ (*The Times* obituary), and he found figure drawing ‘tiresome and uninteresting’. [17] But despite, or perhaps because of, this limitation, in 1897 Villiers pioneered what was to become a more important means of reportage than the drawing.

As the first signs of conflict rumbled in Greece, Villiers set off to report on events, representing the *Standard* newspaper and the illustrated weekly, *Black and White*.[18] Apparently he was initially forced to stay in Athens for some time because the European powers were blockading the Greek ports,[19] but on 24th April Villiers arrived at the port of Volo in Thessaly, near the battlefront. Perhaps because he knew the region (he had been in the Balkans before as a war correspondent) and anticipated only a minor war – he later called it ‘the little flare-up between Greece and Turkey’ – Villiers felt that he could afford to take chances. So he brought with him two novel pieces of equipment: a bicycle for the first time in a European campaign, and a newfangled cinematograph camera for the first time in any war. He wrote:

> ‘When this little war broke out I had ingeniously thought that cinema pictures of the fighting would delight and astonish the public. The cinema camera was then in its infancy, so at considerable expense I took one to the front.’[20]

As the war raged above his base at Volo, Villiers was perfectly placed to reach the action, and could soon put the film camera to good use:

> 'I was well housed during the fighting in front of Volo, for the British consul insisted on my residing at the consulate. To me it was campaigning in luxury. From the balcony of the residence I could always see of a morning when the Turks opened fire up on Velestino Plateau; then I would drive with my cinema outfit to the battlefield, taking my bicycle with me in the carriage. After I had secured a few reels of movies, if the Turks pressed too hard on our lines I would throw my camera into the vehicle and send it out of action, and at nightfall, after the fight, I would trundle back down the hill to dinner... It was a laborious business in those early days to arrange the spools and change the films; and I sweated a good deal at the work...'[21]

In his account of the war, Villiers doesn't say much more about the process of filming or the subjects he shot, but we will look at what he managed to film a little later. In any case the passage just quoted is interesting from another point of view: for his use of the term 'our lines', as if Villiers was taking sides in the war. In fact most correspondents from western countries who reported on this war had an instinctive sympathy for little, Christian Greece, struggling against the powerful Ottoman state.[22] Some correspondents even fought for the Greeks, as well as reporting for the press.[23] As we shall see in other wars, it was not unusual for war correspondents to take sides (especially if they were reporting on a war involving their own country), and even temporarily to take up arms.

Villiers' himself soon became actively involved in the war in a diplomatic role. Early in May, with the Turks pressing their advantage, Volo was abandoned by the Greek military forces. In order to save the Greek population from Turkish reprisals, Villiers suggested to the British Consul an audacious plan, that together they should 'go boldly into the Moslem lines to intercede with Edhem Pasha on behalf of the remaining inhabitants'.[24] This mission of mercy, involving French and British consular staff and four war correspondents, succeeded, and the townspeople in Volo were not attacked further.

Returning to a now-occupied Volo, Villiers met the newly appointed Turkish Military Governor, Enver Bey, who granted him a safe conduct to Athens, and also apparently informed him that the next battle would take place at Domokos the following Monday noon.[25] Villiers arrived in Domokos 'on the exact day and hour to hear the first gun fired by the Greeks at the Moslem infantry advancing across the Pharsala plains'.[26] This was to be the final defeat for the Greeks, and only an internationally arranged armistice saved Greece from further humiliation. Soon after this – probably in early June – Villiers headed off to cover events in Crete, where the European powers had stationed troops and naval vessels.[27]

Confirmation of Villiers' claims

Villiers' account of his experiences is dramatic enough, but is his a true claim that he took a motion picture camera to Greece and filmed scenes from the war? If so, this would be the first war ever to be filmed, so it is worth examining the evidence with some care. There are several reasons why we should question Villiers' own claims. Firstly, he is inaccurate about aspects of his involvement in the war. For example, he seems to imply that he had a scoop in being at Domokos for the hostilities (through the tip-off from Enver Bey), but in fact he arrived with the Reuters correspondent W. K. Rose (see the latter's book *With the Greeks in Thessaly*) and several other correspondents were also present. Similarly, his possession of a bicycle at the front was not as unique as he implies: his colleague René Bull, who was also covering the war for *Black and White*, had one, as did the *Morning Post's* correspondent, Wilfred Pollock, and at least two other journalists.[28]

Secondly, Villiers' claims are mainly based on his own assertions, for none of the accounts of the campaign by other correspondents that I have seen mention Villiers' movie camera – though, to be fair, most of these other accounts do not mention Villiers at all (unsurprisingly, for war correspondents rarely refer to the achievements of their rivals in the field).[29] Most of the descriptions of Villiers' filming activities come from his autobiographical works, published years later, though I have found some more contemporary corroboration: his entry in *Who's Who,* from the 1899 edition onwards, states that he 'used the cinametograph [sic] camera for first time in history of campaigning during the war'. But this entry was probably based on information from Villiers himself, so cannot be regarded as independent.[30]

So *was* Frederic Villiers the first war cinematographer? He probably exaggerated parts of his account for posterity – though, to his credit, I have found that his later reminiscences generally match his more contemporary reports – but would he actually have *invented* basic pieces of information? When I originally wrote an article on Villiers for *Sight and Sound* in 1980, there was no way of knowing for certain. However, since this original article, evidence has come to light which proves beyond doubt that Villiers really did film at the war and its aftermath, and moreover that his films were subsequently shown in public.

Corroboration that Villiers did film during the war comes from the later reminiscences of two separate individuals who actually saw him filming. Firstly, from fellow war correspondent Frederick Palmer, who was riding into Lamia with the retreat after the battle of Domokos, and noted: 'There I saw Frederic Villiers turning the crank of the first motion-picture camera'. (This ties in with Villiers' own claim that he was present at the Lamia retreat).[31]

And secondly, a soldier who was present during the events in Crete in the aftermath of the war, saw Villiers filming on that island. This soldier, William Coyne, wrote a letter to the press in the 1930s recalling that on 22 June 1897, during the celebrations for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee (her 60th anniversary on the throne) the bay of Candia in Crete was full of warships, and troops were formed up ashore. As war correspondents gathered to watch,

the ships and troops all fired the Royal salute and Coyne observed 'Fred Villars', as he calls him, 'with his tripod and camera filming the marvellous scene'.[32]

There is one footnote to add to my account of Villiers in Greece: I found a brief and enigmatic reference in the *Photographic News* in June 1897 to someone who planned to take a film camera to the conflict. The journal reported that this camera was:

> '… built for a well-known and famous war correspondent, on his departure for Greece recently, to take views of the fighting between the Turkish and Greek troops, but he found at the last moment that he could not take it with him, as it made excess of the luggage allowed on the frontier.'[33]

Who was this war correspondent? There are two possibilities: either it was Frederic Villiers, and this was a garbled report about his filming (perhaps he did intend to take a second camera?); or it was one of the other correspondents in the field who hoped to film the war. If the latter, one likely candidate (though scarcely 'famous') would seem to be Villiers' colleague on *Black and White* magazine, René Bull, who was also in Greece reporting on the war, and as we shall see in the following chapters, was to try his hand at war filming in the ensuing years.[34]

The films shown in Brighton and elsewhere

Another piece of evidence has now come to light which proves conclusively that Villiers filmed the war both in Greece and Crete, and that the films were shown. On 2 August 1897 a Brighton newspaper published an advertisement for a screening of 'Animated Photographs', presented by Lewis Sealy's company at a venue called Mellison's Grand Skating Rink, West Street, Brighton. [35] (Sealy was a well-known British music-hall actor.) As further confirmation, a postcard in the Frank Gray collection shows West Street and the exterior of Mellison's, and advertises the film show. With the help of some enlargement and enhancement we can read the sign on the front of the building. The letters are slightly cut off, but would read in full: 'Animated Photographs', 'Greco Turkish War'. [Fig. 2]

The Mellison's film show was in two parts: the first part consisting of films of the Diamond Jubilee, and the second comprising films of the Greco-Turkish War. I reproduce below the section of the ad which lists the war films. This list is exactly as it appears in the newspaper, apart from the film numbers which I have added for clarity.

Advertisement for Villiers' films in the *Sussex Daily News*, 2 Aug 1897

WAR PICTURES ! FIRST EVER TAKEN.
THE GRÆCO-TURKISH WAR. ANIMATED PHOTO-GRAPHS, taken on the FIELD OF BATTLE by
MR. FREDERICK VILLIERS,
The Celebrated War Artist and Correspondent.
SCENES AND INCIDENTS:

1) Relieving Guard on the Bastian – Crete.
2) The "Bersigliere" Italian Contingent – to the Front !!!
3) French Guard at the Custom House – Crete.
4) Street Scene near the Suda Gate – Crete.
5) The Commander of H.M.S. "Bruiser" Landing with Despatches.
6) Seaforth Highlanders taking Mountain Battery out of Action.
7) Greek Irregulars (Brigands).
8) English War Correspondents with the Greek Troops.
9) Reception at the British Consulate (Volo) after the Surrender.
10) "An Alarm" – The Greeks open Fire.
11) In the Trenches.
12) The Capture of Domoko.
13) Inhabitants in Flight.

Notes about these films:
a) The Bastian or Bastion, above Canea, was the location for the camps of the British and European forces (see *Black and White*, 13 Mar 1897).
b) The Seaforth Highlanders were one of the principal British regiments stationed in Crete. After this posting they were sent to the Sudan where they participated in the campaign which culminated in the battle of Omdurman.
c) The 'Greek irregulars', ostensibly a part of the Greek fighting forces, are described with contempt by Villiers in his autobiographies as 'the scum of Thessaly' – a bunch of murderous brigands, equally content to rob from fellow Greeks as to fight the Turks.

Of these thirteen films or scenes – each one probably only a minute or so in duration – the first six or seven were filmed in Crete (providing confirmation for Coyne's testimony that he saw Villiers filming there), and the remainder filmed on the Greek mainland during the actual hostilities. The Crete scenes are listed first (and so were presumably shown first) even though they were apparently filmed after the mainland scenes, i.e. during the armistice after the war. Presumably this a-chronological programming was designed to climax with the scenes taken during the actual war. (Crete incidentally was of some

significance in the war, for it had been one of the flashpoints, due to Turkish atrocities on the island).

The screenings in Brighton continued though August and well into September (with a few days of no showings), but Villiers' films became less dominant though this run as other films were added to Sealy's programme.[36] The war films were therefore screened for about a month, with diminishing prominence, a pattern which hardly suggests that they were a major success.

Villiers himself may have presented the films in person during the Brighton run – he was a regular lantern lecturer in Brighton and elsewhere – though this is not confirmed by the press ads. But evidence has now emerged that later in 1897 he was indeed presenting his own films – this time at venues in London. Announcements for lectures by Villiers appear in the journal of the National Sunday League (an organisation which promoted educational activities, especially lectures) during the Winter of 1897-98 to be in town halls in Shoreditch and Battersea (suburbs of London).[37] The brief notices state that Villiers would lecture about the Greco-Turkish conflict and would show 'special animated photographs of scenes of the war'. The films may have been shown in other parts of Britain too (further evidence of this is probably hidden in regional newspapers). However I have found no evidence that the films were actually distributed by any film companies in the UK.[38]

None of Villiers' thirteen films survives, as far as we know, and the nearest idea of what they might have looked like comes in the form of still photographs which illustrate an autobiographical volume he published in 1902. It is even possible that some of the stills in his book were blow-ups of frames from his films (though Villiers regularly took a stills camera with him on his assignments). Some of these photographs are captioned, and a couple of the descriptions are similar to titles of Villiers' films listed in the Brighton newspaper. Possible matches of these photographs are to film numbers 8, 9 and 13. [39] [Fig. 3 and 4]

In the absence of the actual films surviving, it is the newspaper list which provides our most precise indication of what they depicted. On first inspection these film titles appear to be quite neutral and unvarnished records of the war. But in fact this is not so. For a start there is bias: Villiers gives little or no coverage to the Turkish side, as only the Greeks are filmed. Furthermore, a closer look suggests that in some cases there may have been intervention by Villiers as filmmaker – what I call 'arranging'. Of course it is hard to draw firm conclusions, as this very basic list is all that remains of the films, but I think that even the bare titles raise some questions in this regard. For example, consider the film entitled *The Capture of Domoko*. Could Villiers really have been present as the town fell to the Turks, or did he set something up, or at least mis-describe a film showing a somewhat less specific event? Or what about his film, *"An Alarm" – The Greeks open Fire*: was this action really filmed as it happened, or did Villiers set the soldiers up in position and then ask them to fire their guns? A savvy trade writer in 1899 almost pointed a finger of suspicion at Villiers for doing such arranging when he wrote:

> ‘I went over the Greek battlefields shortly after the war, and I should have found it a very easy matter to have "squared" a few natives to lay as dead upon the field had I needed such pictures, but I did not. Moreover, the guide I employed was the one that accompanied one of our most famous war correspondents to the front, and I value his little tricks too highly to give them away.’[40]

If it is Villiers who is referred to (and possibly meaning his film, *In the Trenches*), such ‘intervention’ would not be out of character, given his known talent for self-promotion and showmanship. What is clear from these titles is that Villiers’ films scarcely showed any of what one might call battlefield action. (Even though he later claimed that he ‘…managed to get touches of real warfare’.) One might think that this lack of battlefield action could help explain why the films were not shown and appreciated more widely, though few early war films show any action, and one might expect that even somewhat dull scenes from a contemporary, albeit distant, small war, would be in some demand. Yet, as we have noted, the films were little screened and not distributed by a film company as far as we know. Why this lacklustre history? One reason is that the films may not have been of very good quality: correspondent Palmer, who as we’ve mentioned saw Villiers filming during the war in Greece, also noted briefly that ‘the results of his pioneer film exposures were foggy’.[41] An even more likely reason for the poor exhibition history is that the films faced competition, for by the time Villiers returned to the UK in the Summer, another filmmaker had produced films of the war which were by now on the market.[42]

FAKING THE WAR: GEORGES MÉLIÈS

Villiers faces competition

In his memoirs, Villiers gives us the following account of what transpired when he tried to air his war films after his return to the UK:

> ‘It was a great disappointment... to discover that these films were of no value in the movie market, for when I returned to England, a friend… said to me:
> "My dear Villiers, I saw some wonderful pictures of the Greek war last night."
> By his description I knew they were certainly not mine. I wondered at this, because my camera was the only one to pass the Greek customs during the campaign. Then he described one of the pictures:
> "Three Albanians [Albanians fought with the Turks during the war] came along a very white, dusty road toward a cottage on the right of the screen. As they neared it they opened fire; you could see the bullets strike the stucco of the building. Then one of the Turks with the butt end of his rifle smashed in the door of the cottage, entered, and brought out a lovely Athenian maid in his arms. You could see her struggling and fighting for liberty. Presently an old man, evidently the girl’s father, rushed out of the house to her rescue, when the second Albanian whipped out his yataghan from his belt and cut the old

> gentleman's head off." Here my friend grew enthusiastic. "There was the head," said he, "rolling in the foreground of the picture." Nothing could be more positive than that.'[43]

This comes from Villiers' 1920 autobiography, and one might think that it could be an unreliable recollection after so many years had passed. But in a 1900 interview Villiers recounted his friend's description of the faked film in very similar terms.[44] However, both accounts rely on someone else's description of the film (i.e. by his friend), and should therefore be treated with some caution. Nevertheless, this is one of the first ever descriptions of a faked film by a spectator of the time, and one of the first discussions of the faking issue in relation to war filming, so it is interesting as an anecdote. Villiers adds that the film had been made by 'a famous firm outside Paris ... and since then many others of a similar nature have delighted the movie "fan"'. There can be little doubt that the 'famous firm' referred to was that of Georges Méliès.

The four films

Georges Méliès, who had been making films since 1896, was based in Montreuil-sous-Bois (which is just outside Paris, as Villiers correctly states). But even if Villiers had not given the firm's French location, the style and content of this film as described by his friend – an attack on a cottage and beheading of an old man – would immediately have suggested the identity of its author. As Paul Hammond has noted in *Marvellous Méliès*, decapitation was a recurrent theme in Méliès' work (and in the stage acts of various magicians before him).[45] At least a dozen of his films involve heads being severed from bodies, and many more are concerned with other kinds of fanciful 'maiming'.

To carry out such camera tricks successfully required a fine control of all aspects of the shooting, which was much easier to accomplish in a studio, and, at about the time of the Greco-Turkish War, Méliès' first studio was just finished (it was probably the first specially-built film studio in the world). He moved into this building on 22 March 1897, and here, as he grandiloquently stated, he believed he would 'meet his destiny'. His granddaughter suggests that the Greco-Turkish War films were Méliès' first productions in the new studio, and indeed they were some of the earliest films by any filmmaker shot in a studio.[46] Furthermore, arguably, they were the first ever films to reconstruct a current news event; and as we shall see, one of them was the first film to use an articulated set. They were, in short, pioneering, 'landmark', films in several senses.

It seems that Méliès made four separate films about this war. I list them here, with both English and French titles (and with arbitrary numbers, added by me):

1. *Mohammedan inhabitants of Crete massacring Christian Greeks; Massacres en Crète*
2. *Turks attacking a house defended by Greeks (Turnavos); La Prise de Tournavos par les troupes du Sultan*
3. *The Greek man-of-war "George" shelling the Fort of Previsa; Combat Naval en Grèce*

4. *Execution of a Greek Spy at Pharsala;* l'*Execution d'un Espion*

[For a more detailed list of these films, with alternate titles, see **Table**.]

Méliès' Greco-Turkish War films were probably filmed during early May, given that the war took place the previous month, and the first announcement that I have found of the films in a trade ad was at the end of May.[47] Each of them was between 65 and 75 feet long.[48] One contemporary claimed that the Méliès films were shot in a 'Parisian garden', and a French film historian makes the same claim for films 1 and 4, saying they were filmed in a Paris suburb or in Méliès' Montreuil garden.[49] This suggestion may hold some credence given the location of one of the films, as described by Villiers' friend, taking place on a road near a cottage. But films 2 and 3, which survive, were shot in Méliès' studio.

The four films were released in various countries. Initially only films 2 and 3 were released on the British market, and 1 and 4 would seem to have come slightly later (the Pharsala events depicted took place near the end of the war). A list of the films is given in an advertisement of an early film distributor, Philipp Wolff (based in London and Germany) and the titles closely match listings in Méliès' own Star Film catalogues and other catalogues. (See **Table**).

In Britain they were well received, one trade journal calling them a 'most striking series'.[50] Another trade writer was also impressed and thought that the films would be of the greatest interest to the public; he added, curiously, that they would also be of the utmost practical value as an inspiration for war painters.[51] It would seem most likely that it was film number 1, *Massacres en Crète,* which roused the enthusiasm of Villiers' friend.[52] This may be the same film released in July in Ireland with the title, *The Greeks Last Stand in the Melina [or Maluna] Pass*.[53] Méliès' Greek war films were also widely shown in Europe, screenings taking place, for example, in the Wintergarten, Berlin, from as early as May 1897, and at the Theâtre des Variétés in Neuchâtel in early June.[54] The films also appeared in Christian Slieker's travelling shows in the Netherlands, and as far afield as India.[55]

One interesting aspect of these Méliès films is that considering that they were depicting a news event, they had a surprisingly long exhibition history. They were still being shown in at least one London theatre in December 1897, prompting a music hall critic to write, 'we are getting rather tired' of such outdated films as 'Views of the Turko-Greek war'.[56] In some locations Méliès scenes were shown even later. They were still being advertised in the trade press as late as February 1898, and one spectator recalled that he had seen 'passable' moving pictures of the Greek war in a town in the north of Scotland in that year.[57] They were exhibited in New York in March 1898 at the Metropolitan, and at least two of the titles – *Defence of a House* and *Execution of a Spy* (corresponding to my films nos. 2 and 4) – were screened as late as June or July 1898 at the Eden Musee, also in New York City.[58]

We can get a sketchy idea of Méliès' Greek war films through their titles, plot synopses and from spectators' descriptions, but we are also in the fortunate position that two of the four Greco-Turkish War films survive. I will describe these in the following two sections.

The defence of a small walled courtyard: *La Prise de Tournavos*

In a British trade journal, *Photograms of the Year,* of 1897 two Méliès films, claimed to be of the Greco-Turkish War, were described as showing: (A) 'the defence of a garret room' and (B) 'the defence of a small walled courtyard'.[59] As I suggest below, film A, the garret room, was not in fact a Greek war film (though was screened as one). But film B, the courtyard, was indeed one of the series, though this brief description – 'the defence of a small walled courtyard' – is the only contemporary description which we have of the film, and (unlike A) there is no frame still of it in *Photograms*. However, I believe I have identified a copy in the National Film and Television Archive (NFTVA) in London. Because I believe that this is a new identification/discovery, and because it is an important film related to this war, I will describe the NFTVA print in some detail.

The film is clearly staged, and shows a skirmish in a courtyard. The courtyard is clearly Ottoman in design, but in a recognisably 'Méliès' style. There is a fancifully Ottoman-style inner doorway on one side, leading into the house, and on the other side an external door to the street outside. Over the walls of the courtyard can be seen a stylized view of the town beyond (meant to be Turnavos, presumably, as I argue below) with towers and minarets, as befits a Greek city in the Ottoman empire.

At just 59 feet long, and running less than a minute at sound speed, the action is so complex that one has to see it several times to appreciate what is going on. As the film starts, three presumably Greek soldiers, soon joined by a fourth, stand in the courtyard on barrels and fire over the wall. As they do so, we can just see the top of a ladder being put up on the wall outside as part of a Turkish assault. Then four Turkish(?) soldiers and their leader enter by climbing over the wall or kicking the outside door in, whereupon the Greeks flee from the courtyard into the house through the other door, locking it behind them. One Turkish soldier places an explosive on this door, which blows open and the Turks rush inside. Then a couple of Greeks(?) storm over the wall from outside and shoot the leader of the Turks as the film ends. Interestingly, during the action, characters pass quite closely past camera, giving the film a three-dimensional quality, unlike Méliès' usual frontal, theatrical viewpoint.[60]

The film is clearly identifiable as Méliès' work by its style, and I believe that this film is indeed one of his Greco-Turkish War titles principally because of the Ottoman style of the architecture, which makes sense for a Greek location, and also is from a found collection of films of about the right date.[61] Assuming it is one of his Greek war films, I feel that the only title in the list of four which it could match is *Turks Attacking a House Defended By Greeks (Turnavos)* also known as *Troopers Last Stand,* and in the French original, *La Prise de Tournavos par les Troupes du Sultan*.

The innovative 'naval' film: *Combat Naval en Grèce*

Another of the four Méliès Greco-Turkish War films is also extant, though it was initially misidentified. A film survived in the NFTVA with the attributed title, 'Action on Deck of Warship', and was dated to about 1904. The NFTVA's description reads:

> A studio reconstruction, showing the central section of a warship which moves up and down. An officer looks through a telescope and binoculars, while sailors fire a deck gun. An explosion occurs on deck, one of the sailors falls down, and the others attempt to put out a small fire.

The hitherto anonymous film was positively identified by John Barnes some years ago as one of Méliès' Greco-Turkish War series, *Combat Naval en Grèce,* based on comparison with a frame from the film in a contemporary photographic journal.[62] [Fig. 5] Another, slightly more complete copy has since turned up in the Will Day collection at CNC.[63] Incidentally, one of the performers in the film may be Méliès himself.[64] The film portrays one of the few naval actions in the Greco-Turkish War, and has proved to be of more than academic interest, especially for one important technical innovation: the set of the warship moves as if rocking on the ocean. This was, says John Barnes, 'the first articulated set to appear in films', and largely because of this remarkable early use of a moving set, Barnes calls this 'a key film in the history of the cinema'.[65] The innovation was also commented upon at the time. One writer noted in 1902 that 'elaborate preparations' had been necessary to make this film, and stated that the set of the 'section of a deck', complete with its large gun, was '…pivoted so as to roll with a swaying counter-weight below it, while canvas waves rose and fell beyond'.[66]

This film and the other which survives (the courtyard film) are made with the care and lightness of touch so typical of Méliès. It is only Méliès, I submit, who could bring such charm and humour, tastefully, into films about war.

ISSUES OF DECEPTION

Faking, believability and plausibility

The attitude of early audiences toward fakes is an important issue for us – and for the wider field of early film studies – so it is worth examining the evidence of how the Méliès Greco-Turkish War films were received. The questions I wish to ask are: to what extent were these Méliès war films marketed as realistic, and did audiences believe they were genuine?

In *The American Newsreel*, Raymond Fielding has written that 'apparently there was not a single major film producer in the period 1894 to 1900 that did not fake news films as a matter of common practice'. He divides the fakes into categories: Méliès' being among those 'not intended or likely to fool audiences'.[67] Sadoul also suggests that these Greek war films should be called 'reconstructions', made as post-factual *illustrations* of the real events, and not 'fakes' as such.[68] The implication from these writers is that

'reconstructed' films were rather like the drawings by artists in illustrated periodicals, giving a flavour of what happened, and not likely to be thought by any reader/viewer to be a photographic recording of the real events (see my discussion of this issue in the Introduction). Historian René Jeanne has a slightly different take on it, suggesting that Méliès' war series were filmed with the 'exactitude' of news illustrations in *l'Illustration* or *Le Petit Journal*, but that the public *were* taken in by them.[69] Who is right?

My conclusion, based on looking at surviving accounts of the reception of Méliès' Greco-Turkish War films, is that it was a mixed response. A few people might have believed that some of the films were genuine, especially if, as sometimes happened, the showmen proclaimed that they were so. Other viewers had doubts on the matter. An American reviewer assumed the scenes were genuine, writing admiringly of how 'the man with the camera will risk his life in the midst of a fierce battle to secure subjects'.[70] From India comes a detailed report of a screening of the Méliès views, which in tone suggests that the reporter thought the films to be genuine. He describes the 'ghastly' killing of Greeks by Turks, of smoke from guns and ammunition, and of the Turks breaking open a gate with an explosive charge.[71] (The latter seems to be a reference to the surviving 'courtyard' film that I described earlier, while the 'ghastly killing' incidents suggest another of the Méliès films, *Massacres en Crète*). Perhaps the best comment on the ambiguous nature of Méliès' films came from a contemporary journalist who, while describing the films as 'wonderfully realistic', also stated that they were artistically made subjects.[72]

An important theme in discussions at the time about the genuine or otherwise nature of these films, hinged around aspects of *plausibility*. As we shall see, in 1897 a spectator in Nottingham, Sidney Race, went to a fairground show including Méliès' films, which the showman proclaimed were genuine views of the war. Race noted sceptically that the films were 'said to have been taken during the Greek and Turkish war – but I very much doubt it'. He adds that his instinct was to 'doubt the truthfulness of the picture', because of the implausibility of some of the action: for example, that one fallen soldier immediately had his head bandaged 'by some unseen and extraordinary quick agency'.[73] (We shall return to Race's description later).

Arguments from plausibility were also used by a number of other writers to try to prove that these Méliès Greek war films were fakes. The fact that they felt it necessary to make these arguments implies that some spectators had indeed been taken in. A photographic journalist, Richard Penlake, recalled seeing the films at a large music hall in Liverpool, where 'the hall was crowded nightly by an enthusiastic audience, who applauded and encored the pictures of the Greeks and Turks in mortal combat'. Penlake was dubious:

> 'Knowing well the difficulty of photographing, let alone cinematographing, like pictures at such close quarters, I wrote to a well-known authority, and asked him if these war pictures were genuine. He replied that he "thought" they were. I, however, had my suspicions...'

Suspicions which were confirmed when, as he states, he later went to the Continent and actually met and worked with those who had made the films – presumably meaning Méliès and colleagues.[74] Another commentator of the period also used an argument from plausibility, suggesting that the naval film could not have been genuine, for if it were it must have been shot from another boat and so the camera itself and the resulting image should have been moving about unsteadily, rather than being a stable shot. As he put it:

> 'In the photos the illusion was complete, except for the few who realized that to obtain such a record the camera must have been mounted on another steamer running alongside of the torpedo-boat, and unaffected by the motion of the waves.'[75]

Villiers himself also used an argument based on the practicalities of filmmaking, when talking to his friend who had seen the Méliès film of the attack on the Greek cottage (quoted earlier). Villiers attempted to disillusion the friend by describing the complications of cranking an early movie camera:

> '…you have to fix it on a tripod ... and get everything in focus before you can take a picture. Then you have to turn the handle in a deliberate, coffee-mill sort of way, with no hurry or excitement. It's not a bit like a snapshot, press-the-button pocket Kodak. Now just think of that scene you have so vividly described to me. Imagine the man who was coffee-milling saying, in a persuasive way, "Now Mr. Albanian, before you take the old gent's head off come a little nearer; yes, but a little more to the left, please. Thank you. Now, then, look as savage as you can and cut away." Or "You, No. 2 Albanian, make that hussy lower her chin a bit and keep her kicking as ladylike as possible." Wru-ru-ru-ru-ru!'[76]

The evidence that I have quoted – limited, admittedly – suggests that some viewers really believed that the films were genuine. Villiers' friend did, for example, as did the writers from America and India whom I have quoted, and Penlake's 'well-known authority'.[77] While to the modern viewer's eye, these films are clearly dramatised, we should bear in mind that this was a very early period of cinema, and in some cases these were the first films that spectators had seen. In this situation there may have been a number of 'naive viewers' who would look at films in a much more trusting and awed fashion than a modern viewer, who has had years of experience of seeing various different kinds and genres of films, both dramatised and actuality.[78]

For example, an obvious giveaway to the modern eye of the artificial nature of the two surviving films, is that the acting is somewhat broad: however this might not have struck earlier viewers who had yet seen few dramas or actualities with which to compare it. Furthermore, the two lost Méliès Greek war films (possibly made slightly later) may have been more realistic than the surviving pair, for contrary to his image as a purely 'fantastic' filmmaker, Méliès was capable of working in both stylized and fairly realistic modes.[79] In subsequent wars a number of different kinds of fakes were produced, by Méliès and others, varying in degree of stylisation. But these four Greco-

Turkish War films certainly constitute the first examples not only of re-enacted (fake) war films, but also the first time that the issue of believability arose. Surprisingly, perhaps, this issue was not to be such a common theme in subsequent discussion of re-enacted war films, and instances of spectators believing such films were genuine also seem to decline after this war. Perhaps the naive viewer wised up fairly quickly; or perhaps some spectators didn't care if films of some distant war were real or otherwise.

Faking by mis-description; re-titled films

One crucial factor in determining whether viewers thought a film was genuine or not was what they were told to expect by the exhibitor. A mendacious description, commentary or sales pitch could establish a film as genuine, and thus the element of fakery could be as much a creation of the exhibitor as of the producer.[80] It seems from the accounts I have quoted that in some cases the showmen, keen to attract a public, told spectators that the Méliès faked films were genuine records of war. The mendacity of the showman or distributor could also include renaming, to make the film more saleable.

This naming or renaming of films could be done for purposes of propaganda – indeed this occurred in subsequent wars – and there are pioneering examples here. While Méliès' film, *Massacres en Crète,* by its subject matter condemned the behaviour of Turkish forces on the island, a Dutch showman, Slieker, went further by re-titling it, *Cruel murders of Christians in Turkey*. A tantalizing piece of information from Germany offers an even more instructive example of propaganda by re-titling.[81] In May 1897 a film with the title *Erschiessen eines Türkischen Spions* was released on the German market; a while later the same film was released as *Erschiessen eines Griechischen Spions*.[82] Distributed by Philipp Wolff, almost certainly this was Méliès' *L'Execution d'un Espion,* and the two title options – the shooting of a Turkish or of a Greek spy – might mean that the German distributor was hoping that the film would sell equally to audiences with Turkish or with Greek sympathies.[83] There was a point to this: while Germany generally supported the Turkish side, some regions or communities might sympathise with the Christian Greeks, and much of the rest of western Europe would also side with the Greeks.[84]

Similar re-titling took place with films about this war which were not made by Méliès. An Australian source reveals an example of a pair of films supporting the opposing sides in this conflict, from an unknown producer. A film entitled *Charge of Turkish Cavalry* was screened in the 'Salon Cinematographe' in August 1897, while the following month a film of Greek cavalry on the march was shown at the same venue.[85] It is likely that these were pre-existing films of troops, taken before the war. Probably a Lumière film released at this time was also of this kind: *Turkish Troops leaving for the Turko-Grecian War.* This was advertised by Maguire and Baucus in the USA, and while it presumably did show genuinely Turkish troops, who could say if they really were 'leaving for war' or had been filmed well before the war?[86] Here we seem to have another example of mis-description to improve a film's appeal. It is also an instance of another (not necessarily mendacious) practice: the release of 'related films' at the time of a major news event. The practice was also seen

during the Sudan war in 1898, and in film coverage of other early wars – as we shall see. It became quite a common phenomenon in later newsreel history, as a way to supplement or replace the lack of films of the actual event. For example, after the *Titanic* sinking in 1912, old films of the ship, or films of other great liners similar to the *Titanic*, were spliced into newsreels to 'bulk out' the sketchy news coverage about the sinking itself.[87]

It is worth adding that in many cases descriptions by showmen or in film catalogues were honest, specifically identifying real or faked war/news films as such. This was often the case in subsequent wars,[88] but there is one example for the Méliès' Greco-Turkish War fakes. In the Warwick Trading Company catalogue the naval film was described as 'a humourous subject', acknowledging, if only implicitly, that the film was not genuine.[89]

The wrong war: the re-titled room interior film

An even more egregious example of mis-description occurred when one distributor sold a film of the wrong war as being the Greco-Turkish War. As I mentioned above, a British trade journal, *Photograms of the Year* of 1897 publicised the Méliès Greco-Turkish War films, including one it described as 'the defence of a garret room, in which one of the defenders is wounded and tended by a nurse'. The journal reproduced some frames from several Méliès films, including this one, and from one of the four Méliès Greco-Turkish War films, *Combat Naval en Grèce.* These were captioned respectively as *Graeco-Turkish War, Ashore* and *Graeco-Turkish War, Afloat*.[90] The films were being distributed in the UK by the Philipp Wolff company. (I reproduce in Fig. 6 a section of the *Photograms* frames, including the room interior film, but not *Combat Naval*).

Frames from the so-called *Graeco-Turkish War, Ashore* match a surviving film in the Will Day Collection, CNC, France, and the action in the CNC print matches the brief description given above of a garret room scene with one of the defenders tended by a nurse.[91] [Fig. 7] This room interior film turns out to be Méliès' film no.105 of 1897, *Les Dernières Cartouches* (*The Last Cartridges* [*or Bullets*]), a film about the Franco-Prussian war – not the Greco-Turkish War! We know it is a Franco-Prussian war title because the scene and action is based on a celebrated painting by Alphonse de Neuville depicting soldiers at Bazeilles in 1870, defending a house to the death from Prussian attacks: in this painting the soldiers with their swords and rifles peer through the windows, and the house has a shell-hole in the ceiling. [Fig. 8] All of which is reproduced in the Méliès film, except, with typical exaggeration the magician/filmmaker makes the shooting from the windows more intense and the ceiling hole much bigger than in the painting![92]

As well as being shown mendaciously, the film was sometimes shown for what it was, a recreation of the 1870 war, or just as a generic war scene. In France it was apparently also known as *Bombardement d'une Maison,* and Sadoul cites a description of this film from 1897 by Georges Brunel: 'a spectacular battle scene with exploding shells, falling walls, etc.' [my translation].[93] The same(?) film was shown in Britain under the title, *The Last Shot*, in August 1897, described as despairing soldiers firing from the windows

of a shattered house (i.e. the windows mentioned again, confirming that it was this same film).[94]

Most interesting for us are screenings of this film in which it was claimed as a supposed Greco-Turkish War film, and there seem to have been quite a few, from Britain and Germany and perhaps elsewhere.[95] The principal 'faker' in both the UK and Germany was the distributor Philipp Wolff. Apparently Wolff, thinking that it might attract more customers, sold the film as depicting an episode of the current Greco-Turkish War, rather than as a historic film about the 1870 war.[96]

The deception began in Germany in late June 1897 when Wolff advertised *The Last Cartridge-Belt* as a 'Scene from the battle of Larissa' (Larissa was one of the well known sites of fighting in the 1897 Greek war). Most likely it was in fact the Franco-Prussian War film we have just described, *Les Dernières Cartouches* (as the title matches). It was among four 'Scenes from the *Greek-Turkish War* (Highly interesting)', including three of the four actual Méliès Greco-Turkish titles (all but the naval film).[97]

As we have seen, Wolff also advertised this film in Britain later that year in *Photograms* as a Greco-Turkish War film. I have found some contemporary descriptions of screenings of this, and in each case the film had been introduced by the showman or in the programme as a Greco-Turkish War scene. A writer in 1902 stated that this film depicted 'the defence of a farm-house by Greek troops', and described it as showing the interior of a room, where he noted: 'Riflemen were firing from a window. Suddenly one of them staggered with his hands to his face, badly wounded. A comrade supported him, and a doctor supplied first aid'.[98]

Another description comes from the diary of the aforementioned Sidney Race, who saw what was evidently this same film at the Nottingham Goose Fair in October 1897 exhibited in Randall Williams' Cinematograph show.[99] Race gives a quite detailed description, and, as I have mentioned above, clearly had his doubts about whether the film was genuine:

> 'In Williams I saw pictures said to have been taken during the Greek and Turkish war – but I very much doubt it. It represented the interior of a house into which the soldiers came running in great haste to begin firing out of windows. There was much smoke knocking about, then fire and then the place began to fall to pieces. Several soldiers fall down apparently dead and (what made us doubt the truthfulness of the picture) one immediately had his head enveloped in a bandage by some unseen and extraordinary quick agency. A nurse came running in and commenced to attend to her work with unusual celerity and calmness, and altogether there was a great sense of confusion when the picture vanished.'[100]

It is worth noting the common factors among these separate eye-witness descriptions, confirming that they all refer to the same film – they mention a room interior, shooting out of windows, and one of the defenders being

wounded in the face or head. The description of *Bombardement* by Brunel notes that this was a battle scene with 'falling walls' – and this point matches with Sidney Race's description that the attacked house 'began to fall apart'. Incidentally, later in the year Wolff was continuing his deceptive behaviour in relation to this war: advertising films of the Indian mutiny accompanied by frames from *Combat Naval en Grèce*.[101]

All of which suggests that Wolff's deception was systematic, practiced in both Britain and Germany with regard to different wars and films. In this very early period of cinema it seems that if certain film distributors and showmen thought they could get away with false claims to improve saleability they would do so. Mis-titling of films was not uncommon in this era, and Wolff is probably only the most detectable perpetrator.

CONCLUSION: The origin of the war film

I have suggested, above, that the Greco-Turkish War is a crucial point of origin for all subsequent history of the relationship between warfare and the moving image. It was almost certainly the earliest war to be filmed by an actuality cameraman, but also the first to be faked, by staging and by mis-description. In other words it stands at the source of both the recording of warfare and also the point at which the apparently simple relationship between event and filmic representation-of-event started breaking down.

Méliès' reconstructions of the Greco-Turkish War were landmarks in the 'fake genre'. Even in the early era they were seen in this light, and a writer in 1902 stated that these Méliès productions had been the first ever re-enacted or fake films. He decried this genre, noting with distaste that several other reconstructed news events had been released, and mentioning films of the Martinique volcano, Edward VII's coronation, and the crash of the air ship 'La Paz'.[102] The writer might have added that the first two films in his list were Méliès titles, and that by the turn of the century the French magician had made several other reconstructions of current news events: including scenes of insurrection in British India, events surrounding the Spanish-American war and a multi-scene version of the Dreyfus Affair. Méliès was truly *the* pioneer in this genre of the reconstructed or faked news film, and specifically the stylised fake war film.

In this way, Méliès clearly made a significant contribution to the history of the war film, as did the other main filmmaker of the Greco-Tukish war, Frederic Villiers, who had filmed aspects of the war for real. But they were working in very different modes, and the films made by Villiers and Méliès seem to offer a strong contrast – a binary opposition, in the jargon – between the straight recording of war as pioneered by Villiers, and the unashamed faking/fictionalisation as practiced by Méliès. Yet perhaps the situation is a little more complicated than this, for as we have discussed above, Villiers may have 'arranged' some of his films shot in Greece. So both filmmakers were practicing some degree of intervention, in turning complex events into understandable images with a message. Thus within a couple of year's of

cinema's invention the challenges of representing a distant news event on screen were pushing the medium towards a more complex relationship with the real world than mere recording.

However, the genuine films that Villiers had taken at the front in 1897 were, in his own words, 'of no value in the movie market'. Despite having been shot at the seat of war, and so in principle being highly 'newsworthy', they were effectively unsaleable, while Méliès' reconstructions, with dramatic action and heads being severed, were sold all over the world. Méliès in short produced more diverting representations than Villiers of this war, versions which found a ready global audience. According to Villiers himself, the conclusion to be drawn was that the public wanted entertainment, not truth, and he ruefully observed: 'Barnum and Bailey, those wonderful American showmen, correctly averred that the public liked to be fooled'.[103] Actually it was not so much that audiences *liked* to be fooled, but more that either they didn't know these films were faked, or that they didn't care. After all, the Méliès fakes were entertaining and well-made films in their own right, which vividly illustrated the war, and which spectators enjoyed watching. In any case, as we have seen, probably Villiers himself was not above a bit of battlefield 'rearranging', and in so doing he too, like Méliès, was pioneering another way of representing war for the cinema.

Extraordinarily, therefore, in depicting this brief war for the screen, filmmakers at this very early stage in the history of the medium, within little more than a year of its arrival, had swiftly discovered a number of techniques which would be used in coming years. Events in the war-zone, such as troop movements, could be filmed as they happened (Villiers); actions on the battlefield could be arranged and posed using actual soldiers and participants (Villiers); events could be re-staged far from the battlefield with actors (Méliès); and related events could be shown as a visual substitute for war scenes (various showmen). And finally, any of these kinds of films could be mis-described or re-labelled to make them more relevant to the war (Wolff), and thus imbue them with greater audience appeal or propaganda value.

In these different ways filmmakers were exploring techniques of presenting war on screen with varying levels of authenticity and honesty. As practiced by Méliès and Villiers this reconfiguration of reality was relatively innocent - little more than a distillation and simplification of the key events of this small war. But in the 20th century to come, in much greater wars, others would use these techniques of manipulating the filmic image by faking and selection for purposes of outright deception and propaganda. In retrospect, the filming of the Greco-Turkish war had been something of an early warning.

However, even at this early stage, the film professionals didn't have it all their own way, in that they could not show audiences any kind of image with impunity. A few spectators, like Sidney Race, were starting to question what they were seeing, and wondering about the plausibility of some of these so-called images of war. They were realising that films might not always be what they seemed, or what they were claimed to be.

Table: Variant titles of Méliès' four Greco-Turkish War films (1897)
(in screening date order, with catalogue numbers where known)

	Film 1	Film 2	Film 3	Film 4
Source				
Méliès French catalogues[104]	108. *Massacres en [or de] Crète*	106. *La Prise de Tournavos*	110. *Combat Naval en Grèce*	107. *Execution d'un Espion*
Philipp Wolff (Germany, June 1897)[105]	4. *Massacre of the Christians on the Island of Crete*	2. *Capture of a House in Turnavos*	[Not listed]	3. *The Shooting of a Turkish Spy*
Ireland screening (July 1897)	*The Greeks Last Stand in the Melina [or Maluna] Pass*	[Not listed]	[Not listed]	[Not listed]
Philipp Wolff ad (UK, Aug? 1897) [106]	18. *Mohammedan inhabitants of Crete massacring Christian Greeks*	19. *Turks attacking a house defended by Greeks (Turnavos)*	20. *The Greek man-of-war "George" shelling the Fort of Previsa*	21. *Execution of a Greek Spy at Pharsala*
Nijmegen: Slieker (Oct 1897)[107]	*Wrede christenmoord in Turkije* [Cruel murders of Christians in Turkey]	*Het innemen van de vesting in Tessalië door de Turken* [Capturing the fortress in Thessaly by the Turks]	*De oorlog tusschen Grieken land en Turkije* [The war between Greece and Turkey]	*Het fusileren van een spion door de Grieken* [The shooting of a spy by the Greeks]
Warwick Trading Co. catalogue (UK, 1897-1898)[108]	4108. *Turks Massacring Christians in Crete* ('sharp and clear', adds the catalogue)	4105. *Troopers Last Stand* – 'an incident of the Turko-Grecian war'	4110. *Naval Combat at Greece* – 'a humourous subject full of action'	4107. *Execution of a Spy – (Turko-Grecian war)*
Eberhardt Schneider (USA, 1898)	[Not listed]	*Defence of a House, Turco-Grecian War*	[Not listed]	*Execution of a Spy, Turco-Grecian War*
Star Film Catalogue (USA, 1903)[109]	108. *Massacre in Crete*	106. *The Surrender of Tournavos*	110. *Sea Fighting in Greece*	107. *Execution of a Spy*
Notes	This is probably the film seen and described by Villiers' friend.	Extant in NFTVA and in CNC. The 'courtyard film'.	Extant in NFTVA	-
Historical notes	Several risings by Greeks took place between the 1860s and 1897, with subsequent repression by Turkish rulers. Massacres took place among both communities.[110]	Tournavos or Turnavo, a town on the plain of Larissa, was the site of an early defeat for the Greeks, 20-23 April 1897, after which the town was abandoned by their forces.[111]	The Greek navy shelled Previsa or Prevesa, 18-20 April, one of the few naval actions of the war.[112]	The Greeks fell back on Pharsala or Phersala, 23-25 April, which was in turn attacked by the Turks, from where the Greeks retreated to Domokos, 5 May.

Notes:

[1] Theodore George Tatsios, *The Megali Idea and the Greek-Turkish War of 1897 : the Impact of the Cretan Problem on Greek Irredentism, 1866-1897* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984). For an evocative illustration of street-fighting in Canea, Crete, between pro-Greek and pro-Turkish residents, events which some say helped lead to the Greco-Turkish War, see *Le Petit Parisien,* 21 February 1897.

[2] Henry Woodd Nevinson, *Changes and Chances* (London: Nisbet & Co., 1923), p. 173 – his chapter 9 is entitled 'The thirty days' war'.

[3] Douglas Dakin, *The Unification of Greece, 1770-1923* (London: Benn, 1972), p.149-54.

[4] As ever the British sent the largest number of war correspondents, though there were also Americans, Frenchmen and representatives from several other nations.

[5] Wilfred Pollock, *War and a Wheel: the Græco-Turkish War as Seen from a Bicycle* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1897), p.35.

[6] Charles Henry Brown, *The Correspondents' War : Journalists in the Spanish-American War* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1967), p. 94. These and other Americans were especially well provisioned and equipped. Incidentally, a young Winston Churchill returning from India, had considered reporting on the war (from the Greek side) – to 'see the fun and tell the tale', as he put it – but by the time his ship reached Port Said the Greeks had already been defeated. This indicates, as I mentioned in my first chapter, the attitude of 'war as escapade' in this era before the horrors of the Great War. Winston S. Churchill, *My Early Life* (London: Mandarin, 1991), chapter 9.

[7] Some journalists took photographs: see Henri Turot, *L'insurrection Crétoise et la Guerre Gréco-Turque* (Paris: Hachette, 1898) which is illustrated from numerous photos by the author. Also prominent during the war were Greek-based photographers: in early May the *Photographic News* noted that during the Greek anti-dynastic riots ('last week', it states) a Piraeus photographer had had his photographs of the Greek Royal family smashed up (due to the unpopularity of these royals among certain factions). See 'Photographic perils', PN 7 May 1897, p.290. Stereographers and stereographic firms represented at the war included Underwood and Underwood, Keystone, and Kilburn. See William Culp Darrah, *The World of Stereographs* (Nashville, Tenn.: Land Yacht Press, 1997), p.194. Some of these stereographs are copyrighted in the Library of Congress and held in their Prints and Photographs Division.

[8] Charles Ray, 'Following a War with the Camera', *Royal Magazine* 3, no.18, April 1900, p.475-481. The photographer referred to may have been either Bert Underwood, René Bull, E.M. Bliss or even Richard Harding Davis. See Bert Underwood, 'Five Days in Thessaly', *Harper's Weekly* 41, May 1897, p.523-25. See also William Culp Darrah, *Stereo Views. A History of Stereographs in America and Their Collection* (Gettysburg: Times and News Publishing Co., 1964).

[9] Correspondent W. Kinnaird Rose, who had been present at the hostilities, lectured on the war with lantern slides at St. Georges, Langham Place, London and in Bermondsey Town Hall in December 1897. (See *The Free Sunday Advocate* Nov 1897, p.92 and Dec, p.97.) Burton Holmes lectured on 'The wonders of Thessaly' in the Autumn of 1897. See Burton Holmes, *The World Is Mine*: (Murray & Gee, 1953), p.175-6.

[10] A leaflet detailing the Pooles show is in the National Fairground Archive, Sheffield at NFA 200672148. It seems to date from the early 1900s, and, though it details shows about several conflicts, it is somewhat surprising that the Greco-Turkish War should still be offered at this late date. Karl Gocksch, a panorama painter of Schöneberg bei Berlin, advertised his latest panorama paintings, including 'All battles of the Greek-Turkish War' in *Der Komet* no. 641, 3 July 1897, p.16. This and other references to *Der Komet* come via Deac Rossell and his German colleagues.

[11] PN 30 April 1897. The article went on to say that films could also be valuable archival records, and mentioned such subjects as the signing of a peace treaty between Greece and Turkey, or the 'carving' up of the latter country by other European powers. Another suggestion for filming the Greco-Turkish War came in BJP 26 Mar 1897, p.196, noting as precedent that other violent activities had been filmed, such as boxing. Some war correspondents had cinema on their minds too, one of them noting that during a suffocatingly hot day of battle 'the heat waves danced and quivered about them, making the plain below flicker like a picture in a cinematograph'. Richard Harding Davis, 'With the Greek Soldiers', *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 34, Nov 1897, p.824; and in his *Notes of a War Correspondent* (NY: Harper and Brothers, 1911) in the chapter on the battle of Velestinos. A news report from Paris in April

1897 spoke of films capturing, for the first time, war 'in all its movement, all its horror' – it is unclear which films they have in mind. The story was derived from a news report in a Paris periodical, and seems to have mentioned Lumière cameramen. It was first reported in Spanish newspapers on 30 April, headed, 'Cinematógrafo greco-turco'. See J. M. Folgar de la Calle, "Aproximación a la Historia del Cine en Galicia (1896-1920)". Thesis, Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela, 1985, p.23.

[12] Kenneth Gordon, 'The early days of newsreels', *BKSTS Journal,* August 1950, p.47-48. In another source Gordon repeated this claim and added (correctly) that 'Villiars [sic] used these and other war films to illustrate his lectures'. He also noted that 'The late Henry Sanders, newsreel "ace" and late editor of Pathe Gazette used to project for him.' Kenneth Gordon, 'Forty Years With a Newsreel Camera', *The Cine-Technician*, March-April, 1951, p.44-45, 48 etc. Gordon began in the film industry around 1912, and had latterly worked for Associated British Pathé. His information on Villiers probably came from a fellow film pioneer, maybe Sanders, or from the Coyne letter cited below. My attention was first drawn to Gordon's claim by Patrick Hickman-Robertson, for whom I was then working as a researcher, and he encouraged me to pursue this theme, as well as generally inspiring me to do further research.

[13] Much of this information comes from Pat Hodgson, *The War Illustrators* (London: Osprey Publishing, 1977).

[14] F. Lauriston Bullard, *Famous War Correspondents* (Boston ; London: Little, Brown & Co./Pitman, 1914).

[15] 'Death of Mr. Frederic Villiers', *The Times* (London) 6 April 1922, p.14.

[16] Hodgson, 1977, op. cit. A major source for information on Villiers is his own autobiography: Frederic Villiers, *Villiers: His Five Decades of Adventure* (New York & London: Harper & Bros., 1920).

[17] His son disagrees with this assessment, and draws attention to his father's fine figure work in Villiers' book, *Days of Glory* (NY: Doran, 1921); he also scotched the rumour that Villiers only did rough sketches and others polished up his work for publication. Letter from his son, G.F. Villiers of Tonbridge, Kent, to author, 7 Nov 1980 (contacted via Villiers' granddaughter, Ann Towers of Bexhill).

[18] Villiers took a train for Marseille, from where presumably he took a ship for Greece, he states in Frederic Villiers, *Peaceful Personalities and Warriors Bold* (London & New York: Harper & Bros., 1907), p. 321-3. Taking a train through France was the fastest way to go from Britain to the Mediterranean and onto the Far East, rather than taking a ship all the way from the UK round the Iberian peninsular.

[19] Frederic Villiers, *Villiers: His Five Decades*, op. cit., vol 2, p.159. Unless otherwise noted, all the Villiers quotes in this chapter are taken from the second volume of his autobiography. See also an article on Villiers in *Brighton Society* 10 Dec 1898, p.13. This source notes that 'he was in Athens during the blocade [sic] of the Greek ports'.

[20] *Villiers, His Five Decades*, p.181.

[21] *Villiers, His Five Decades*, p.170 and 181.

[22] There were some exceptions, such as the notably pro-Turkish Ellis Ashmead Bartlett, who covered this war (and the later Balkan war) from the Turkish side, as did George Steevens, Bigham of the Times, H. Weldon, and Pierre Mille, who denied claims of Turkish massacres against Greeks. In terms of national support, most European populations sympathised with Greece, apart possibly from in Germany, where the government had invested heavily in the Turkish state and her military.

[23] Henry Nevinson, war correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle* was in a pro-Greek 'batallion of Englishmen' fighting for the Greeks. Henry Woodd Nevinson, *Scenes in the Thirty Days War between Greece and Turkey, 1897* (London: J.M. Dent & Co., 1898); and chapter 9 of Nevinson, *Changes and Chances*. One American war-correspondent (John Bass) was photographed actually 'directing the fire of the Greeks'. Davis, 'With the Greek Soldiers', *Harper's Monthly* 34, Nov 1897, p. 828.

[24] This event took place on 8 May and Villiers' on-the-spot account of it was filed the same day and appeared in the *Standard* on 11 May. See also the *Standard*, 20 May, p.4. Villiers' involvement in the mission is confirmed by another correspondent in the *Standard,* 2 June, p.5.

[25] Villiers makes this claim in his later recollections, *Villiers: His Five Decades of Adventure*, and it is confirmed in his *Standard* account of 20 May, p.7.

[26] The two day battle began on 17 May which was indeed a Monday. On 20 May Villiers' telegraphed report of the Domokos engagement appeared in the *Standard*.
[27] *Who's Who*, 1899 edition, states of Villiers' work in the Greco-Turkish War that: 'During armistice visited Crete'. It would have been at this time that he filmed the international forces at their duties – see below.
[28] See Wilfred Pollock, 'A War Correspondent on Wheels – an Interview with Mr. Wilfred Pollock of the "Morning Post"', *Ludgate Magazine* 4, July 1897, p.308-10: he notes that 'the Standard man' (i.e. Villiers) and the *Daily Graphic* man (Bull?) also had bicycles. See also Pollock's book, Wilfred Pollock, *War and a Wheel: The Græco-Turkish War as Seen from a Bicycle* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1897). John Bass and Bouillon of the *Journal* of Paris also had bicycles at the war: see *Gli Avvenimenti D'oriente. La Guerra Greco-Turca 1896-97. Cronaca Illustrata* (Milano: Treves, 1897), p.203. There are several books on the history of bicycles in war.
[29] I have checked through almost a score of contemporary books about the war, as well as articles and later accounts.
[30] Villiers described his pioneering filming of the war in various accounts from 1900 onward. The most detailed account is in *Villiers: His Five Decades*, op. cit., 1920. An earlier autobiographical book mentions that he had a cinematograph camera and bicycle at the front, though contains none of the anecdotal material about these innovations. See Frederic Villiers, *Pictures of Many Wars* (London: Cassell & Co., 1902), p.76. Villiers gives some details too in: Raymond Blathwayt, 'Fresh from the front… A talk with Mr. Frederic Villiers', *Daily News* 19 April 1900, p.7. (I found this interview via the BL's experimental OCR programme. Blathwayt was a well known interviewer and writer of biographical portraits, active between around the 1890s and the Great War).
[31] Frederick Palmer, *With My Own Eyes. A Personal Story of Battle Years* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1932), p.63. This was sometime after 19 May. In his 1900 interview with Blathwayt Villiers stated that: 'I took the trouble in the Greek war to take a cinematograph out with me, and I took actual scenes of troops marching into trenches, Turks opening fire, the famous retreat of the wretched Greek peasantry at Lamia, incidents of our troops in Crete…'.
[32] 'First pictures': letter from W. Coyne of Derby in *Radio Times* 2 Aug 1935, p.9. My correspondence with Coyne's descendants shows that he really was who and where he claimed to be, that his first name was William (b.1891) and that this Seaforth soldier was a reliable witness (Letter to me from R.E. Williamson of Derby, 15 June 1992, who noted that William was his maternal grandfather). Coyne's 1935 press letter was reprinted in the *BJP*, and then as 'The first war cameraman' in the *Journal of the Association of Cine-Technicians,* Nov 1935, p.66. This letter may also be the source of Kenneth Gordon's information which I quoted above (from August 1950) because Gordon misspells Villiers as 'Villiars' – and Coyne's published letter uses the similar 'Villars'. For more on Coyne, see my chapter on the Sudan War. Incidentally, this description of the Jubilee scene does not match any of the Villiers titles mentioned below – perhaps the film did not come out well. The troops and warships represented several nations, an early example of international intervention in a conflict.
[33] PN 4 June 1897, p.355.
[34] Bull reported from the Greco-Turkish War for *Black and White*, and is better represented on its pages for coverage of this conflict than Villiers, being credited with many snapshot photographs of events in the field of battle, compared with relatively little by Villiers about the war. Bull might also have filmed in the Sudan and/or Boer Wars, as I discuss in later chapters.
[35] *Sussex Daily News* 2 Aug 1897, p.1. Frank Gray very kindly sent me xeroxes of this and the other ads from the SDN. Before receiving this information, I had independently found one newspaper ad which suggested but did not prove that Villiers' genuine war films were shown in Brighton. See *Hove Echo, Shoreham and District News* 7 Aug, 1897, p.12. This is an ad for Lewis Sealy's film show of the Jubilee series and 'Graeco-Turkish war pictures – the first ever taken' – with no further details. Sadly we have not yet found any reviews or descriptions of the shows, but only the ads.
[36] See *Sussex Daily News* for 7 Aug, p.8; 9 Aug, p.1; 18 Aug, p.1; 24 Aug, p.1; 30 Aug, p.1; 4 Sep, p.8; 6 Sep, p.1. Barnes, 1897 volume, p.165, reports these Sealy shows but assumes (as I had) that these films were the Méliès versions of the war. He cites reports in the *Hove Echo* 7 Aug, p.12; 14 Aug, p.12; 21 Aug, p.1; 28 Aug, p.12; 4 Sep, p.12; 11 Sep, p.1; 18 Sep, p.1.

[37] Tony Fletcher found these references and kindly passed them on. Villiers' lectures were at Battersea on 21 Nov 1897 and 30 Jan 1898, and Shoreditch on 28 Nov 1897 and 6 Feb 1898. (Notices in *The Free Sunday Advocate and National Sunday League Record* Nov, 1897, p.89 and 90; Jan 1898, p.5; Feb 1898, p.12).
[38] John Barnes lists no other venues in his books.
[39] There is a still of Larissa refugees in his 1902 book, which could correspond to film 13, though we also know he filmed a retreat at Lamia (unless the book caption is a mistake – a confusion of similar words). The mention in the interview of a film of 'Turks opening fire' may be a confusion for film 10, 'The Greeks open Fire'. Additional stills (by Villiers?) of the Greco-Turkish War are reproduced in a published interview with him: Roy Compton, 'Mr. Frederic Villiers ', *The Idler* 12, Sep 1897, p.237-255.
[40] Richard Penlake, 'Bogus war and other pictures', *BJP* 46, 1 Dec 1899, suppl. p.92. He added: 'I did, however, bring a Greek soldier's uniform back with me, and, should ever another Greek war break out, I shall probably be the first to send to the illustrated papers an illustration of a Greek in ambush, dead upon the field, and so on, ad lib.' Penlake was discussing faked films in the light of the current Boer War fakes. The phrase 'one of our most famous war correspondents' may well refer to Villiers.
[41] Frederick Palmer, op. cit., p.63.
[42] I suggest that the date of Villiers return to the UK was not before the end of June, as according to Coyne, above, he was filming the Jubilee in Crete which was on 22 June. The Méliès films were released in late May, so Villiers' account does make sense that Méliès beat him to it for films of this war.
[43] *Villiers, His Five Decades*, p.181-82. A slight doubt must remain (given what I mention below about other films screened as if Greco-Turkish War films), as to whether this film seen by Villiers' friend, really was one of the Méliès Greco-Turkish War fakes, though the mention of the yataghan seems to confirm an Ottoman location.
[44] See Raymond Blathwayt, 'Fresh from the front… A talk with Mr. Frederic Villiers', op. cit. In the interview Villiers notes of his own, real films of the war that '… these true pictures were absolutely worthless from a commercial point of view, because of the much more dramatic pictures 'faked up' elsewhere. One subject was an Albanian carrying off a girl…'; and his description of the film which follows is similar to his 1920 account.
[45] Paul Hammond, *Marvellous Méliès* (London: Gordon Fraser Gallery, 1974) p.23-25.
[46] Madeleine Malthête-Méliès, *Méliès L'enchanteur* (Paris: Hachette littérature, 1973), p.191. The studio was an important advance for Méliès, and this book quotes his alleged remark that he would meet his destiny with this building ('rendez-vous avec mon destin'), and adds: 'In any case, for the moment it was merely a meeting with history, for Méliès intended to reconstruct in this studio some striking current events. The Greco-Turkish War had broken out in February 1897 and still continued, and Méliès reconstructed some of its most sanguinary incidents' (my translation). The date of February is incorrect, though the Turkish repression of Greeks which led to the war had been taking place for some months before hostilities began.
[47] Ad by distributor A. Rosenberg and Co., *The Era* 29 May 1897. Cited in Barnes, 1897 volume, p.49. Also films 2 and 4 were advertised in Germany by Wolff in *Der Komet* no. 636, 29 May 1897, p.30 (and again in *Der Komet* no.639, 19 June 1897, p.20). A earlier production date than May is not feasible because the actual events depicted in the films happened between April and early May.
[48] Both the Maguire and Baucus listing in June (see below) and the Warwick catalogue give the length of 75 ft. The cost per film from Warwick was £2.10s. The 1903 Star Film catalogue gives their length at 65 ft. and cost $8 each. Sadoul gives the titles a length of 65 feet and Malthête gives 20 meters (approx 65 ft). Possibly the extra 10 feet for the British release was leader. See Georges Sadoul, 'An Index to the Creative Work of Georges Méliès (1896-1912)', *Sight and Sound. Special supplement. Index series* no. 11, 1947.
[49] *Photograms of the Year*, Nov 1897, p.37 and 38, quoted in Barnes 1897 volume, p.117 and 121; René Jeanne, *Cinéma 1900* (Paris: Flammarion, 1965), p.108.
[50] PN 1 Oct 1897, p.655.
[51] 'Der Kinematograph im Kriege' in *Photographisches Wochenblatt* no.38, 21 Sep 1897, p.301. This states that the news item was taken from the *Photographic Dealer* (PD) for July 1897, p.150, but this issue of PD does not survive in any known collection, hence my reliance on the German source. Additionally, a report in a surviving issue of PD Oct 1897, p.218,

states that the films were in great demand, and would be very popular in military regions of Britain.

[52] The list of four films, each 75 ft. long, is in Philipp Wolff's catalogue of July-Aug 1897 [reproduced in James Offer et al, eds., *Victorian Film Catalogues* (London: The Projection Box, 1996)]. The films are credited to 'Robert Houdin' (Méliès' theatre was the Théâtre Robert-Houdin). The titles are also in PD Aug 1897, p.xiii; and the series is listed in an ad in the *OMLJ* for August (p.xiv). The same list of films, though not credited to Robert Houdin, is in *Magic Lantern Journal Annual* 1897-1898, p.xcviii (published Oct 1897).

[53] Shown at Cork Opera House in mid-July 1897, according to Tony Fletcher's researches.

[54] See Birett reference below regarding the Berlin screening. Caroline Neeser, (ed.) 'Neuchâtel: Aux Premiers Temps du Cinéma', Issue of *Nouvelle revue neuchâteloise* 9, no.35, automne 1992, p.21. A film of the guerre turco-grèque was shown: the exact title is not clear but it was screened along with *Les Manoirs du Diable*, a known Méliès title (made at the end of 1896).

[55] Adriaan Briels, *Komst En Plaats Van de Levende Photographie op de Kermis : Een Filmhistorische Verkenning : Tussen Kunstkabinet 1885 - 1910 en Kinematograaf – 1896* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1973), p.30-32; additional information from Karel Dibbets. Haimanti Banerjee, 'The Silence of a Throng: Cinema in Calcutta, 1896-1912', *New Quest* 65, Sep-Oct 1987, p.261-3.

[56] *The Music Hall* 31 Dec 1897, p.24. Footage of the Jubilee procession was also being shown – another outdated series, according to this critic. Wolff was still advertising the Greco-Turkish series in OMLJ Oct 1897, p.173.

[57] The Méliès films were advertised in the *Photographic Dealer* by Wolff as late as February 1898 (on page xxv; see also Dec 1897, p.viii). The Scottish reference is from a talk by Hilton Brown, 'The 50th anniversary of motion pictures', broadcast by the BBC in 1946. (BBC Written Archives, Caversham). This recollection may be suspect due to possible lapse of memory by the spectator.

[58] Metropolitan: 'scenes from the Graeco-Turkish war'. See *Variety* 26 March 1898, p.3. The Eden Musee screening by exhibitor Eberhardt Schneider conspicuously stressed variety rather than continuity, as Charles Musser points out perceptively, mixing up film subjects rather than making a themed series/programme (unlike some other shows at this time). Thus the two 'Turco-Grecian War' films were not shown as a pair, but with an unrelated film, *Storm at Sea* spliced between them. See Charles Musser, 'The Eden Musee in 1898: The Exhibitor as Creator', *Film & History* 11, no.4, Dec 1981, p.83; and Musser, *Before the Nickelodeon*, p.137.

[59] *Photograms of the Year,* Nov 1897, op. cit., in Barnes 1897 volume, p.117 and 121. I originally thought that film B, the room interior, was also a Méliès' Greco-Turkish War film, but because it did not match any of the other three titles in Méliès' list, that it could be part of one and the same film, *Turks Attacking a House Defended By Greeks*, but I now believe it depicts the Franco-Prussian War film (mentioned below).

[60] In another reconstructed actuality Méliès similarly employs this style of action coming past camera – in the scene of journalists in the court in his *l'Affaire Dreyfus* of 1899.

[61] The NFTVA's copy of this film was acquired as film no.13 in the Ray Henville Collection: there were a total of 17 or 18 titles in this collection of very early films, most it seems dating from 1896 and 1897. The only other of Méliès' titles of this time which matches the action is his *Attack on an English Blockhouse* released later in 1897, but that is presumably set in India, which would not match the décor in the NFTVA print.

[62] *Photograms of 1897*, p.37 and 38, op. cit., in Barnes 1897 volume, p.117 and 121. It is Méliès catalogue no.110.

[63] The NFTVA copy is 56 ft. or 59ft long, depending what one includes (or 54 ft, says Barnes). That in CNC is 19 m. (or 1010 frames). A copy also survives in the University of Wisconsin film archive, Madison. See John Barnes, 'Early Méliès discovery', *Domitor Bulletin* Jan 1989, p.9-10: his source for comparison was the *Photograms* article, mentioned earlier.

[64] Madeleine Malthête-Méliès makes this suggestion. See Madeleine Malthête-Méliès, 'Trois films de Georges Méliès retrouvés en 1988', *1895,* no.5-6, Mar 1989, p.49.

[65] The same articulated set appears in another Méliès film of the same year, *Entre Calais et Douvres,* listed in his catalogue as the next but one entry at no.112.

[66] 'Cinematograph fakes', *The Photographic Chronicle*, op. cit. The writer recalled that the film showed: '…a quick-firing gun in action on the deck of a torpedo-boat in chase of a Turkish

ship… One saw the crew of the gun working it, on the rolling deck, with the waves rising and falling in the back-ground of the picture'. Georges Sadoul in *Histoire Générale du Cinéma: vol. 2. Les Pionniers du Cinéma (de Méliès à Pathé) 1897-1909* (Paris: Denoël, 1978), p.49-51 reproduces a still from the wrong film, another Méliès naval scene, with model ships. The 1902 description and a viewing of the print confirm that the effect in *Combat Naval en Grèce* was indeed achieved using a full-size articulated set.

[67] Raymond Fielding, *The American Newsreel, 1911-1967* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), p.39 and 37 respectively.

[68] Georges Sadoul, *Histoire Générale du Cinéma: vol. 1. L'invention du Cinéma, 1832-1897* (Paris: Denoël, 1977 [orig 1948]), p.395.

[69] René Jeanne, *Cinéma 1900* (Paris: Flammarion, 1965), p.108. The term 'exactitude' for such illustrations is surely wrong – 'poetic license' would be nearer the mark.

[70] Elbert Chance, 'The Motion Picture Comes to Wilmington', *Delaware History* 24, no.4, Fall/Winter 1991-2, p.237: this screening of the Méliès war films was in September of 1897, by Philipp Wolff's cinematograph. It's not clear if this spectator had actually seen the films which were being shown in his city, or just reporting that they were listed in the programme.

[71] Banerjee, op. cit., p.269: this article quotes the report, presumably from the 1890s, as reproduced, it would seem, in: Anupam Hayat, 'Silent era of Dhaka cinema', *Dhrupadi* 5, August 1985, p.14 etc. I have been unable to trace this periodical.

[72] *Photograms of the Year,* Nov 1897, op. cit., p.117.

[73] In her commentary on Sidney Race, Vanessa Toulmin stresses his scepticism about this film, and notes that early film spectators were not all naive. Vanessa Toulmin, 'The cinematograph at the Nottingham goose fair', op. cit.

[74] Richard Penlake, 'Bogus war and other pictures', *BJP* 46, 1 Dec 1899, suppl. p.92. Unfortunately Penlake does not name the 'well-known authority' who thought the films were genuine. In the article he makes a claim of 'getting into the circle of workers who produced such pictures', and he adds that 'I actually assisted in producing many other bogus war scenes'.

[75] 'Cinematograph fakes', 1902, op. cit., p.517.

[76] *Villiers, His Five Decades*, p.182-83. As I've noted above, many years earlier in an interview (a mere three years after the Greco-Turkish War) Villiers' description of the Méliès film and his comments on the implausibility of such films is very similar to his 1920 account. See Raymond Blathwayt, 'Fresh from the Front… a Talk with Mr. Frederic Villiers', op. cit.

[77] Though it is possible that some of these, Penlake's man, for example, might have been relying on hearsay; or if he was a showman would want to maintain the fiction that these films were genuine.

[78] Regarding the naive viewer, see my essay, 'The Panicking Audience?: Early Cinema and the 'Train Effect'', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 19, no. 2, June 1999, p.177-216; see also the work of Yuri Tsivian referred to in that article.

[79] Note for example the scene of journalists in the courtroom in *l'Affaire Dreyfus*, which is surprisingly realistic, with a set based on the real courtroom; by contrast, elsewhere in the film some settings are utterly stylised.

[80] I am indebted for this idea to Frank Kessler.

[81] The printed press was also guilty of exaggeration and propaganda. One writer stated that when his reports arrived back home they were exaggerated by his editor, and that other correspondents invented battles before they happened. See Frederick Palmer, *Going to War in Greece* (New York: R. H. Russell, 1897), p. 32 and 181-2.

[82] Herbert Birett, *Lichtspiele: Der Kino in Deutschland bis 1914* (Munchen: Q-Verlag, 1994), p.39. The film is listed as film number 3642 in Herbert Birett, *Das Filmangebot in Deutschland, 1895-1911* (Munich: Filmbuchverlag Winterberg, 1991). Another visual medium – still photography – was also used for propaganda at this time, such as a controversial photograph of a massacre of Muslems by Christians in Sitia. See BJP 19 Mar 1897, p.187.

[83] The execution film was distributed in Germany by Philipp Wolff, who also distributed the film in London, as one of the four Méliès Greek war titles. This is my reason for believing the film in Germany was one of the Méliès Greek war films.

[84] In France, for example, people tended to support the Greek side, and there were even fundraising events, such as a 'matinée artistique' at the Théâtre de la République on 4 April, to aid the Greek and Cretan wounded. (On the same programme was the Cinématographe de Normandin.) See programme of the event in Roger Viollet picture library, image no.889392.

[85] *Bulletin* (Sydney) 28 Aug 1897, p.8 and 11 Sep 1897, p.8.
[86] Maguire and Baucus ad, *The Phonoscope* June 1897, p.4. This may be the same Lumière-shot film of a march of Turkish cavalry at Constantinople noted in a Lyons newspaper on 25 April 1897, but this film was probably shot earlier in the year, as the Lumière operator had most likely left the city by the time war broke out in April. See Jean-Claude Seguin, *Alexandre Promio, ou, Les Énigmes de la Lumière* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999), p.85. Warwick released the same subject as two films, showing Turkish infantry/artillery leaving Constantinople for the Graeco-Turkish war, the infantry preceded by 'a native band'. They claimed it was filmed during the recent war. (Warwick catalogue nos. 1414 and 1415). See *Descriptive List of New Film Subjects* (London: The Warwick Trading Co Ltd., 1898), op. cit., p.21-2.
[87] See my book: *The Titanic and Silent Cinema* (Hastings: The Projection Box, 2000).
[88] Robert Paul, for example, proclaimed some of his fake films as 'reproductions of incidents of the Boer War'.
[89] Warwick Trading Company, *Descriptive List of New Film Subjects Issued by the Warwick Trading Company, Limited* (London: The Warwick Trading Co Ltd., 1898).
[90] *Photograms of the Year,* Nov 1897, op. cit., in Barnes 1897 volume, p.117 and 121. Interestingly, these two films both turned up in the Will Day Collection – identified by myself and colleagues – suggesting that these two films may have been screened by the same showman from whom Will Day obtained them. Perhaps this showman was also screening both as being Greco-Turkish War films.
[91] CNC's description reads (courtesy of Nadine Dubois): *Bombardement d'une Maison* (Méliès, 1897) 18.6 m (981 frames). 'This film shows troops under fire in a house. While a few soldiers are climbing a ladder (probably to get onto the roof) on the opposite side of the room, other soldiers are firing from a window . A bomb falls through the roof and explodes in the room wounding a soldier. A missionary nurse rushes towards him.' In fact, nurses from Britain and elsewhere played quite a role in this war, tending the wounded. At the Pordenone festival of 1996 apparently this film was screened, identified as Meliés' *La Prise de Tournavos*, showing Turks attacking a house defended by Greeks. I believe that this was my mis-identification and that this was really the print of *Les Dernières Cartouches*. The film also survives in the Bruxelles Royal Film Archive, apparently. (See also Baj citation below).
[92] The film was described as, 'Un épisode de la guerre franco-prussienne. On assiste au bombardement d'une maison à Bazeilles. Il s'agit de la reproduction du célèbre tableau de [Alfred de] Neuville.' From Jacques Malthête, *158 Scénarios de Films Disparus de Georges Méliès* (Paris: Les Amis de Georges Méliès, 1986), p.12. In the film the soldiers are dressed in the French military uniform of the 1870 era, not uniforms of the Greco-Turkish War.
[93] See Georges Brunel, *La Photographie et la Projection du Mouvement* (Paris, 1897), p.98-9; and Georges Sadoul, *Lumière et Méliès* (Paris: L'herminier, 1985), p.254.
[94] Barnes 1897 volume, p.162. For more on the print of *Les Dernières Cartouches* in the Bruxelles archive, see: Jeannine Baj, 'Vers une approche intégrée de la notion d'identification. Le cas de L'IIIC745/12 ou du PX20282', in Thierry Lefebvre, et al., *Les Vingt Premières Années du Cinéma Français* (Paris: AFRHC/Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1995), p.281-290. Another film title or titles from the Méliès Star catalogue from this period may also have been to do with the Franco-Prussian war: *Episodes de Guerre* (Star Catalogue numbers: 103/104), possibly titled, *La Défense de Bazeilles*, [i.e. also set in Bazeilles] – and was probably not about the Greco-Turkish War, despite what Paul Hammond (op. cit., p.34) and Sadoul suggest. See Sadoul, 'An Index to the Creative Work of Georges Méliès …', op. cit.
[95] Historian Pierre Leprohon suggested that this film was screened at the time as a Greco-Turkish War film, though it's not clear what evidence he bases this on, and whether he means in France. He writes: '... *Les Dernières Cartouches*.. [de] G. Méliès d'après le tableau d'Alfred [sic] de Neuville. Ce film aurait été présenté d'abord comme un épisode de la guerre gréco-turque qui sévissait alors'. Pierre Leprohon, *Histoire du Cinéma Muet 1895-1930* (Paris: Cerf, 1981), p.106. Cited in footnote 20 of Baj, op. cit., who also quotes from *Le Nouvel Art Cinématographique* of 1930 (via Deslandes and Richard) which gives a vague description of the film, mentioning the explosions etc, and stating that the film was quite realistic, apart from at the end when the actors grouped themselves as in the de Neuville painting.
[96] Thanks to Frank Kessler for discussion and citations about this film, which has greatly helped to clarify matters.
[97] *Der Komet* no.640, 26 June 1897, p. 20. The rest of this ad for these films reads (translated): '1. The Last Cartridge-Belt (Scene from the battle of Larissa), 2. Capture of a

House in Turnavos, 3. The Shooting of a Turkish Spy, 4. Massacre of the Christians on the Island of Crete. Projected with great success in the Wintergarten Theatre, Berlin, by Wolff's Vitaphotoskop, to be seen directly through Philipp Wolff, London-Paris-Berlin.' Larissa had been reported in the news as a battle site.

[98] 'Cinematograph fakes', *The Photographic Chronicle* 14 Aug 1902, p.517.

[99] It was accompanied by sound effects, it is interesting to note, for Race states: 'To heighten the reality of the picture a boy whose principal work was to attend to a barrel organ, fired three shots from a pistol – which startled the ladies into real fear'.

[100] Sidney Race diaries, Sat 9 Oct 1897, quoted in Vanessa Toulmin, 'The cinematograph at the Nottingham goose fair, 1896-1911' in Alan Burton and Laraine Porter, eds., *The Showman, the Spectacle and the Two-Minute Silence : Performing British Cinema before 1930* (Trowbridge, Wilts.: Flicks Books, 2001), p. 78.

[101] OMLJ Dec 1897, p.212.

[102] 'Cinematograph fakes', *The Photographic Chronicle* 14 Aug 1902, p.516-7, and *The Photographic Chronicle* 7 Aug 1902, p.498.

[103] *Villiers, His Five Decades...*, p.183.

[104] See Jacques Malthête, (ed.) 'Les Actualités Reconstituées de Georges Melies', special issue of *Archives*, no.21, March 1989, and his essay, 'Georges Méliès, de la non-fiction à la fiction' in Thierry Lefebvre, (ed.) *Images du Réel: la Non-Fiction En France (1890-1930)*, *1895* no.18 (Summer 1995), p.75; Sadoul, *Lumière et Méliès,* op. cit., p.254.

[105] *Der Komet* no.640, 26 June 1897, p.20. Wolff advertised Greek war films in *Der Komet* between 29 May and 12 Nov.

[106] Jacques Deslandes, citing an 1897 Meliès catalogue, gives three of the titles with the same catalogue numbers as Wolff, and gives the same title wording (though in French): see Jacques Deslandes, *Le Boulevard du Cinéma á l'époque de Georges Méliès* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1963), p.61-2. As I cannot find these longer French titles in any other French source for 1897 or later, I suggest that Deslandes might simply have translated the Wolff titles back into French.

[107] Frank Van der Maden, *Mobiele Filmexploitatie in Nederland, 1895-1913*. Thesis, Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen, Nijmegen, 1981, p.34. I deduced that *De oorlog tusschen Griekenland en Turkije* is Film 3 by a process of elimination.

[108] Warwick Trading Co. catalogue, 1897-8, op. cit., p.55-6.

[109] *Complete Catalogue of Genuine and Original "Star" Films* (New York, 1903), p.11. On reel 4 of Musser, *Motion Picture Catalogs… Microfilm Edision*.

[110] Ogilvie Mitchell, *The Greek, the Cretan and the Turk: A Short ... History of the Three Nationalities...* (London: Aldine Publishing Co., 1897), p.56; Jean Ganiage, 'Les Affaires de Crete (1895-1899)', *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique* 88, no. 1-2, 1974, p.86-111. Turot, *L'insurrection Crétoise*, op. cit., p.35, claims thousands (he states 300,000!) Christians were massacred in Crete, notably in Canea.

[111] All dates here are derived from B. Vincent, *Haydn's Dictionary of Dates...* (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1911 [reprint Michigan, 1968]). At least one war correspondent was in 'Tyrnavos' in April. See Henrik Cavling and Tage Kaarsted, *Henrik Cavling Som Krigskorrespondent; Artikler Og Breve Fra Den Græsk-Tyrkiske Krig, 1897* (Aarhus: Universitets-forlaget, 1960).

[112] The Greeks had a well armed navy, though it was poorly led, and its relative inactivity is 'the greatest mystery of the entire war', according to one historian, and a war correspondent had much the same opinion. See Theodore George Tatsios, *The Megali Idea,* op. cit., p.114-15. Davis, 'With the Greek Soldiers', *Harper's Monthly* 34, Nov 1897, p.816. Davis was present at the shelling of Prevesa.