

Dried Blooms, Rooted in Stone: The Herbarium of the Aegean

Amid the stones and sparse soil of the Aegean, the *Dried Blooms* are born not from water, but from memory, persistence, and light. The landscape, seemingly barren, blossoms with silent forms: desiccated flowers, cracked stems, invisible roots preserving the secrets of life on earth.

Across the centuries, European travelers of the 18th and 19th centuries — among them Joseph Pitton de Tournefort, Richard Chandler, Edward Dodwell, and Ludwig Ross — journeyed through Greece and its islands, recording with astonishment the wild austerity and archaic, almost primeval beauty of the land.

In 1700, Tournefort, traveling through Andros, observed:

“Rien n’est plus sauvage que ces collines pierreuses, mais elles sont pleines d’aromates et d’ombres antiques.”
 (“Nothing is wilder than these stony hills, yet they are full of scents and ancient shadows.”)

Dodwell, describing the dryness of the Greek summer, wrote:

“The sun had burnt every blade of grass, and yet the land breathed an austere poetry, a solemnity of silence.”

And Chandler, noticing a wild shrub sprouting from an ancient ruin, remarked:

“Nature has reclaimed what marble left behind.”

For these travelers, Greek nature was no longer the backdrop of a painting, but a living protagonist — an organism speaking in tones both vivid and stony, carrying the taste of the new and the unfamiliar, yet resonating with the memory of landscape and history.

Today, our *Dried Blooms* seek to enter into dialogue with that legacy — not through nostalgia, but through transformation. Out of dryness, decay, and dust, they trace a new aesthetic: one of endurance.

We imagine a herbarium of the future, where the dried is not dead but transfigured; where stone and root become archive, drawing, sculptural form. Through the gaze of each artist, this informal record becomes a hymn to simplicity — and a quiet reminder that even in the most arid of landscapes, literal or metaphorical, new forms continue to emerge.