

ANTOIN SEVRUGUIN



Photograph by Antoin Sevruguin (cat. no. 99, P. 1203 / N. 24251).

ANTOIN SEVRUGUIN: PAST AND PRESENT

edited by

Tasha Vorderstrasse

with contributions by

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FOREWORD

Christopher Woods

A hitherto little-known treasure of the Oriental Institute Museum is its collection of 152 Qajar-era photographs, which date to the late nineteenth century and were captured primarily by the acclaimed Iranian-Armenian photographer Antoin Sevruguin. Recently revealed by a growing body of scholarship to be a major figure in early photography, Sevruguin documented changing life in Iran through a wide range of subjects as the country stood on the cusp of modernity at the turn of the twentieth century. As emphasized by special exhibit curator Tasha Vorderstrasse, Sevruguin stood in contrast to his Western contemporaries who, immersed in the Orientalist tradition, focused specifically on the antiquity of the country, romanticizing the ruins of a glorious past. Rather, Sevruguin's photography promotes the newly arrived conveniences of the modern age while simultaneously capturing traditional ways of Iranian life—often drawing a stark contrast between the two in their juxtaposition. Understanding the new technology to be more than a mere medium of documentation for posterity, Sevruguin was an early proponent of photography as art, frequently backstamping his work with the label “*photographie artistique*.” Sevruguin's distinctive approach to composition, choice of subject matter, and use of light and shadows are hallmarks of his photographic vision.

Expertly curated by Vorderstrasse—and timely for the recent scholarly and artistic appreciation of Sevruguin's work—*Antoin Sevruguin: Past and Present* exhibits for the first time the Oriental Institute's unstudied and largely forgotten collection of Qajar-era photographs that were acquired at the beginning of the twentieth century. As one might expect of an OI exhibition, *Antoin Sevruguin: Past and Present* and its accompanying catalog rigorously explore Sevruguin's work in the fullest of its historical, cultural, and ethnographic contexts. But where this exhibition stands out from previous ones is in its unique engagement with contemporary reactions to, and perspectives on, Sevruguin's *oeuvre*—from that of modern photographer, conservator, and archivist, to that of the artist. A particular highlight of the exhibit is the integral inclusion of the art of Yassaman Ameri, whose featured work draws inspiration from that of Sevruguin by reimagining anonymous depictions of Qajar women and imbuing them with an historical context. In this way, *Antoin Sevruguin: Past and Present* builds upon our ongoing efforts to engage with contemporary art and performance, as well as with contemporary Middle Eastern cultures and issues. The purpose of these efforts is to expand and diversify our offerings and attract new audiences to our museum and programming while underscoring the current relevance of the OI's research and collections. Public engagement of this kind was a central pillar of our Centennial programming last year, and I am delighted that *Antoin Sevruguin: Past and Present* continues what I hope will be an enduring OI tradition.

I want to thank and commend Tasha Vorderstrasse, along with Deputy Director and Chief Curator Jean Evans and Curator Kiersten Neumann, for envisioning and designing a thoroughly engaging exhibit that at once brings to light this hidden treasure of the OI's collection while presenting a diversity of novel perspectives, both past and present, on this fascinating material.

PREFACE

Jean M. Evans

Antoin Sevruguin: Past and Present demonstrates everything we hope to accomplish by bringing to light an aspect of the OI collections that has received little attention. By exhibiting the best examples of Sevruguin's photography, we show visitors the vast scope of our collections, and it will likely come as a surprise to many to learn that, in the United States, the OI possesses one of the most important collections of photography by this famed Qajar-era photographer, comparable only to those of the Smithsonian Institution, the Harvard Sackler Museum, the Getty Museum, and the Brooklyn Museum of Art. The photographs also speak to the history of collecting, having been essentially curated by Mary Clarke, a former missionary who donated them in 1901 to the Haskell Oriental Museum. That Clarke saw a worthy recipient in Haskell reminds us of the far-reaching subjects acquired by this predecessor to the OI Museum. It is thanks to the vagaries of these early practices that our collections, consisting primarily of Middle Eastern antiquities excavated by OI archaeologists in the early twentieth century, have been immeasurably enriched.

And, because of these same practices, it is often the case in museum practice that we search for scholars who take an interest in the lesser-known aspects of our collections so that we might make them available to the public through exhibition and publication. I am therefore thankful to Tasha Vorderstrasse for her enduring enthusiasm for Antoin Sevruguin, which represents just one aspect of our collections that she has researched and published over the years. Her catalog represents a complete publication of the Qajar-era photography in the OI collections, and her enthusiasm for understanding Sevruguin not only within the context of his time but in terms of his contemporary reception allows us to continue our enduring interest in exploring the connections between past and present.

For their generous support of this publication, the OI Museum would like to thank the Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fund, the American Institute of Iranian Studies, the Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies, and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research. Without their support, this catalog would not have been possible.

We also thank Yassaman Ameri for lending her photography, which is featured in both the exhibition and the catalog, providing a framework for us to understand Sevruguin's enduring legacy.

Thank you also to the OI Museum staff for making this exhibition and its catalog possible. Anne Flannery and Jeff Cumonow in the Museum Archives facilitated the cataloging, conservation, and exhibition of the photographs. From our Conservation Laboratory, Laura D'Alessandro and Alison Whyte coordinated the conservation of the photographs, which was carried out by Carol Turchan. Kiersten Neumann, curator, organized the many aspects of this exhibition, which was designed and realized by Robert Bain and Josh Tulisak of Exhibition Design and Production; thank you also to Josh for his additional role in preparing the photographs for publication. Helen McDonald and Susan Allison in Registration also assisted with the documentation of the photographs. In addition, the OI Museum would like to thank Charissa Johnson and

Steven Townshend in Publications for producing such a beautiful catalog. Finally, we would like to thank Wally Verdooren and Polina Kasian in Development for their assistance with fundraising, and Matt Welton and Ali Mallett for publicizing the exhibition and coordinating its virtual programming.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Tasha Vorderstrasse, with Kiersten Neumann

This volume would not have been possible without the generous support of the Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fund, the American Institute of Iranian Studies (AIrS), the Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), and the OI. Additionally, we are thankful for the support AIrS has provided for the conservation treatment of the collection of photographs themselves. We are excited to engage in particular with the Armenian and Persian communities at a local and international level through the present publication, which makes available for the first time the OI's collection of late nineteenth-century photographs attributed to Antoin Sevruguin, and the future exhibition that will feature a selection of the original photographs for public viewing.

The editor of this volume would like to thank OI Director Christopher Woods and Deputy Director and Chief Curator Jean Evans for their support of this project. The editor would also like to acknowledge Jean Evans's vision for the contemporary art that helped inform how the exhibition developed in that direction. Thanks are also due in particular to Kiersten Neumann, OI Museum curator, for her work in organizing the exhibition, catalog planning, assistance in soliciting funding, and maintaining the momentum on the project overall. Thanks also to Wally Verdooren, director of development, for all his advice and assistance. The editor would also like to thank the anonymous reviewer for their many helpful comments and the OI publications committee, Susanne Paulus and Theo van den Hout. The editor would also like to mention that she would not have rediscovered the Sevruguin photographs without the visit of Sona Kalousdian and Ira Lawrence to the Oriental Institute.

In particular, the editor would like to thank all the contributors who wrote articles for this volume for being willing to contribute and for being responsive. The editor would like to thank Yassaman Ameri for her suggestions and insights, which made this a better volume overall and has helped the editor to see Qajar photographs in new and exciting ways; Polina Kasian, who was never too busy to answer questions about her chapter immediately, and whose understanding of Russian painting and culture greatly added to the overall volume; Delphine Poinot for her carefully crafted article and for her invaluable advice on the subtleties of the French language, which helped better understand the words Sevruguin chose to describe himself; Carol Turchan for describing her methods in conserving the photographs; Jeff Cumonow for discussing the archive and for all his help with the photographs; Josh Tulisiak for writing clearly about his methods in colorizing Sevruguin's photograph; Mahdi Ehsaei for providing his photographs, bio, and artist's statement, and last (but not least), Charissa Johnson, who created the beautiful catalog of Sevruguin photographs, and whose advice, patience, and encouragement meant so much throughout this project and who really inspired the editor on this work.

This catalog would not look as it does without the assistance of three people: Charissa Johnson and Steven Townshend of OI publications, and Josh Tulisiak, exhibition design and production manager. Charissa, in addition to being an author, is also the series editor, and worked tirelessly on the design and layout, and Steven Townshend is also a series editor. Both of

them worked so hard meticulously editing and commenting on the catalog, and it literally could not have happened without them. Josh Tulisiak, who worked on so many different aspects of the project, including the exhibition planning, catalog cover design, map, photograph colorization, and formatting, and provided general advice on the catalog overall, was also invaluable. In prep, Rob Bain helped on the exhibition planning and provided useful insights into issues related to contemporary art. In conservation, Laura D'Alessandro arranged for the conservation of the photographs with Carol Turchan and meticulously counted the pictures; and Alison Whyte provided a condition assessment of the prints. In the OI Museum Archives, Anne Flannery patiently answered the editor's detailed questions. Susan Allison in Museum Registration helped with the high-resolution scans of the Sevruguin photographs and with other images. Thanks also to Helen McDonald in Museum Registration. Thanks are also due to Hripsime Haroutunian for her continued support of this project and all her assistance, as well as Frank Lewis. The editor would also like to thank Antiquariaat Isis in Grongingen, the Netherlands, for promptly shipping a book that was very much needed by the editor in time for consultation for the catalog despite the COVID-19 situation. Further, this catalog could not have been completed without the tireless support, suggestions, and advice of Brian Muhs.

Finally, this catalog would also not be in its current form without the inspiration of Atlas Unlimited. In 2019, the editor participated in Atlas Unlimited Act V: Plaisance, and Act VI: Strike, at the Logan Center of the University of Chicago, and Atlas Unlimited: Entr'acte, at the Graham Foundation in Chicago, as well as gallery activations at the Logan Center. The editor would like to thank the creators of Atlas Unlimited, Karthik Pandian and Andros Zins-Browne, as well as all the participants: Anthony Adcock, Zakaria Almoutlak, Jad Dahshan, Jane Foley, Sami Ismat, Mohammad Miah, Gabe Moreno, and Maryam Taghavi. Karthik and Andros brought together artists and others who had many different skills and used different media and approaches in order to link past and present. This multiplicity of approaches enhanced and changed the perception of the contemporary art that everyone created, both performative and material, and challenged the audiences in new and exciting ways. This approach was explicitly used in this catalog in order to approach Sevruguin in new and hopefully interesting ways and to engage with a wide variety of viewpoints. Therefore, this catalog is dedicated to all of you in the Atlas family.

INTRODUCTION

Tasha Vorderstrasse

Thanks to recent scholarship, Antoin Sevruguin has emerged as one of the most important proponents of nineteenth-century photography in Iran and has been the subject of exhibitions, monographs, and articles, either individually or as part of larger studies in Iranian photography.¹ This exhibition not only looks at Sevruguin in his context but also includes a discussion of archival practice of the Oriental Institute Museum,² how a modern photographer sees Sevruguin's artistic practices,³ and Sevruguin's impact on modern art,⁴ as well as more specialized studies focusing on different aspects of Sevruguin's work, including his photography of monuments (see Poincot, this volume, chapter five, and Vorderstrasse, this volume, chapter four) and the context behind his work (see Vorderstrasse, this volume, chapters six and eight). Further, the exhibition also shows the continued relevance of Sevruguin's work—and by extension Qajar photography—in the present day, and how it is viewed through the lens of contemporary art. A modern colorized photograph of Sevruguin in the exhibition demonstrates how the absence of color influences our view of Sevruguin's photographs. Further, it forms a bridge to the art of Yassaman Ameri, the featured artist in this catalog. Yassaman Ameri's work reimagines photographs of Qajar women together with images from Qajar painting (see Vorderstrasse with Tulisak, this volume, chapter nine, and Ameri, this volume, chapter ten) to provide micro-histories of these otherwise unknown women. In giving this context, her work provides the women in the photographs with a voice and restores their histories. Her work also raises important questions about how we view Qajar (and other) nineteenth-century photographs and how we might view who the photographer was when we have no information about their identity. Ameri hypothesizes that the photographer might have been a woman, and this once again points to a whole group of people who may have been active in Qajar photography but still remain unseen.

The Oriental Institute Museum has a collection of 152 late-nineteenth-century Qajar-era photographs in its collection, the vast majority of which are by the famed Armenian-Iranian photographer Antoin Sevruguin (ca. 1851–1933). After its donation to what was then known as the Haskell Oriental Museum by former missionary Mary Clarke in 1901, this collection was largely forgotten, although its presence was signaled in a recent catalog to the OI Museum exhibition, *Picturing the Past*,⁵ and it was briefly discussed in a recent article in the OI quarterly periodical *News & Notes*.⁶ These photographs are now the focus of an OI exhibition, and this accompanying catalog, *Antoin Sevruguin: Past and Present*. The exhibition emphasizes the unique vision of Antoin Sevruguin, informed as it is through his background as an Armenian living in nineteenth-century Iran. He documented a changing Iran, taking photographs of modern infrastructure that is frequently absent in photographs taken by Western photographers, but at the same time he still photographed more traditional “Orientalist” subjects. Nevertheless, his unique approach to staging, lighting, and general composition, as well as his explicit references on his own photographs as “photographie artistique,”⁷ shows that Sevruguin took his photographs in a very deliberate way, with a particular purpose in mind. The subsequent collection and reinterpretation of Sevruguin's photographs by nineteenth-century collectors and

viewers, as well as by present audiences, also forms an important part of the exhibition and catalog. Further, it is evident that Sevruguin's photography had an influence on contemporary artists, whether explicitly or implicitly, who continue his tradition of photography and intentionality. These multiple layers show the complexity in attempting to unpack various meanings in Sevruguin's pictures and how they were subsequently viewed, reinterpreted, and reused. On the one hand, photographs are seen as being a "realistic" depiction of the past, but on the other, they clearly provide only an impression of the past.⁸ Sevruguin's photographs are in many ways typical of Middle Eastern subject matters. In his official photograph albums, the Ottoman sultan Abdul Hamid II chose subject matters that were very similar: landscapes and ancient monuments, as well as documentation of modern developments in the Ottoman empire. But Abdul Hamid II did not send photographs of himself to the United States and the United Kingdom.⁹ As an official court photographer, Sevruguin produced photographs of the Qajar court that acted as propaganda for the government on the one hand but could also be enjoyed by tourists and locals alike.¹⁰

PHOTOGRAPHIE ARTISTIQUE

The majority of the backs of Sevruguin's photographs that have a backstamp describe his work as "photographie artistique" (fig. 1a-b), which Behdad notes involved the use of shadow and light.¹¹ In his circa 1897 backstamp, the words are superimposed against a drawing of a palette and a group of brushes, making his association with painting and art extremely clear. In the later backstamp, the palette and brushes disappear, but the appellation remains. For some photographers, photography was not a science but rather it was an art.¹² In another backstamp, which is less commonly attested, Sevruguin simply describes his work as "Grande photographie," which was a common term used by photographers in France and once again seems related to the idea that photography was art.¹³ Artist brushes and palettes are frequently found on the backstamps of pictures, making this connection manifest.¹⁴ It appears not only on Sevruguin's backstamps but also the backstamps of Armenian photographers operating in the Russian Empire.

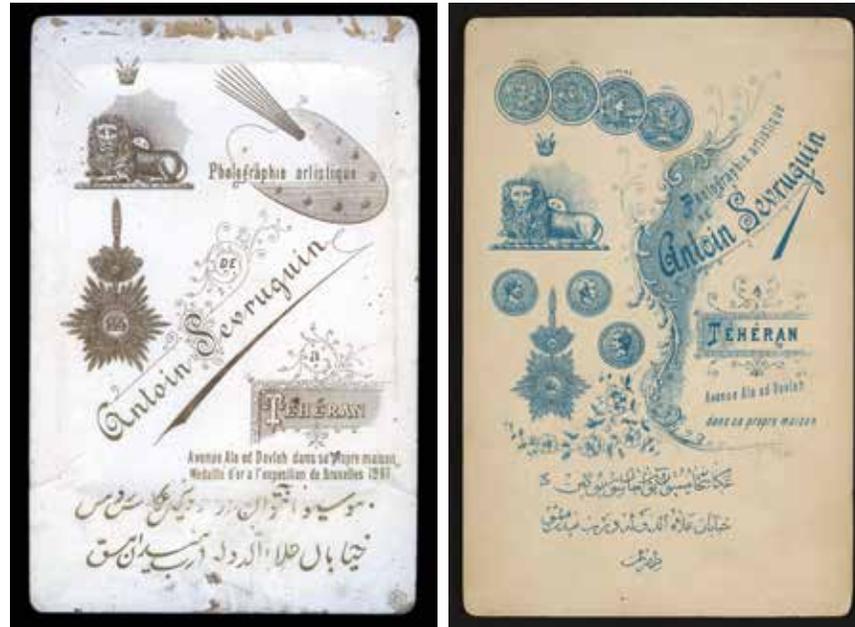


Figure 1a-b. Backstamps of Sevruguin's photographs (Nina Avakyan and Joel Montague Collections, Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran website, Record Nos. 1260A51 and 908A7).



Figure 2. Antoin Sevruguin, *Photograph of School Girls*, early twentieth century with close-up showing the photo mount and the artist's name stamped on the picture (Joel Montague Collection, Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran website, Record No. 908A3).

When analyzing the backstamps, however, one must keep in mind the fact that many of the photograph mounts used by Ottoman, Qajar, and Russian Empire photographers were produced in Western Europe. This is indicated by the presence of words such as “cabinet photograph” on the front of card in English,¹⁵ and English also appears on the reverse, on the medals showing the busts of famous photographers.¹⁶ The same backstamps are used by various photographers, including different Armenian photographers working in Merv and Georgia;¹⁷ Shushi in what is now Nagorno Karabakh; and Singagi, in Georgia;¹⁸ and Baku and Kars;¹⁹ which suggests that the photographers ordered photo mounts with decorations already on them and then added their own names and other relevant information. Therefore, the frequent appearance of artists’ palettes and cameras²⁰ are not necessarily an indication that these photographers definitely saw the link between photography and art. This can also be seen in the use of the term “photographie artistique,” or “artistic photographer,” by a variety of different photographers in their mounts and backstamps.²¹ In some cases, however, it is clear the artist did make this connection. The Armenian photographer Georgiy Shahverdov, also known as Gevorg Shahverdyan, worked in Central Asia, supposedly at an “artistic photo-studio” in the town of Ashgabat.²² The backstamps were also customized with the medals received from various rulers appointing an individual as “court photographer.” Grigor Hakobi Babalov (Babalyan), who operated studios in Tbilisi, Shushi (now in Nagorno-Karabakh), and Helendorf (now Goygol in Azerbaijan) is a good example. His backstamps state that he was court photographer to the Czar Nicholas II (accompanied by medals), the ruler of Persia (including a Qajar medal and a lion holding a sword aloft), as well as the Emir of Bukhara (including another medal).²³ It is also interesting that the name of his photography studio was actually Armenian, “Luys” (or “light”), but it is transliterated in Cyrillic (see Vorderstrasse, this volume, chapter six for discussion of Armenian photographers).

The term more rarely appears on the mount of the front of Sevruguin’s photographs. In an example from the early twentieth century, the emphasis is on “photographie artistique” and not on name of the photographer, even though it is present. In this picture, the words “photographie artistique” are clearly stamped in gold on the mount. The signature of the artist himself, here “A. Sevruguine,” is much smaller, and also embossed but not colored, affixed directly to the photograph itself (fig. 2).

The question is what that meant to Sevruguin and how that informs what we think about his work. It appears that he meant that the photography should have a particularly artistic point of view, which given his training as a painter, is not surprising.²⁴ In this, he followed the paths of other artists, such as his teacher Dimitri Ermakov, who collaborated with the painter Piotr Kolchin;²⁵ and the landscape painter David Octavius Hill (1802–1870), who formed a photography studio with Robert Adamson (1821–1848) in Edinburgh. They collaborated on pictures that looked at composition and used chiaroscuro technique, leading critics to compare the influences in the photographs to Raeburn and Rembrandt. Like Sevruguin, Hill and Adamson made photographs of “traditional” life in Scotland, similar to Sevruguin’s ethnographic photographs of traditional life in Iran.²⁶ It is interesting that on the one hand Sevruguin’s photographs are seen to document Iran, whereas he saw them as artistic photographs rather than documentary works. Nevertheless, photography was seen as recording reality, and Sevruguin’s work can be viewed as part of the impulse in the nineteenth century to use the camera to record images that were said to represent reality that could be preserved through this new medium for posterity.²⁷

In 1883, Auguste Pierre Petit asked whether photography was an art or a science, which he claimed depended on whether someone who was making the photography was an artist or a scientist.²⁸ Further, in his work, Petit provided instructions on how to take photographs artistically, namely where to position the light for landscape photography and how the light will affect the photography depending on the time of day.²⁹ He also provided instructions on how to photograph monuments, correct for distortion, and photograph the interior.³⁰ Writing about the subject nearly thirty-five years later, Anderson reflected on the methods of trying to get the lighting correct in photography and the difficulties of composing scenes.³¹ He also noted that “the art of photography lies in rendering gradations of light, shading, and shadow in their infinite delicacy.”³² It is clear that photography and painting were intertwined in Qajar art. Qajar artists based their portraits on photographs, and they thought it improved their paintings by helping with their understanding of things such as perspective and shadow, etc.³³

Stein claimed that Iranian photography was different from contemporary Western European photography because Iranian photographers did not have access to the same artistic background that European photographers did. Therefore, she concludes they used Orientalist conventions to create a new local Iranian identity in their photographs.³⁴ In the case of Sevruguin, however, this overlooks Sevruguin’s artistic training in Tbilisi (see Kasian, this volume, chapter seven) and the fact that Qajar artists were familiar with Western art, some of them having studied in Europe, and they also comment on the influence of Rembrandt.³⁵ It is evident that Sevruguin and photographers from the region operated within the ideas current in photography at the time. Given Sevruguin’s interest in unusual angles, lighting, and staging (see Johnson, this volume, chapter three), his association with artistic photography is not surprising.

CONCLUSION

This catalog assembles a variety of different perspectives on Sevruguin to try to understand more about his photographs and their different contexts. In attempting to understand Sevruguin's techniques and motivations for making the photographs in the way that he did, we also find ourselves looking at the historical background behind those photographs and how those photographs were collected, curated, and examined and reexamined through time. This includes not only how we view the photographs but how these photographs impact the way that nineteenth-century viewers and ourselves see Qajar Iran and how we can see their continued impact on the way that new art is made and interpreted. Sevruguin's legacy is therefore not simply the photographs he made but the mutable atmosphere that he created, which continues to influence and impact us as we study and are inspired by his works to create new stories and new art, such as the works by Yassaman Ameri and others.

Endnotes

- ¹ See, for example, Stein 1983; Bohrer 1999; van Doorn and Vogelsang–Eastwood 1999; Rosema 1999; Vuurman 1999; Navab 2002, 2003, 2011; Spurr 2002; Behdad 2008, 2013, 2016; Krasberg 2008, 2008b; Tatjarian and Sevruguin 2008; Chi 2015; Scheiwiller 2016, 2018; Schwerda 2017; Williams 2020.
- ² Cumonow, this volume, chapter one.
- ³ Johnson, this volume, chapter three.
- ⁴ Vorderstrasse with Tulisiak, this volume, chapter nine, and Ameri, this volume, chapter ten.
- ⁵ Larson 2012, 51 fig. 6.2.
- ⁶ Vorderstrasse 2018.
- ⁷ The author would like to thank Delphine Poinot for her helpful and stimulating discussion of this term.
- ⁸ Edwards 2016, 307.
- ⁹ Nolan 2019.
- ¹⁰ See for similar in the Ottoman Empire, Nolan 2019.
- ¹¹ Behdad 2016, 24–25, 83–84. See also Bohrer 1999a, 40.
- ¹² Marsoobian 2015, 45.
- ¹³ İhtishāmī 2017, 208 fig. 372. For examples from France see, Lithograph advertising “Grande photographie des enfants de France,” 1890. <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b53015808v>, accessed August 10, 2020; Reverse of photograph advertised “Grande photographie des familles,” 1860–1900. <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84323632/f30.item.r=%22grande%20photographie%22.zoom>, accessed August 10, 2020; Reverse of photograph advertising “Grande photographie du globe,” 1860–1900, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84323632/f10.item.r=%22grande%20photographie%22.zoom>, accessed August 10, 2020. Thanks again to Delphine Poinot for discussing the term with me.
- ¹⁴ Henisch and Henisch 1996, 50–51 figs. 3–4.
- ¹⁵ See for example İhtishāmī 2017, 155–60, 162–65, 167, 169–71; Marsoobian 2017, 14, 63, 65, 67–68.
- ¹⁶ www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/khachaturyants-a/, <http://www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/aniev-a-m/>, www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/manukov-ga/, accessed on May 16, 2020.

- ¹⁷ See www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/nazaryants-stepan/, accessed May 16, 2020 and www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/hovhannisyants-minas/, accessed May 17, 2020.
- ¹⁸ www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/serobe-brothers/, accessed May 16, 2020; www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/sildiryants-martiros/, accessed May 17, 2020.
- ¹⁹ www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/avagyants-a/, accessed May 16, 2020; www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/palandjyan-m-g/, accessed on March 17, 2020.
- ²⁰ www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/nazaryants-stepan/, www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/lalayants-senekerim/, accessed May 16, 2020, www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/serobe-brothers/; www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/hovhannisyants-minas/, www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/sildiryants-martiros/, accessed May 17, 2020, among other examples.
- ²¹ Damandan 1999, 111; Ihtishāmī 2017, 164 fig. 250, 168, fig. 268, 206 fig. 364, 220 fig. 434.
- ²² www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/shahverdov-georgiy/, accessed May 16, 2020.
- ²³ www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/babalov-grigor/, accessed May 17, 2020.
- ²⁴ Vuurman 2013, 43.
- ²⁵ Mamatsashvili 2014, 33; Kasian, this volume, chapter seven.
- ²⁶ Simpson 2012, 21–46; Simpson 2013, 31–36.
- ²⁷ Nolan 2019.
- ²⁸ Petit 1883, 5–6.
- ²⁹ Petit 1883, 10.
- ³⁰ Petit 1883, 24, 28.
- ³¹ Anderson 1916, 21–22.
- ³² Anderson 1916, 52.
- ³³ Ekhtiar 1998, 60; Raby 1998, 17, 31; Diba 2013, 86; Stein 2013, 25; Brusius 2015, 65–66.
- ³⁴ Stein 2013, 24–25.
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TIMELINE

Dates concerning Sevruguin are in italics

- 1779 Mohammad Karim Khan Zand, ruler of the Zand Dynasty in southern Iran dies. Agha Mohammad Khan, leader of the Qajars, starts to reunify Iran under his rule
- 1794 Agha Mohammad Khan eliminates his rivals and becomes sole ruler of Iran
- 1796 Agha Mohammad is crowned as shah and established capital at Tehran, which was a village at the time
- 1797 Agha Mohammad assassinated and followed by his nephew Fath Ali Shah as ruler
- 1804- Perso-Russian wars
- 1813 Treaty of Golestan where Fath Ali Shah cedes north Caucasus and recognizes Russia's annexation of Georgia
- 1826- Perso-Russian wars
- 1828 Treaty of Turkmanchai, Qajars cede areas that cover modern Armenia and Azerbaijan to Russia
- 1848 Nasir al-Din Shah succeeds to the throne
- 1851 *Approximate year of Antoin Sevruguin's birth*
- 1870 *Approximate year that Dimitri Ermakov opens his studio in Tiflis (Tbilisi)*
- 1877 *Approximate date when Antoin Sevruguin returns to Iran with his brothers and founds a photographic studio in Tabriz*
- 1883 *Approximate year that Antoin Sevruguin opens his studio in Tehran*
- 1896 Assassination of Nasir al-Din Shah by Mirza Reza Kermani, his son Mozaffar al-Din Shah succeeds to the throne
- 1905 Constitutional Revolution begins
- 1907 Mozaffar al-Din Shah dies and his son Mohammad Ali Shah succeeds to the throne
- 1908 *Sevruguin's studio is destroyed by fire by anti-Constitutionalists working with the Russian military and his glass plates are destroyed*
- 1909 Mohammad Ali Shah abdicates, his son Ahmad Shah succeeds
- 1911 Parliament is dissolved. End of Constitutional Revolution
- 1916 *Dimitri Ermakov dies*
- 1917 Bolshevik revolution in Russia
- 1922 Abolishment of Ottoman sultanate
- 1923 Republic of Turkey is established
- 1925 Reza Shah Pahlavi comes to power, replacing Qajar Dynasty
- 1933 *Antoin Sevruguin dies of kidney failure*

Map 1. Map showing region at the end of the nineteenth century after the 1878 Treaty of Berlin.



Romania

Bulgaria

Eastern Rumeila

★ Istanbul (Constantinople)

Russian Empire

Tbilisi (Tiflis) ★

Ottoman Empire

• Tabriz

Tehran ★

Qajar Empire

Afghanistan

★ Isfahan
★ New Julfa

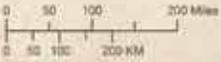
Naqsh-i-Rustam
Bishapur ★
Pasargadae
Persepolis

India

Egypt

1878 Map of Region

- Empire/Country
- ★ Capital
- City
- △ Ancient Site
- Suburb



Map 2. Modern
borders of region.



Modern Map of Region

- Country
- ★ Capital
- City
- ▲ Ancient Site
- * Suburb

0 50 100 200 Miles
0 50 100 200 KM

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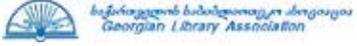
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CHAPTER ONE

THE OI'S COLLECTION OF SEVRUGUIN PHOTOGRAPHS: AN ARCHIVAL APPROACH

Jeff Cumonow

While there are over one hundred thousand images within the Oriental Institute Photographic Archives, these 152 photos offer a unique chance to explore how a single set of images can provide the observer with several routes for understanding the nature of a photographic collection. The history of these photographs and how they came to be a part of the greater OI Photographic Archives tells a story of different approaches to archiving and cataloging: according to the photographer Antoin Sevruguin, the collector Mary A. Clarke, and the Oriental Institute itself. Each of these parties has had a distinct but related manner of defining the significance of this collection. Allowing these photographs to be displayed in the OI Museum gives observers the opportunity to explore the different ways in which these photos have been understood—what the collection has meant to the parties connected to it, and how the future Antoin Sevruguin exhibit becomes a part of that history.

In the twenty-first century, the Oriental Institute continues to approach archival work in accordance with the thoughts of its founder, James Henry Breasted. He envisioned an archive wherein “photographs, journals, note-books, drawing and surveys . . . would rapidly grow into a comprehensive body of historical archives. . . . The final result would be a systematically built up documentary basis, such as exists nowhere else, for recovering the lost chapter of the career of man.”¹ Over the last century, this archive has grown to encompass a vast collection, including correspondence of the Director’s Office beginning with James Henry Breasted, papers of OI faculty and staff, field records of OI expeditions, curatorial records and

correspondence of the museum, in addition to the many photo negatives, prints, and slides. This archive as envisioned by Breasted includes these 152 images of Antoin Sevruguin. They spend the majority of their time housed in five boxes in climate-controlled compact storage among hundreds of other boxes, rarely seen by the public, and stored under a subcollection entitled “Records of the 19th Century Photograph Collection.” These terms for how they are stored is efficient and accurate. However, there are many other manners in which this collection can be viewed.

A “nineteenth century photograph collection” is merely one way in which the Sevruguin Collection can be understood as an archive. It fits perfectly within the subject matter that Breasted sought to curate and is a part of several themes: it is a photographic series on a topic that fits the subject matter of research within the Oriental Institute, a part of a series of photos taken in the nineteenth century, and could be even more narrowly looked at as nineteenth-century photos of Iran. This is without even exploring the subject matter of the photos or the goals of the photographer or original collector of the images. Other interpretations of what the 19th Century Photographs Collection represents as an archive can be seen in the approach to curating these photographs undertaken before they eventually reached the Haskell Oriental Museum (the predecessor to the OI) in 1901.

Some historians feel that in order to examine the photography of Antoin Sevruguin, it is necessary to see his work as a “brand rather than the work of a single artist.”² Iran of the late nineteenth century saw an ever-growing number of Western tourists. These visitors rarely took their own photos, and instead often purchased what was provided in commercial studios, which attempted to keep a range of images in stock so that a visitor could pick and choose photos at their leisure.³ A tourist could then go home with an album full of photos they picked out themselves and use the album to retell the story of their experience abroad.

The photos from the studio of Antoin Sevruguin were of the same nature but were of a different caliber. It must certainly be accepted that his photographs, in catering to the Western buyer, fall into the genre of Orientalism. Many of his photos are staged, and often depict common tropes of Orientalist tourist photography: images of citizens by “type,” organized in categories so as to cover all the myriad facets of what daily life in Tehran was like. These types vary from “dervish” to women posed with the suggestion of sensuality. However, Sevruguin differs from this genre in that he represents “simultaneously examples of an Orientalist tradition of photography of the Middle East and the expression of a resident photographer genuinely interested in Iran and the everyday practices of its people.”⁴ A number of his photos include images of the royal family, as well as the rapid Westernization that was arriving during his time there. His photography shows a clear, intimate knowledge of and investment in his surroundings.

This enables Sevruguin’s photos to fill a unique niche within the greater categories one might file his images into. Instead of being entirely relegated to the contemporary method of defining this collection: Oriental Institute Photographic Archives, 19th Century Photography Collection, his photos can also be defined as “images of Iran,” and “Orientalist Middle Eastern photography,” “the photos of Antoin Sevruguin,” or other combinations. This is similar to imagining a photo album of a family member. An album of a grandparent on a shelf could be seen strictly as photos of that person. If that

album is next to an album of their spouse, they could collectively be treated as images of a couple. Or, if there are photos of children in yet another album, as a family photo collection. Or as photos of a family in a certain decade. Or photos of a family in a certain region of the world. Defining, cataloging, and archiving a collection of images is a multifaceted and flexible undertaking. Another way of archiving these Sevruguin photos would be the approach of the collector of these particular 152 images: Mary A. Clarke.

Very little is known about Mrs. Clarke, aside from historical information documenting where she was in Iran and when, and when her photos arrived at the Oriental Institute. Mary Clarke (later Colquhoun) likely purchased these images herself. She lived in Iran for an extended period of time—first in Tabriz from 1880 to 1883 as a principal at the American Presbyterian Church Girl’s Mission School, and as assistant superintendent of the Boys’ High School in Tehran from 1892 to 1898.⁵ Only three years after leaving Tehran, she gifted her collection to the Haskell Oriental Museum. The museum received 157 loose photographs, which she seems to have numbered and labeled herself. Unlike some of the other nineteenth century OI photo collections, these images are not in an album but are loose and on a cardstock backing that was likely added sometime after the original purchase. Once absorbed into the then rapidly growing photo collection of the Oriental Institute, these images were rarely interacted with. The next record in the Museum Archives show a number of them were loaned in 1928, but not all of them returned, leaving the collection at 152 images. After 1928, over eighty years passed without mention of these photos. Prior to the upcoming Antoin Sevruguin exhibition, it is only briefly mentioned in a catalog for a 2012 OI exhibition entitled *Picturing the Past*.⁶ Having this collection on display reveals a world gone-by as well as interpretations of their significance beyond what is depicted on the film itself. They simultaneously show the past and act as a viewing screen for interpreting it.

The nature of defining the make-up of a collection is closely tied with the viewpoint of those who curate it—whether it is the one who created the collection in the first place, the one who purchased and collected it, or the archivist who stores it amongst a greater repository. Each has a hand in rewriting what it is the collection represents, without altering the physical make-up of the collection whatsoever. The upcoming Antoin Sevruguin exhibit seeks to express this. The power of the approach to archiving is that while the object that is archived does not change, the interpretation of what the object means can fluidly evolve. To Sevruguin, these photos may have been seen as “photos a tourist might want to purchase,” or “an approach to popular photos for Westerners with a more intimate personal lens,” or “typologies of Iranian people.” Mary Clarke might have seen the same photos, which she personally selected, as “memories of a time abroad,” or “what Persia is really like [according to Clarke].” The Oriental Institute can equally redefine these same images without nullifying the understanding of what they meant before their 1901 arrival. For most of the past century, these photos spend a majority of their time sitting quietly on a shelf within a large archival storage space. There, they still represent over one hundred years of different interpretations of their significance. On display, these photographs give the visitor to the Oriental Institute an opportunity to learn more about their history and what they present, creating a new part of the ongoing story of the 152 photos in the 19th Century Photographs Collection.

Endnotes

- ¹ James Henry Breasted, February 18, 1919.
- ² Williams 2020, 30.
- ³ Williams 2020, 30.
- ⁴ Behdad 2016, 77.
- ⁵ Vorderstrasse 2018, 4.
- ⁶ Larson 2012, 51.

CHAPTER TWO

PRESERVATION OF THE ANTOIN SEVRUGUIN COLLECTION

Carol Turchan

The Oriental Institute collection of 152 Antoin Sevruguin photographs of Iranian subjects will again see the “light of day” as they undergo minor conservation treatments and re-housing to ensure their continued preservation. The upcoming exhibition will feature a small number of images from the collection, but it provides an opportunity, while being highlighted, to extend the same level of care to all of the prints in the OI’s collection.

The Sevruguin photographs are believed to have been made between 1880 and 1890. All the prints are albumen, but many exhibit a soft pink tonality. Photography was in a constant state of development from its earliest days. Synthetic dyes discovered in the 1860s allowed subtle tinting of albumen papers, a trend that became especially popular in the ’70s. Pink, blue, and violet dyes were added to the albumen before coating the thin, fine quality papers. Pink was the most popular color, as it was thought the tint reduced the effect of yellowing as the image faded over time.

Albumen prints were always mounted. The photographic papers had to be very thin, of superior quality, and flexible, to allow for floating on the albumen solution, which consisted of salted and beaten egg white. The thin prints would curl tightly if not mounted. Albumenized papers were coated and dried, then light-sensitized by floating the papers on a dilute solution of silver nitrate. They were typically used the same day, as they did not keep well after sensitizing.

In a previous storage setting, one or more edges of Sevruguin’s mounted prints acquired sooty deposits, a condition that is consistent throughout the collection. When such soiling is present, handling can set fine particles of soot into the paper,

making removal more difficult. In preparation for the exhibition, surface dirt will be reduced in treatment using a variety of dry cleaning products. Prints will be more fully examined and tested when conservation treatments begin, in order to determine whether the photographs require light surface cleaning as well. Original board mounts are brittle and acidic. Over time they suffered minor edge damage, and in their current storage system they are vulnerable when handled. Fragile areas will be stabilized in treatment to prevent further breakage and loss.

Surfaces of the prints were found to be coated after mounting, but the specific coating material has not been identified. It was unevenly brushed over surfaces of prints and in some places appears iridescent. Coatings on photographs were common on both albumen and salted paper prints in the late nineteenth century. Gum arabic, gelatin, albumen, collodion, and some varnishes were typically applied to prints to enhance the images by increasing contrast and deepening tones. Coatings were primarily intended, however, to protect vulnerable processes from fading. Albumen, and especially salted paper prints, had little or no protective binder to shield sensitive silver particles from the damaging effects of light and humidity.

Acidic mounts to which photographs are intimately bonded also contribute to image fading. Acids migrate through the back of a print—they may be absorbed from old, degraded storage materials, and also transfer when prints are stored in direct contact with one another over time. The current storage materials will be replaced as a component of treatment. At present, the prints are stored individually within archival folders, but the top, soiled margins of the mounts extend above the folders. Soot is driven into paper fibers if handled. Surface cleaning the mounts will remove the possibility of transferring the soot to prints and other mounts.

A new folder has been chosen that combines characteristics beneficial to sensitive photographs on degraded board mounts. Two specialty papers are combined in one product: MicroChamber folder stock incorporates a naturally occurring zeolite that scavenges and sequesters acids and peroxides from deteriorating materials, and a thin layer of Silversafe—a non-buffered cotton fiber specifically manufactured for use with photographs—lines the inside of the folder. The new folders will completely cover the edges of the cleaned mounts, and the collection will be further protected in archival document boxes.

CHAPTER THREE

SEVRUGUIN'S APPROACH TO PHOTOGRAPHY

Charissa R. M. Johnson

Ya know, my cell phone takes photos just as good as your camera, and I bet it was a whole lot cheaper than it too!” I was in the middle of photographing a wedding ceremony when I received this unsolicited comment from a gentleman. “Well if you’d like to take over—please, be my guest,” was the only decent response I could think of. As frustrating as his comment was to me (and believe me, he’s not the first to say something along these lines), I can see why he’d think this way. In this day and age, everyone has access to a camera—a cell phone—nearly every moment of every day. Why bother pouring countless years, time, and money into being a photographer at all? Why is it worth it? Why would anyone do it?

Photography is about perspective. It conveys a viewpoint. It reveals and preserves a story. Not only is it a way of viewing the world, it is a way of interpreting it, helping us to understand our own lives and be present with what we celebrate, love, grieve, abhor, and desire. This is why I do photography. Perspective. While there is some subjectivity involved, there are a myriad of elements that go into portraying that perspective in a way that is skilled, meaningful, and artistic. One’s use of technology, lighting, composition and subject placement, and subject appearance are factors that can create a more powerful perspective. Indeed, even the identity of the photographer adds to the image’s perspective, as we can’t help but pour a bit of ourselves into what we do. This chapter examines Antoin Sevruguin’s approach to photography by looking at his personal identity as a photographer as well as the way he uniquely used specific photographic elements.

SEVRUGUIN'S IDENTITY AS A PHOTOGRAPHER

Antoin Sevruguin (ca. 1851–1933) was one of Iran's most influential nineteenth-century photographers, producing over seven thousand glass plate negatives, though only 696 survive today.¹ His skill was widely recognized, winning him photography exhibit competitions in Paris and Brussels.² Sevruguin originally trained to be a painter³ but left painting to pursue photography, also using it as a means to support his family (his widowed mother had been denied her pension by the Russian government⁴).⁵ After an apprenticeship with Russian photographer Dmitri Ermakov, Sevruguin and his brothers moved first to Tabriz and then Tehran,⁶ and he began providing commercial portraiture to locals and tourists. He soon became one of the most prominent photographers in Iran and was even appointed by Nasir al-Din Shah (r. 1848–1896) as the official photographer of the late Qajar court.⁷ In his lifetime, he provided commercial portraiture, industrial photographs (many of which include monuments), and landscape photography.⁸

Sevruguin's varied national identity and connections also contributed to the type of photography he was able to do, providing him generous access to both Iranian spheres and Western spheres. Though of Armenian descent he was from the Russian Empire, non-Iranian, married to an Iranian-Armenian, and spent most of his life in Iran (Persia).⁹ On the back side of his photographs Sevruguin would sign his name and list his photographic awards using Russian, Persian, and French¹⁰—appealing to and embracing multiple identities. He spoke five languages, and because of his ability to speak Persian, traveled to many areas other European photographers strictly avoided. For example, he was commissioned to photograph ancient monuments in Fars, an area located in southern Iran and one of the many foci of colonial and Qajar feudal rivalries;¹¹ he was successful in doing so in part because many of the chiefs there were already his clients in Tehran and they protected him.¹² He might not have had these established relationships had he been a strictly European photographer. The power he obtained through the Qajar court also allowed him privileges and access. The shah even gave him the title of khan, meaning “prince.”¹³ Sevruguin photographed a wide range of people: Georgians, Shasavan, Assyrians, Gilak, Armenians, Zoroastrians; Muslim clerics and Jewish doctors; prisoners and military; royalty and harem women; dervishes and courtiers; diplomats and children.¹⁴

As supporting his family was a priority, one can probably safely assume that Sevruguin employed the latest photography techniques and photographed his many subjects in such a way as to please specific clients. It might behoove the viewer to keep this in mind when analyzing his photographs and his approach. However, pleasing one's client and maintaining one's own artistic integrity are not mutually exclusive. Among the awards and languages that graced the back of his photographs, one also finds “*photographie artistique*” (artistic photographer) predominantly displayed over a painter's palette (fig. 3.1). Photography was more than just a job for Sevruguin, it was an art to him—a vocation endued with passion. As we dissect the



Figure 3.1. Backstamp of one of Sevruguin's photographs (Nina Avakyan Collection, Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran website, Record No. 1260A51).

technical elements, we should neither forget the joy Sevruguin must have experienced in creating images, nor the reactions these images create in ourselves. Pay attention to what draws you into the photos. Where do they take you? What feelings are you aware of as you sit with them? Hold those experiences together with the examination of the photographic elements.

PHOTOGRAPHIC TECHNOLOGY

During Sevruguin's time, photographs were produced by creating a negative image on a glass plate that could be used to generate multiple prints on light-sensitive paper.¹⁵ Frederick Scott Archer invented the wet-plate collodion process in 1851,¹⁶ which involved coating a cleaned piece of imperfection-free glass with an egg white wash.¹⁷ This wash would allow a coat of the light-sensitive chemical collodion to keep from running off of the glass plate. Enlarging techniques had not yet been discovered, so the plate had to be the same size as the desired print.¹⁸ The collodion-covered plate would be placed into a camera large enough to hold it and then exposed to light before the chemicals dried, in less than ten minutes.¹⁹ When Sevruguin was in the field, this wet-plate process required him to transport a portable darkroom, chemicals, his large format camera, and his tripod.²⁰ In the late 1800s, an easier dry-plate method was invented;²¹ while this allowed for Sevruguin to leave chemicals behind, he would still need to carry in his camera, tripod, and glass plates (fig. 3.2a-c). This traveling would have been done on horseback and quite difficult, considering the heavy and fragile items involved.²²

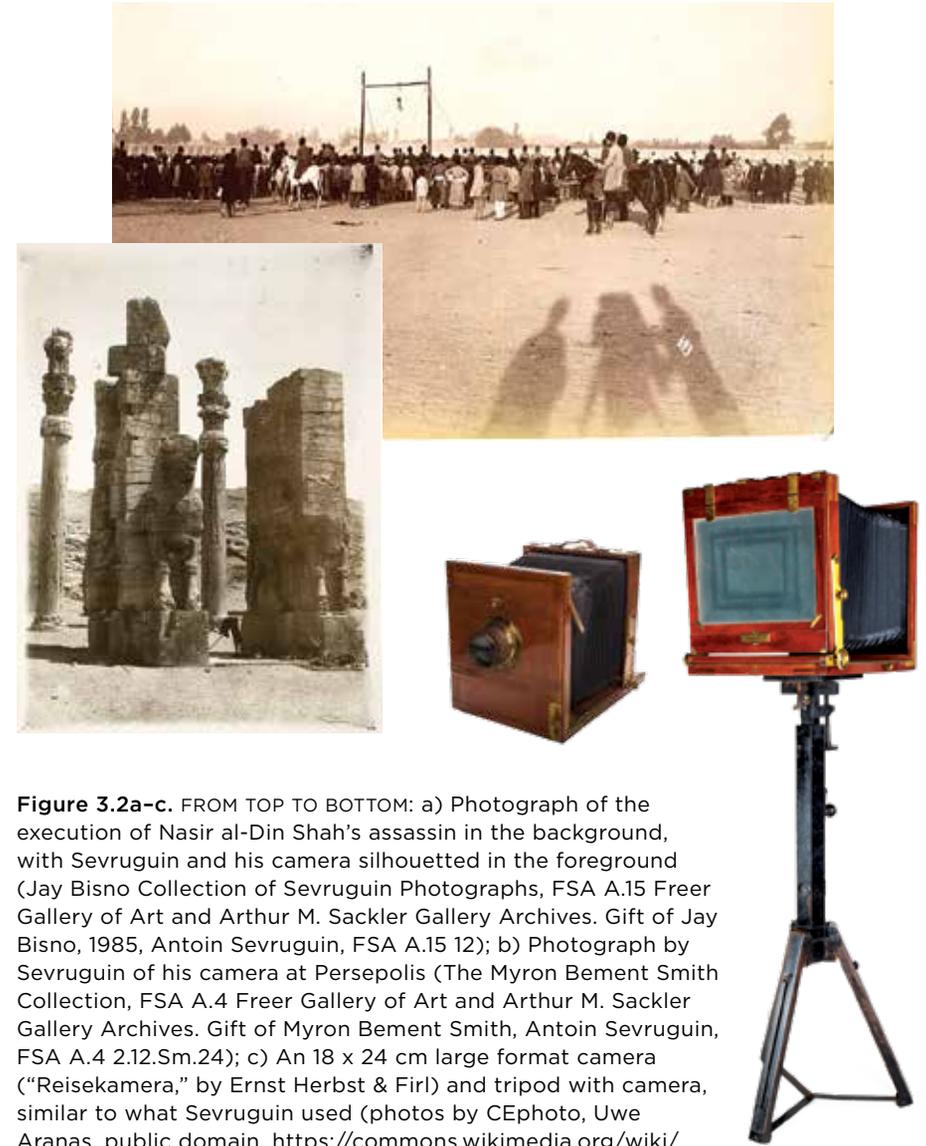


Figure 3.2a-c. FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: a) Photograph of the execution of Nasir al-Din Shah's assassin in the background, with Sevruguin and his camera silhouetted in the foreground (Jay Bisno Collection of Sevruguin Photographs, FSA A.15 Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives. Gift of Jay Bisno, 1985, Antoin Sevruguin, FSA A.15 12); b) Photograph by Sevruguin of his camera at Persepolis (The Myron Bement Smith Collection, FSA A.4 Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives. Gift of Myron Bement Smith, Antoin Sevruguin, FSA A.4 2.12.Sm.24); c) An 18 x 24 cm large format camera ("Reisekamera," by Ernst Herbst & Firl) and tripod with camera, similar to what Sevruguin used (photos by CEphoto, Uwe Aranas, public domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Large-format-camera_Globus-M-40.jpg, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Large-format-camera_Globus-M_03.jpg).

Once the negative had been captured, the plate could then be taken home and used to create prints. Most of Sevruguin's prints are albumen prints; albumen printing was a process that had recently been introduced to the West. Invented in 1850 by Louis Désiré Blanquart-Evrard, it quickly became the predominant printing method for the next fifty years.²³ Thin paper would first be coated with a wash mix made of egg white (albumen) and salt (sodium chloride).²⁴ (This use of egg white is why aged albumen prints have a faded yellow hue to them.²⁵) This emulsion would add a bit of gloss to the surface, also imbuing the paper with necessary chemical elements. After drying, the paper would go through another wash—this time with silver nitrate—in order to make it light-sensitive.²⁶

Sevruguin would have placed this photographic paper in a frame, positioning the paper directly underneath his glass negative; then he exposed it to sunlight. Depending upon conditions, exposure could take anywhere from a few minutes to an hour. As the sunlight is especially bright and ample in the Middle East, his location was ideal.²⁷ The image develops directly as a result of the UV light, so Sevruguin would have seen the image take form during the exposure process and he probably checked exposure continuously, removing it from sunlight once the desired level of darkness was achieved. This process makes albumen printing “printed-out” rather than “developed-out,”²⁸ as is the case with film, which requires the use of a developing solution after exposure.

To finalize the print, Sevruguin would wash it, tone it by using gold chloride solution, fix the exposure (preventing it from developing further) by putting it into a sodium thiosulfate bath, wash it again, and finally let it dry.²⁹

Not only was albumen printing a successful means of providing detailed prints, it was also relatively inexpensive and could be distributed easily, which allowed for commercial prints to be mass produced for general consumption. In addition to growing in popularity with the general public, the wealthy were drawn to it as a means of representing themselves honorifically and preserving, alluding to, and even incurring power.³⁰ Nasir al-Din Shah himself was enthralled with it, continuously researching the latest technical developments in Europe.³¹

LIGHTING

The word “photography” comes from the Greek *phōtos*, meaning light, and *graphé*, meaning drawing; literally a “drawing with light.”³² Capturing a photograph depends wholly on the quantity and quality of light available and the camera's ability to capture that light. Photographer Trent Parke said, “I am forever chasing light. Light turns the ordinary into the magical.”³³ Indeed, some Islamic theologians and jurists in Iran during Sevruguin's time even viewed photography as sacred, asserting that it was not in competition with God's role as creator, but because of the sun's involvement in creating the image, was instead a direct product of the divine.³⁴ What, then, makes Sevruguin's approach to lighting distinctive?

Today we can capture a photo in hundredths or even thousandths of a second, only sometimes choosing a slow shutter speed for especially dark occasions, such as a night sky starscape. (The shutter is a device in one's camera that opens and closes,

Figure 3.3a-b.
Examples of outdoor portraits lacking long shadows, and thus, probably taken during high noon (cat. no. 46, P. 1148 / N. 23646, cat. no. 58, P. 1160 / N. 24482).



allowing light into the camera for a determined duration. The darker the scene, the longer the shutter time needed to create an image.) Sevruguin was not afforded such technology. While a ten-minute wet-plate exposure may not seem lengthy, the potential amount of movement in anything over a few seconds can render an image ruined. Thus, Sevruguin's bright outdoor environment not only aided his printing of images but also decreased the amount of necessary glass negative exposure time to only one or two minutes.³⁵

While photographing in bright sunlight makes capturing a negative easier, it would require careful forethought into how each little shadow would add or detract from the image's composition. Most photographers today shy away from photographing in extreme light, so as to avoid any harsh, unwanted contrasts or shadows. Many aim to photograph during "golden hour," when the sun is close to setting and provides a warm, soft light. While using extreme lighting is sometimes aesthetically desirable, it is much easier to get candid photos of a subject when you don't have to worry about what direction the subject facing and if shadows are running across their face.

In order to avoid some of these harsh shadows, Sevruguin seems to have taken many outdoor photographs during overcast days, or even during high noon (fig. 3.3a-b). While this would eliminate some shadows, bright days could still create extreme contrasts. In order to help diffuse this harsh lighting and dull extreme highlights, Sevruguin would use large, white sheets outdoors, holding them over subjects and the areas surrounding subjects.³⁶ I can imagine this would be both limiting and difficult to accomplish. When I photograph in a bright area, I have the much easier option of using a flash on my subject. It

seems a bit odd to add more light to the composition when there is already so much light available, but when one lights the darkest areas of an extremely bright composition, an overall shutter speed can be increased, allowing for the overall brightness to be reduced, eliminating the risk of losing details in the shadows. Sevruguin resorted to the methods he did because no type of flash for camera was invented until 1887.³⁷

Achieving lighting balance in Sevruguin's studio could be especially difficult. Though little is known about how Sevruguin accomplished studio lighting, photographers and painters during his time would often place a large, north-facing skylight in their studio. This would provide steady, indirect light throughout most of the day³⁸ and is most likely how Sevruguin took indoor portraits.

Not only was Sevruguin able to master light technically, he mastered it aesthetically. His photographs are often described as both intimate and compelling. One way he achieved that—especially in his portraiture—was to utilize Rembrandt lighting.³⁹ This is a studio lighting technique inspired by the way Rembrandt van Rijn painted light on subjects' faces. No doubt Sevruguin was influenced as a painter and artist by Rembrandt, as well as Impressionists and Persian painters of the sixteenth century.⁴⁰ Sevruguin's use of Rembrandt lighting reflects his painterly approach to capturing his subjects.

To accomplish Rembrandt lighting, one creates a small, upside-down triangle of light on the



Figure 3.4a-d. Photographs of a Persian gentleman and a woman who is usually identified as Kurdish; examples of the triangle of light typical of Rembrandt lighting, found in both Sevruguin's studio and outdoor photography (cat. no. 87, P. 1191 / N. 24509, cat. no. 95, P. 1199 / N. 24517).





Figure 3.5. Qajar-era gate into Tehran; an example of chiaroscuro and the use of lights and darks in outline to create a three-dimensional effect (cat. no. 32, P. 1133 / N. 23669).

most shadowed side of the subject's face just below one eye (fig. 3.4a–d). In photography, this is accomplished by sourcing light from above and either aiming it down towards the subject's face or positioning the subject so that the light is at a forty-five-degree angle and the shadow between the nose and cheek do not touch. The effect is dramatic and creates a moodier aesthetic.

Another related lighting technique apparent in Sevruguin's photography is the use of *chiaroscuro*, a term from the Italian *chairo*, meaning "light," and *scuro*, meaning "dark."⁴¹ This art technique grew out of the Renaissance, as artists explored how light and shadow could illuminate a subject's form. It is the ability to wield both stark and subtle contrasts to compose a sense of depth and three-dimensionality within a painting, drawing, or print,⁴² provoking a sense of drama. This image of a gate in Tehran (fig. 3.5) uses the culminative shadows around the crowd and the surrounding highlights to create movement and depth—one almost feels the crowd as a single, moving entity, jumping out of the paper.

Sevruguin and other Qajar photographers also used light to call attention to power. For example, in many of Sevruguin's photos featuring the shah, the shah is posed in such a way that the brightest light is solely focused on him, illuminating him as the central character. This can be seen both indoors and outdoors, as those placed around the shah are kept in the available shadows.⁴³



Figures 3.6–7. Prisoner Mirza Reza Kirmani, photographed by Sevruguin (LEFT; cat. no. 3, P. 1102 / N. 23689) and by Abdullah Mirza Qajar (RIGHT; cat. no. 4, P. 1103 / N. 23690).

COMPOSITION AND SUBJECT PLACEMENT

Sevruguin was able to not only curate emotive effects using lighting techniques but was also able to use composition to allude to a subject's power, highlight relationships, draw viewers into an image, and make scenes feel intimate and interesting. Composition is the arrangement of the subjects and elements in one's photo. The subject is the primary person, object, or abstract feature of the image that draws the viewer's eye. Sevruguin accomplished successful composition through several means:

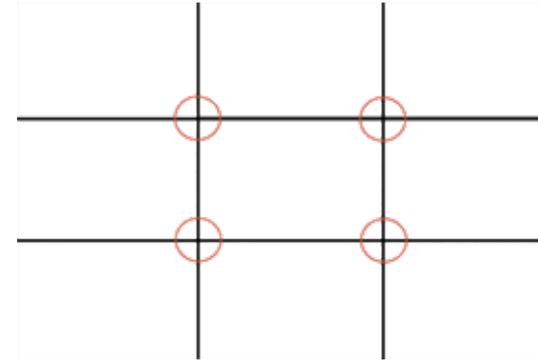
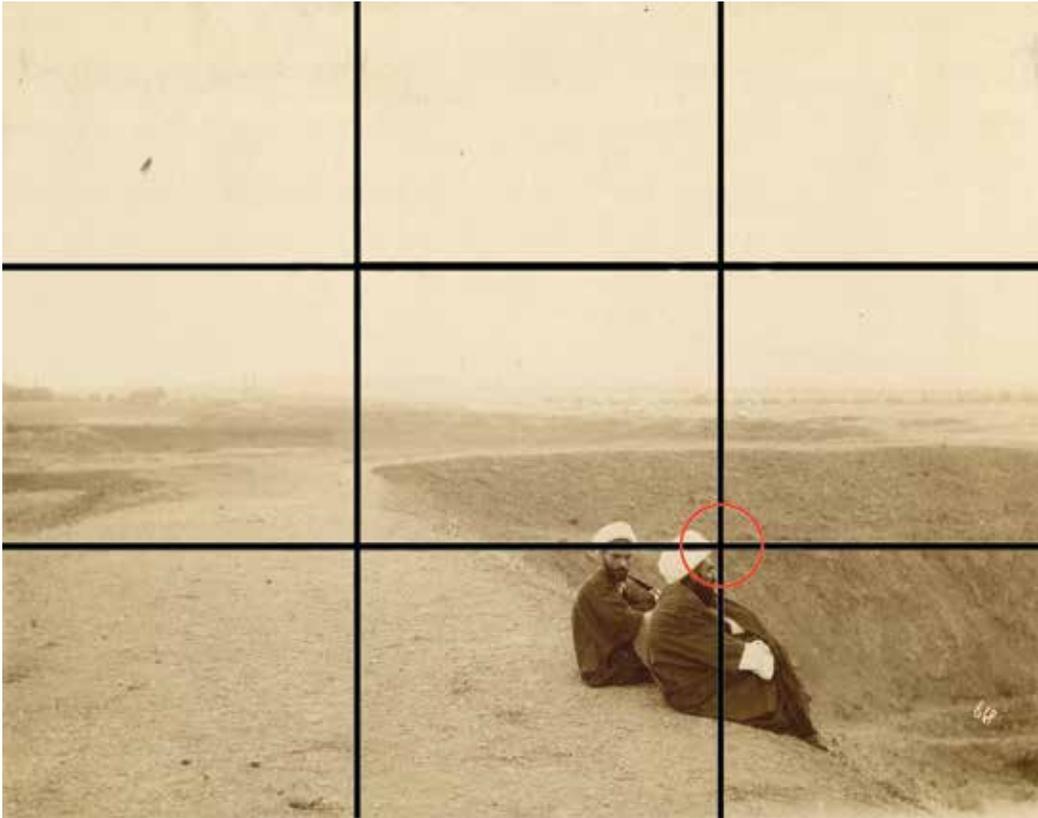
Fill the Frame

What is captured in one's photo can be made more impactful by what is not captured. Images can be made more intimate by eliminating excessive negative space, perhaps by blurring the background (which can be done by using a low aperture), but primarily by mindful cropping.⁴⁴ Every detail in a photo can add or detract from its overall composition, and a photographer must plan—by moving the camera, changing the camera's focal length, or even moving the subject—to best accomplish this. For example, in this photo of prisoner Mirza Reza Kirmani (fig. 3.6), one is immediately struck by his eyes, hands, and disposition, drawn in by curiosity as to who he is. Sevruguin cropped quite close around his figure, being careful not to crop any of his limbs, but cropping a bit of his clothing. His chains are only seen at his feet, forcing the viewer to reconcile with Kirmani's presence as a person—someone who is more than just a prisoner, someone with a story—before reducing him to his chains or his clothing. In contrast, Kirmani was also photographed by Abdullah Mirza Qajar. In Qajar's photograph (fig. 3.7), there is much more negative space around the prisoner, the guard is placed in the forefront, and the chains are more predominant—around Kirmani's upper body. The focus is taken away from the prisoner's face and story and placed potentially on the guard; one is no longer forced to reconcile with a connection to Kirmani, and the focus is not immediate, reducing the power of the photo.

While Sevruguin's photo fills the frame with positive space (the object or shapes within the image), filling the frame can also be accomplished by adding negative space (the background).⁴⁵ Sevruguin did this especially with photos outdoors. For example, in figure 3.8, the two men in the right corner are surrounded by a vast, nearly desolate landscape. Negative space used in this way allows the focal point to become a resting point for the viewer, creating a sense of quietness, solitude, importance, or a sense of scale. Additionally, as in this figure, it can make a subject feel isolated, provoking feelings of loneliness or contemplation.



Figure 3.8. Men sitting on the ramparts outside of Tehran, an example of the use of the use of negative space to fill the frame (cat. no. 30, P. 1131 / N. 23667).



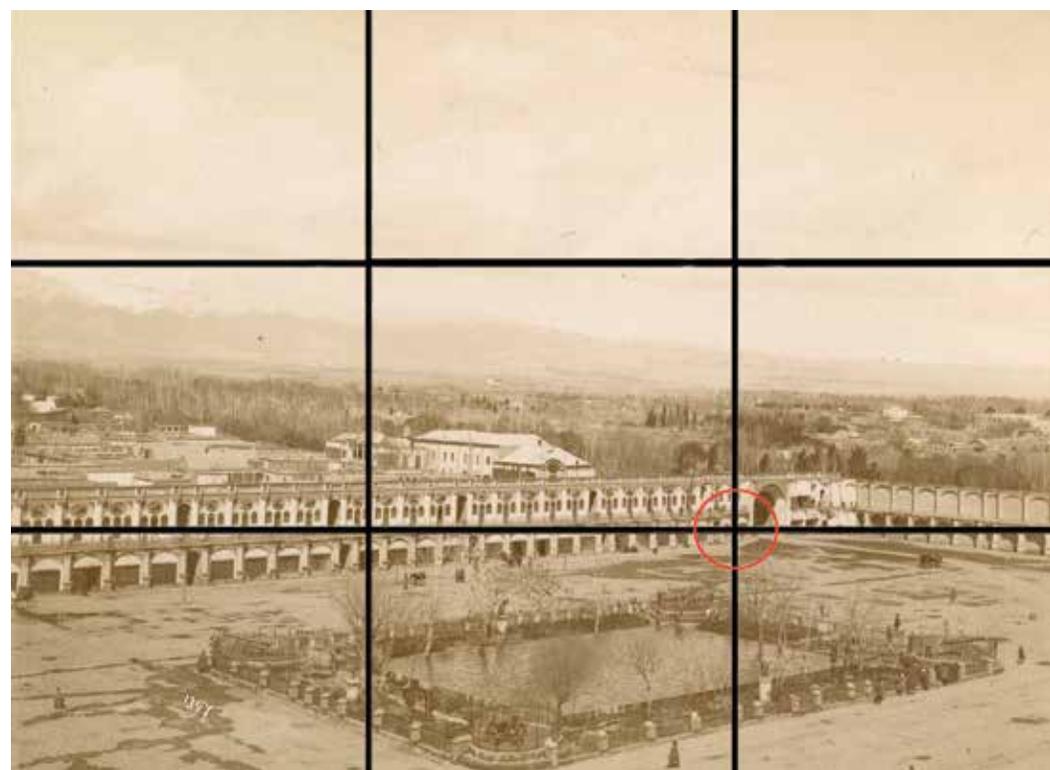
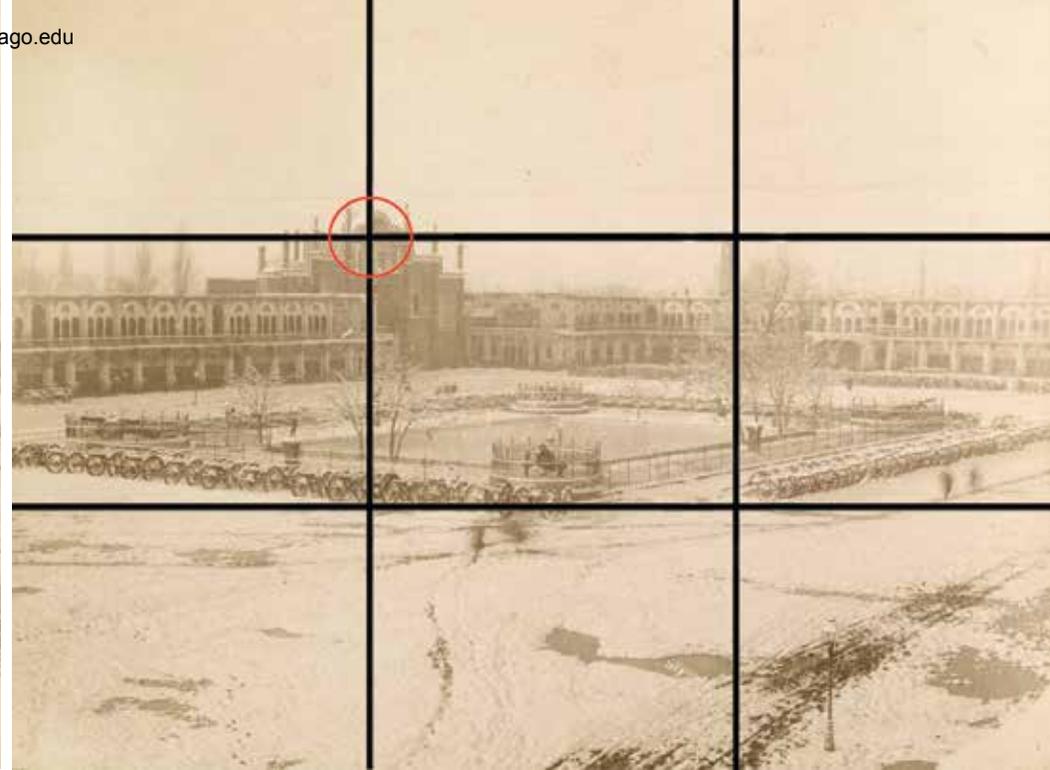
ABOVE: Figure 3.9. Visual representation of the rule of thirds, the red circles highlighting potential focal point placement.

LEFT: Figure 3.10. Example of Sevruguin's use of the rule of thirds by placing the focal point on one of the intersections (cat. no. 30, P. 1131 / N. 23667).

OPPOSITE: Figure 3.11a-d. Photographs showing exterior ramparts of Tehran and Canon Square in Tehran, also showing Sevruguin's use of the rule of thirds (cat. no. 20, P. 1121 / N. 23657, cat. no. 21, P. 1122 / N. 23658).

Rule of Thirds

Another one of the most important compositional tools is the rule of thirds: dividing an image into nine equal parts by imaginary horizontal and vertical lines and then placing the most important focal point at an intersection of two of the lines (fig. 3.9).⁴⁶ By first pulling one's focus to an area that is not the center of the image, this allows one's eye to travel into the composition, creating more depth, draw, and motion. This can especially be seen in Sevruguin's group portraiture (as seen in fig. 3.9) and his landscape photography featuring monuments (see fig. 3.11a-d; the most prominent part of the monument rests on an intersection, and the horizon lies on one of the horizontal lines).



Occasionally, Sevruguin breaks this rule, placing the main subject in the center. Doing so increases symmetry and pattern, creating a feeling of familiarity. It can also make a subject appear more confrontational or intimidating.⁴⁷ For example, in figure 3.12, the monument appears striking and looming. Sevruguin's placement of people at the monument's base allows the viewer to have an idea of scale, but the center focus and lack of negative space at its top gives an impression of overbearing grandness.

Sevruguin also broke the rule of thirds for many of his individual portraits, placing the subject in the very center of the frame (fig. 3.13a–c). While this style is frequently seen in royal portraiture during the time and is perhaps an attempt of Sevruguin's to replicate that style, he used this technique purposefully, allowing the center alignment to create an impact upon the viewer.



Figure 3.12. Mil-i Sharq Radkan tower tomb (cat. no. 129, P. 1233 / N. 24539); an example of breaking the rule of thirds in order to emphasize a sense of grandeur.



Figure 3.13a-c. Sevruguin's breaking the rule of thirds in portraits of (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT) Zell-e Soltan, a water seller, and a dervish (cat. no. 8, P. 1108 / N. 23693, cat. no. 52, P. 1154 / N. 24476, cat. no. 144, P. 1248 / N. 24547).

Leading Lines

Leading lines help create specific paths for the viewer's eye to travel through a composition. There are several types of leading lines,⁴⁸ of which Sevruguin was incredibly mindful and intentional (fig. 3.14a-d):

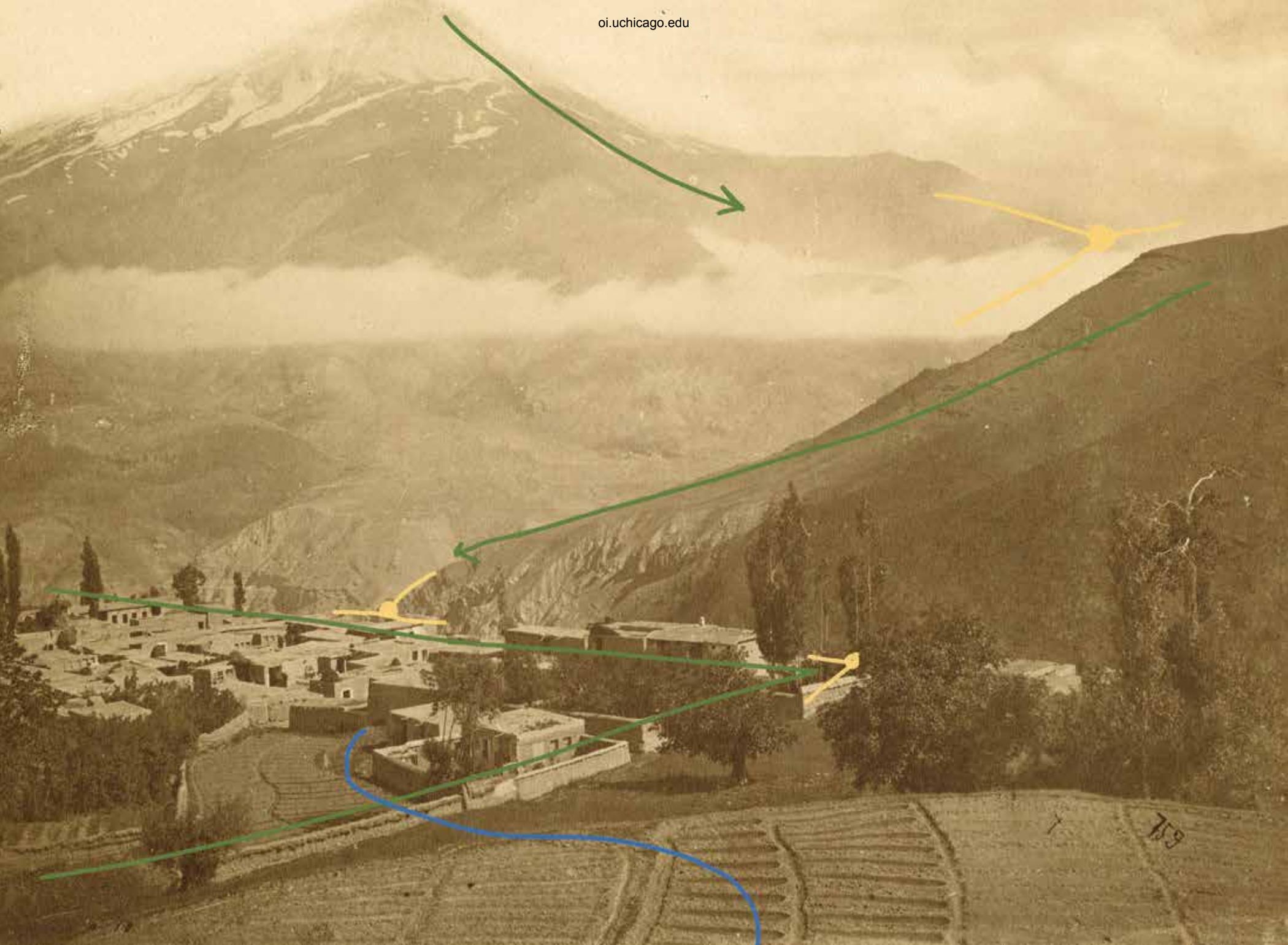
1. **Horizontal.** Producing a sense of calm or contemplation.
2. **Vertical.** Creates feelings of strength or power.
3. **Diagonal.** Adds movement and interest.
4. **Curved.** Can provide a story and relax the viewer.
5. **Converging.** These often create a “vanishing point” where the two lines meet, producing a sense of mystery.

While Sevruguin demonstrated an experienced understanding of leading lines throughout his photography, what captures my attention most is his mastery of implied lines. He does this in group portraiture through three main means of posing: posing individuals at varying heights (through sitting, squatting, or standing); posing individuals at varying distances, creating diagonal leading lines; and facing an individual's eyes, head, or body a certain direction.



Figure 3.14a-d. Examples of leading lines (FROM ABOVE LEFT TO OPPOSITE):

- a) curved and horizontal lines drawing attention to the isolation of the two characters in the image, as well as creating a bit of a space for them to have their own story (cat. no. 30, P. 1131 / N. 23667);
- b) the strength and power in the monument through the use of vertical lines (cat. no. 129, P. 1233 / N. 24539);
- c) converging and diagonal lines pointing to the mystery of what lies beyond the horizon, and a parallel diagonal line at the bottom right, adding movement to the three characters and their horses towards that mystery (cat. no. 119, P. 1223 / N. 23680);
- d) diagonal, converging, and curved lines draw one's eye into story of the village below (cat. no. 125, P. 1229 / N. 23634).





LEFT: Figure 3.15a-b. Peddlars and donkey riders; examples of implied diagonal lines (cat. no. 58, P. 1160 / N. 24482, pl. 22, P. 1123 / N. 23659).

OPPOSITE: Figure 3.16. Nasir al-Din on a hunting trip with Malijak; an example of posing at differing heights to create implied leading lines (cat. no. 2, P. 1101 / N. 23688).

In figure 3.15a–b, Sevruguin posed individuals at varying distances to create two diagonal lines, using eye direction in the figures (including the donkey) closest to the camera to continue these lines off into the distance. This pulls one in and out of the same image, allowing the motion to create a journey for the viewer, and thus increasing one’s interest.

In this next image (fig. 3.16), three characters are posed at three distinct heights, creating a rounded triangle of movement that keeps one’s eyes continually moving from one character to the next (the use of hands and arms adding to this movement is also notable). The shah is the only one looking out into the distance, his gaze creating a line that runs parallel to the river; following the implied line from his gaze, one is drawn back into the largest section of the river, which pulls one’s focus back into the center of the image and continues the movement.

Figure 3.17 is a particularly excellent demonstration of Sevruguin’s mastery of implied lines. It is not the most powerful person in the image that is the focal point; it is the youngest child. Sevruguin accomplishes this not by bringing the child to the forefront of the image, or even by having others look directly at the child, but by using implied lines. Sevruguin placed the two youngest children behind the cart, which is the only nonhuman object in the photo, potentially an additional draw to the focal point. The tallest people in the image are angling their bodies towards the children, and the only figure that is standing completely straight (fifth from the left) and creating a vertical line is in complete profile towards them. All of these aspects direct a viewer’s eyes towards the youngest child’s gaze—the only subject directly looking at the camera. From there, one’s eye then moves into an infinity loop (which is notably not divided in half, but into thirds), carried along by each person’s





head/eyes as well as the cart's wheels and handle. Sevruguin has created continuous eye movement, captivated the viewer, and highlighted the youngest and least powerful.

Many photographers might try to ensure bodies are facing the camera and props are moved to the side. Counterintuitively, Sevruguin utilized what would normally “hide” a subject or focal point—such as his use of the cart or posing the gentleman in profile—to draw more attention and emphasize implied lines. He pushes this even more in the images right (fig. 3.18a–b). In the first one, the girl standing second from left is the focal point; her face sits perfectly on an intersection of the rule-of-thirds lines; each of the heads in the image create implied curved lines that point to her face, and she's the only one that's both completely facing, and looking at, the camera. Sevruguin turns the woman to her left, away from the camera, her head slightly nodded towards the girl's face. In the second image, the figure on the far left hides her face with her elbow, a triangle that clearly points to the focal point—again, a subject that is more directly turned towards the camera than the others.



OPPOSITE: Figure 3.17. Ice cream seller in Tehran; Example of implied lines—particularly an infinity symbol—with the focus on the youngest child in the image (cat. no. 46, P. 1148 / N. 23646).

RIGHT: Figure 3.18a–b. Armenian women and girls (TOP) and water carriers (BOTTOM); curved implied lines, produced by “hiding” aspects of subjects (cat. no. 103, P. 1207 / N. 24525, cat. no. 54, P. 1156 / N. 24478).



While there are many other compositional techniques that could be further explored—such as simplification, focus, background, symmetry/patterns, depth, etc.—Sevruguin’s ability to fill the frame, use and strategically disobey the rule of thirds, and cultivate leading lines most attest to his artistic understanding and the intentionality he put into each image.

SUBJECT APPEARANCE

A final photography technique Sevruguin especially utilized was the curation of a subject’s appearance, adding character and context to the story portrayed in an image, both creating and strengthening a concept. While compositional appearance is not limited to props and clothing, these specific tools especially stand out in his photography.

Sevruguin almost obsessively included props in his portraiture (fig. 3.19a–f). They did not overwhelm an image but added compositional power as well as commentary. This commentary is something to wrestle with. While much of his photography seems intended to convey life in “everyday Iran,” it is impossible to ignore the push and pull between the East (and the declining Qajar regime) and the West, and the potential perpetuation of certain stereotypes through his use of props. European furniture, binoculars, books, and clocks all speak to the desired modernity and enlightenment of the West,⁴⁹ while leopard rugs, lions, musical instruments, axes, and carrying sticks allude to Oriental exoticism—colonial representations of what were considered primitive cultures and people.⁵⁰ This is emphasized in part with the pairing of colorful costumes and regional dress as well (fig. 3.20a–g).⁵¹

During the nineteenth century, it was common for photographers to portray Iranian rural and lower classes as a representation of “the Orient,” emphasizing ways in which they appeared primitive and exotic.⁵² This was accepted as a method of scientific and ethnological research—a way of documenting—embraced especially by local elite audiences and the shah.⁵³ At its worst, it was likely used as a means to elevate the elite’s own modern perception of themselves by separating themselves further from the “other”—from those they considered beneath them. Indeed, one of the reasons so many of Sevruguin’s glass plate negatives are

Figure 3.19a–f. Various examples of Sevruguin’s use of props (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: cat. no. 72, P. 1174 / N. 24495, cat. no. 78, P. 1181 / N. 24501, cat. no. 87, P. 1191 / N. 24509, cat. no. 144, P. 1248 / N. 24547, cat. no. 143, P. 1247 / N. 24546, cat. no. 147, P. 1251 / N. 24550).



Figure 3.20a-g.
Examples of the costumes and regional dress (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: cat. no. 97, P. 1201 / N. 24519, cat. no. 137, P. 1241 / N. 24540, cat. no. 145, P. 1249 / N. 24548, cat. no. 106, P. 1210 / N. 24528, cat. no. 108, P. 1212 / N. 24530, cat. no. 111, P. 1215 / N. 24533, cat. no. 107, P. 1211 / N. 24529).

missing today was because Reza Shah Pahlavi (r. 1925–1941) discovered that many of Sevruguin’s images of former Qajar regime figures were portrayed in a way that lacked the Westernized modernity he aimed to portray; he confiscated two thousand glass plate negatives.⁵⁴ This “photo-exoticism” was also popular with tourists. Western fantasies of the East—such as harem scenes, archaeological sites, and tribal types, all of which Sevruguin photographed—were eagerly sought after.⁵⁵

While one must acknowledge how Sevruguin participated in adding to the overarching narrative of Orientalism, it would be unfair to say that Sevruguin photographed scenes and subjects solely for the purpose of satiating Western fantasies or the local elite. Sevruguin was multicultural in perspective and identity, loved Iran, and deeply cared about Persian culture; he even knew lengthy Persian verses by heart.⁵⁶ Additionally, photography is not simply a matter of constructing a story out of whole cloth but capturing the scene in such a way that allows the story in front of you to speak for itself. Sevruguin might have constructed bits of it, but as a photographer and an individual with a varied identity, he sits uniquely intermingled within the complexities of Iran, portraying different histories and memories with his own captivating touch.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Sevruguin’s photography rests at the intersection of varied identities, places, and peoples. As an Armenian living in Iran, with ties to both the lowest class and the highest, the East and the West, one might imagine that this might create a sense of aimlessness in Sevruguin, a lack of belonging. But Sevruguin found his belonging as a photographie artistique who captured these varied stories—the many faces and stories of the Persian world. He mastered technology, lighting, composition and subject placement, and subject appearance in ways that revealed these stories as striking, intriguing, compelling. His work is a testament to the fact that photography is not simply capturing faces and events with a camera but using one’s unique perspective to share the world with others.

Endnotes

- ¹ Navab 2002, 120–21; Navab 2003.
- ² Vuurman and Martens 1999, 23–24.
- ³ Navab 2003.
- ⁴ Navab 2002, 118.
- ⁵ Much to the chagrin of photographers who struggle to make a living today, photography during Sevruguin’s time was rapidly growing in popularity and a lucrative means of status and power.
- ⁶ Navab 2002, 119; Melikian 2000.
- ⁷ Navab 2002, 119; Navab 2003; Behdad 2015, 321.
- ⁸ Behdad 2015, 320.
- ⁹ Navab 2002, 118–19; Navab 2003.
- ¹⁰ Navab 2002, 117.
- ¹¹ Benab 2020.
- ¹² Navab 2002, 119; Navab 2003; Melikian 2000; Rexer 2001.
- ¹³ Behdad 2016, 78; Navab 2002, 120; Rexer 2001.
- ¹⁴ Navab 2002, 128–29; Melikian 2000.
- ¹⁵ Middlebury College Museum of Art 2016.
- ¹⁶ Wilson n.d.
- ¹⁷ Sutton Archives 2016.
- ¹⁸ Middlebury College Museum of Art 2016.
- ¹⁹ Sutton Archives 2016.
- ²⁰ Middlebury College Museum of Art 2016.
- ²¹ The gelatin dry-plate negative was invented in 1871 by Richard Maddox and became common use in the early 1880s; Wilson n.d.
- ²² Navab 2002, 117.
- ²³ Cornell University Library n.d.; Wilson n.d.
- ²⁴ Middlebury College Museum of Art 2016.
- ²⁵ Reilly 1980; Middlebury College Museum of Art 2016.
- ²⁶ Reilly 1980; Cornell University Library n.d.; When sodium chloride comes into contact with silver nitrate, it creates silver chloride. When exposed to UV light, silver chloride decomposes into silver, creating the deposits that make up the shading in each photo. This light-sensitive paper, once dried, could be stored for a short time until the photographer wanted to use and expose it (Wilson n.d.).
- ²⁷ Behdad 2015, 311; Daguerre 1980, 12.
- ²⁸ Reilly 1980; Cornell University Library n.d.; Sutton Archives 2016.
- ²⁹ Wilson n.d.; Cornell University Library n.d.
- ³⁰ Behdad 2015, 313, 316.
- ³¹ Navab 2002, 127; Melikian 2000.
- ³² Liddlel and Scott 1940; Harper n.d.

- ³³ Parke n.d.
- ³⁴ Behdad 2015, 313–14.
- ³⁵ Behdad 2015, 312.
- ³⁶ Vorderstrasse 2018, 7.
- ³⁷ Tolmachev 2011.
- ³⁸ May 2018.
- ³⁹ Bohrer 1999a, 40; Bohrer 1999b, 26.
- ⁴⁰ Rexer 2001.
- ⁴¹ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019.
- ⁴² The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019.
- ⁴³ Behdad 2015, 322.
- ⁴⁴ Moulton 2017.
- ⁴⁵ Naryškin 2019.
- ⁴⁶ Moulton 2017; Newton 2016; Shaw Academy 2015.
- ⁴⁷ Shaw Academy 2015.
- ⁴⁸ Cliffe n.d.
- ⁴⁹ Behdad 2015, 327.
- ⁵⁰ Behdad 2015, 313, 329.
- ⁵¹ Behdad 2016, 83–88.
- ⁵² Navab 2002, 114; Behdad 2015, 313; Behdad 2016, 75; see also Vorderstrasse, this volume, chapter eight, for more of an in-depth discussion.
- ⁵³ Behdad 2015, 319, 328.
- ⁵⁴ Navab 2002, 120; Behdad 2016, 81.
- ⁵⁵ Navab 2002, 125; Navab 2003; Behdad 2015, 328–30; Behdad 2016, 83–87.
- ⁵⁶ Navab 2003; see also Behdad 2016, 78.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESERVING IRANIAN MATERIAL
CULTURE THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY

Tasha Vorderstrasse

Sevruguin's work documented both people and places in Iran. His work on ancient and medieval monuments is important, not only for their staging, but also because they documented the state of these monuments at the time that he took them, which allows scholars to see what changes may have occurred since then. His work documenting Iranian material culture is less well known, but equally important for the same reason. At the same time he was photographing the historical legacy of Iran, however, Sevruguin also documented a modern Iran, photographing the single train in the country, tramlines, telegraph cables, modern buildings and palaces, and other appurtenances of modern life. Therefore, Sevruguin was documenting a changing and modernizing of Iran at the same time that he documented its traditions.¹ It is not clear whether he was consciously trying to document Iran in this way or responding to the wants of his different clients, or both.² One cannot strictly divide the photographs of Sevruguin in a simple opposition of "modernity" and "traditionalism," however.³ Rather, Sevruguin was documenting a lived Iran that included both (fig. 4.1).



Figure 4.1. Street in Tehran with tramway (cat. no. 25, P. 1126 / N. 23662). The tramway evidently did not impress visitors. Jackson described Tehran as "a pretense of having a jingle-bell tramway" (Jackson 1906, 419).

Whatever Sevruguin's motivation, Western travelers to Iran did not find that the new trappings of modern life fit into their view of how the country should be.⁴ Even Ernst Höltzer, who was embedded in the Armenian Iranian community, was explicit about wanting to document Iran before it became "modern," including buildings that were being demolished, old clothing styles that were being rejected, and customs that no longer were practiced.⁵ The attitude towards modernization is perhaps best summed up by Sven Hedin, who states, "And so there is no pleasure in wandering through the hideous streets of Teheran, where dirty, badly kept European tramcars and leaning lamp-posts form an unpleasantly crude contrast to the tones of Oriental life . . . Nasr-ed-din Shah did all he could to imitate Europe and open every door for foreign contamination which, far from improving the condition of the country, would lower its self-confidence, increase its dependence, and prepare its fall."⁶ Others saw that while there was a monetary opportunity in selling the Iranians Western commercial items, they still did not approve of the mixture of modern and traditional that they found was an imperfect combination of the two.⁷ But most visitors were far more interested in the "exotic" aspects of Iran, including its unique landscape, monuments, and people.⁸ In the case of the photographs in the OI, it is evident that Mary Clarke was not particularly interested in ancient Iran. While she has a few photographs of Persepolis, she has more pictures of Sasanian and Qajar rock reliefs⁹ and medieval monuments. These were places that she or others visited on their various trips through Iran.

SEVRUGUIN'S PHOTOGRAPHY OF ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL MONUMENTS

For those visiting Iran, collecting photographs of their trip was a way to record what they had seen. Some took their own photographs, while others purchased them from photographers such as Sevruguin.¹⁰ The record they took was considered to be a correct representation of what they saw and helped shape subsequent views of Iran.¹¹ They were also collected by armchair tourists who were interested in seeing how Iran appeared.¹² While photographs of monuments are often seen as objective and a way of preserving them, the way that they are photographed is subjective. If people are present, they are often there to show scale, although how the subjects interacted with the monuments shows that such views were deliberately staged and reflects the often Orientalist and colonialist sensibilities about the way that Western photographers viewed the local population and their connection to the monuments in which they were placed. Some tourists wanted to simply experience archaeological ruins without the local population; others saw them as degenerate examples of the past glories of civilization, while still others believed they were in fact surviving remnants of the now-vanished past civilizations. Deliberate staging appears to have been equally true when the monument was devoid of people.¹³ Looking at how Sevruguin photographed Iranian monuments and objects, demonstrating an "archaeological gaze"¹⁴ shows that they can also be considered "art."¹⁵ Lerner describes them as "some of the most visually striking photographs of Persia's ancient monuments,"¹⁶ and Poinot (this volume, chapter five), notes that some of Sevruguin's photographs were clearly made subjectively rather than objectively.

Sevruguin is not the only nineteenth-century photographer to use perspective and aesthetics to make striking photographs of monuments. Other early photographers of ruins also had a painting background and produced highly unique

Figure 4.2a-b.

LEFT: William James Stillman, painting of Mount Chocorua (Smithsonian Art Museum 1999.71, gift of Dr. Richard D. Bullock and museum purchase made possible by Walter Beck and Reverend F. Ward Denys, 1999.81). RIGHT: William James Stillman, stele from the Kerameikos Cemetery, Athens (Metropolitan Museum of Art 2005.100.1313, Gilman Collection Museum Purchase, 2005).



images. William James Stillman (1828–1901), for instance, achieved great success with an album of photographs of the acropolis at Athens and had trained as a painter (fig. 4.2a–b).¹⁷ One can see from Stillman’s paintings that he was highly interested in realism, and when he abandoned painting for photography, his photographs show an interest in angles and lighting. His student, John Henry Haynes (1849–1910), also was concerned with photographic aesthetics,¹⁸ as were other photographers active in the Middle East in the nineteenth century.¹⁹ Therefore, Sevruguin can be seen as part of trend among some photographers of monuments in the nineteenth century to make photographs that still seem eye-catching today.

Sevruguin was also not the first to photographically document the monuments of Iran. The cultural heritage of Iran became a particular interest of Western travelers and scholars starting in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Iranians themselves had of course been interacting with their own monuments for centuries, although the way in which they did so changed through time. Monuments such as Persepolis, Naqsh-e Rostam, and Pasargadae took on new meanings depending on the dynasties that ruled over Iran. Rock reliefs such as these were very important in Iran and were important in transforming places such as Naqsh-e Rostam and Behistun. Their reuse shows that they were important for the memories of different Iranian dynasties, as they showed continuities over the centuries, though the extent of this reuse changed through time.²⁰ This was

why they continued to inscribe these monuments, such as the Sasanian carvings at Persepolis, or add to the already existing landscape, such as the Seleucid, Parthian, Sasanian, and Safavid reliefs at Behistun and the Sasanian reliefs at Naqsh-e Rostam.²¹ The Sasanian dynasty also founded new cities in Iran, and they created new rock reliefs around these cities to help create a new landscape. In some cases, different Sasanian kings continued to carve their reliefs into the rocks at these sites, which points to their continued significance.²² After a gap until the later Islamic period, the Qajar dynasty was also active in reworking this landscape, and they made rock reliefs that would be documented by later photographers. These later reliefs drew directly on Sasanian rock art, but they also interacted closely with the Achaemenid past.²³ Further, the Iranians before Sevruguin were interested in documenting the past, as indicated in collections in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This material consists of a partially published album, with drawings including Achaemenid and Sasanian antiquities by Ahmad Naqqash in 1838²⁴ and Sasanian rock reliefs drawn by Lutf' Ali Khan (1797–1869) in 1860.²⁵ It is likely that Qajar drawings of this type exist in other collections as well.

It is evident that there were certain monuments that were drawn and subsequently photographed by individuals documenting Iranian cultural heritage, whether they were local Iranian artists and photographers or Western travelers and scholars. Therefore, one can see that the same monuments are continually photographed and drawn, with interest in rock reliefs, inscriptions, and monumental sculpture. But the ability of the photographer makes a difference in how these monuments appear in the pictures. While photographing objects might be thought to be an objective, scientific documentation (see above), it becomes increasingly evident that the ability of the photographer to know how to photograph the monuments also plays an important role about what and how the information is recorded. Franz Stolze (see below), for example, loses details in his photographs of the rock reliefs because of his inability to deal with light and shadows.²⁶ Although he has not received the same criticisms, there are also issues with shadows in some of Pesce's photographs of Sasanian reliefs.²⁷ If one compares Sevruguin's photographs with other depictions of Iranian monuments from the nineteenth century, one can see a number of similarities, and how Sevruguin built upon previous depictions, discussed below.

Not surprisingly, Sevruguin made photographs of the site of Persepolis, which is the most famous ancient monument in Iran. During the Qajar period, the site was an important monument for the Iranian government, and in 1850, Jules Richard was ordered to photograph it by the new ruler, Nasir al-Din Shah. This never happened, and Persepolis was then first photographed in 1857 by another foreign photographer, the Italian Luigi Pesce.²⁸ It was also a popular site for tourists, meaning that it is frequently depicted in drawings, paintings, and photographs, as well as frequently graffitied by both foreigners and Persians (including Sevruguin) alike.²⁹ Further, the importance of photographs from Persepolis can be demonstrated by the fact that they can show not only what the sites looked like at the time, but also can help identify reliefs that have been looted from the site and are now in museums around the world.³⁰ Sevruguin also photographed medieval monuments, including the early fourteenth century Gunbad-i Uljaytu at Sultaniya, which is one of the largest brick structures in the world. There has been later restoration work on the building, meaning that photographs such as this one constitute a valuable record of

Figure 4.3a-b.
 LEFT: Photograph of Tomb of Darius I with Sasanian rock reliefs published by both Weissbach 1911a and Sarre and Herzfeld 1910 (Victoria and Albert Museum, PH.2860-1903, ©Victoria and Albert Museum, London). RIGHT: Photograph of inscription published by Weissbach 1911a, fig. 3.

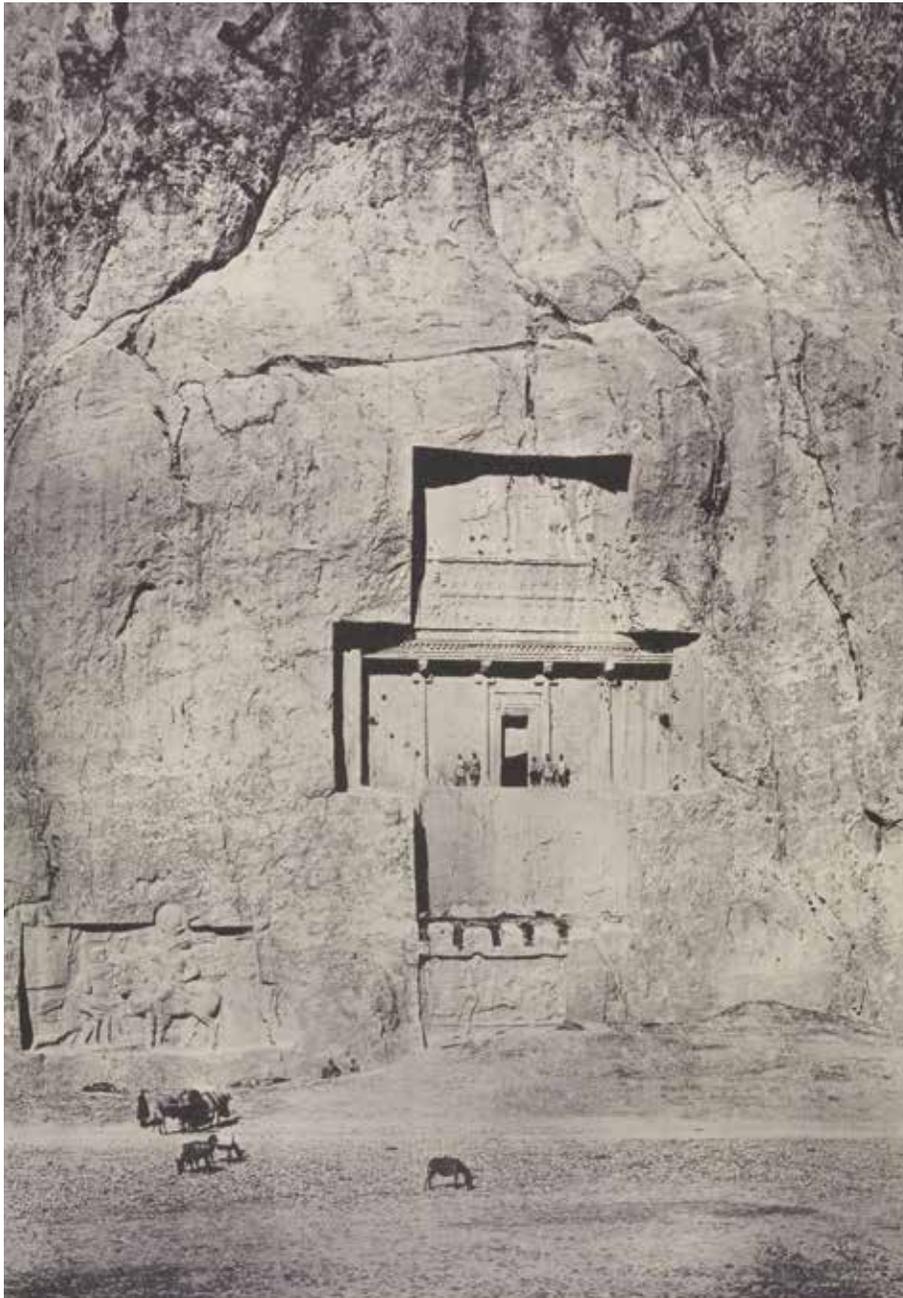




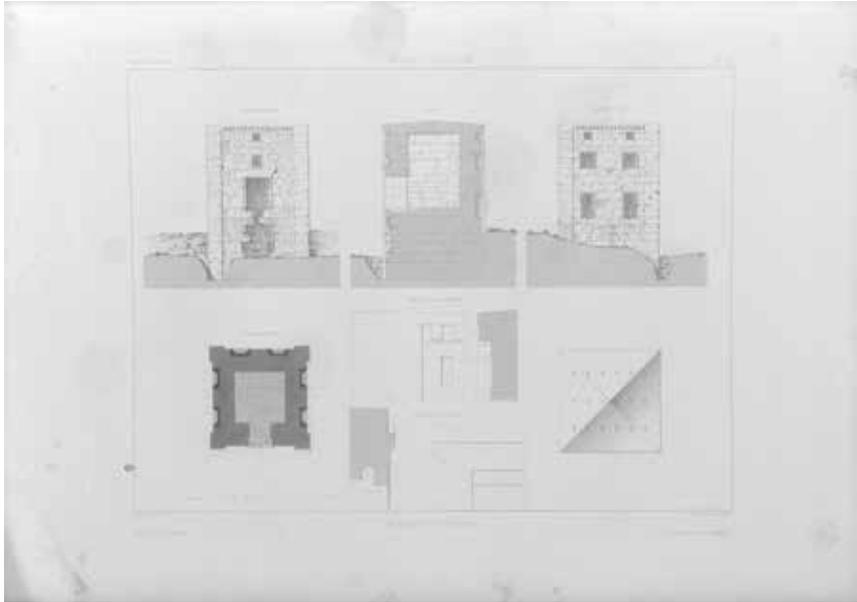
Figure 4.4.
Self portrait of
Sevruguin with
Ka'ba-ye Zardosht
and Achaemenid
and Sasanian reliefs
in the background
(The Myron Bement
Smith Collection,
FSA A.4 Freer
Gallery of Art and
Arthur M. Sackler
Gallery Archives.
Gift of Myron
Bement Smith,
Antoin Sevruguin,
FSA A.4 2.12.
GN.38.04).

how the building appeared prior to these restorations.³¹ As Vuurman notes, Sevruguin had “commercial motives” in taking photographs at Persepolis,³² since they would be highly collectible.

In addition to their aesthetic qualities, Sevruguin’s photographs of rock reliefs also aided in the translating of important Achaemenid inscriptions at Naqsh-e Rostam, allowing scholars to update their original readings,³³ such as the revisions based on Sevruguin’s photographs taken in 1902 for the Austrian Indo-European philologist Hans Reichelt (1877–1939) and obtained by Weissbach (fig. 4.3a–b).³⁴ Sevruguin’s contribution to Iranian philology has been largely unnoticed, however, outside the philologists who have studied these inscriptions. Indeed, there is the suggestion that Hans Reichelt did not have any photographs made of southern Iran in 1902.³⁵ It was clearly important for the philologists to establish a chain of authenticity for their corrections to the Naqsh-e Rostam inscription of Darius, and so Sevruguin’s contribution was acknowledged. While scholars of Iranian language Weissbach and Tolman credited Sevruguin and his photographs for helping them decipher the Naqsh-e Rostam Darius inscription, more famously, Herzfeld and Sarre commissioned Sevruguin to take photographs of monuments but did not credit him.³⁶ It is possible that Sevruguin took his pictures for Reichelt at the same time he took those for Herzfeld and Sarre, since the same photograph of the tomb of Darius appears in both.³⁷ Other scholars, however, did acknowledge Sevruguin, such as Abraham Valentine Williams Jackson, a professor of Columbia University who credits Sevruguin as the photographer in the pictures he used,³⁸ and Ella Rebe Durand in her 1902 book, *An Autumn Tour in Western Persia*, where it is spelled “Sévroguine,” often with the identifier “Tehran.”³⁹ But in many publications, he was not credited.⁴⁰

Some of Sevruguin’s photographs of Persepolis, Naqsh-e Rostam, and Pasargadae contain people, but there are other examples where there are no individuals in them. Indeed, many archaeological photographs from this period do not contain people in them. This can be seen on the one hand as an emphasis on the monuments, but on the other as Orientalist tendencies to depict modern landscapes devoid of people who might distract the viewer.⁴¹ The people who are present in the photographs are for scale,⁴² and one sees individuals (including Sevruguin himself) photographed next to monuments, which shows him as a part of the landscape, while at the same time taking on poses that seem Orientalist, which shows his multiple identities.⁴³ In her discussion of staged photography, Rameder notes that Sevruguin arranges the scene first and then places himself in the photograph, making him an unnecessary addition.⁴⁴

The staged nature of his photographs can also be seen in his photograph of the Ka’ba-ye Zardusht at Naqsh-e Rostam (fig. 4.4). Here we see an individual, identified by Navab in other photographs as Sevruguin, looking away from the camera, advancing on the square Ka’ba-ye Zardusht. The building’s lines naturally draw one’s attention to the rock reliefs on the hill that it was built in front of, namely the most famous of the Achaemenid tombs at Naqsh-e Rostam, that of King Darius I and the two Sasanian rock reliefs carved below it. Further, the position of Sevruguin in the landscape also draws the eye towards the rock reliefs. Sevruguin seems to not only be looking at them, but he is also positioned directly under the famous relief of Shapur I. The angle of the picture seems to have been taken so as to deliberately emphasize not only the Ka’ba-ye Zardusht but also to draw attention to the famous rock reliefs and tomb.



This is another Achaemenid building that found itself altered in the ensuing centuries. Not only did the Sasanians carve inscriptions on the buildings, since the building was then buried and apparently surrounded by settlements dating from the Achaemenid–Early Islamic periods,⁴⁵ the very way the building was perceived through time changed. The early Western drawings of the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht and the various Achaemenid tombs at Naqsh-e Rostam and Sasanian rock reliefs show that from the beginning artists wanted to depict the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht with the mountains and its tombs and reliefs behind (fig. 4.5a–b). Inevitably, these pictures show the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht in the corner of the picture and the reliefs and tombs in the mountain-side as being much smaller and less detailed. Jean Chardin (1643–1713) visited Iran on several occasions, and he was in the Persepolis region in 1674. In contrast to many artists and photographers, who situate the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht in the corner of the picture, Chardin placed the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht in the middle, with the mountains and the reliefs behind it. He also placed people in the picture, but the scale is clearly off.⁴⁶ In 1714, Cornelis de Bruijn published his drawings of Naqsh-e Rostam from his visit in 1704. There, one can see very clearly the beginning of this tradition. In this case the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht is shown in the left-hand side of the picture, with the mountains behind it. De Bruijn

Figure 4.5a–b. Drawings of the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht (Flandin and Coste 1851, pls. 172, 179. Scan Bibliothèque de l'Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, collections Jacques Doucet, 2010).



Figure 4.6a-b. LEFT: Ahmad Naqqash, drawing of Sasanian relief of Bishapur II of Shapur. In *Persian Travelogue: A Diary of a Journey through the region of Fars*, AD 1838 (Metropolitan Museum of Art 2019.116, purchase, Friends of Ancient Near Eastern Art and The Ishtar Society Gifts, 2019). BELOW: Lutf 'Ali Khan, Investiture scene of Ardashir I at Naqsh-e Rostam, AD 1860 (Metropolitan Museum of Art 1998.6.3, gift of Mr. Sassan Mokhtarzadeh, 1998).

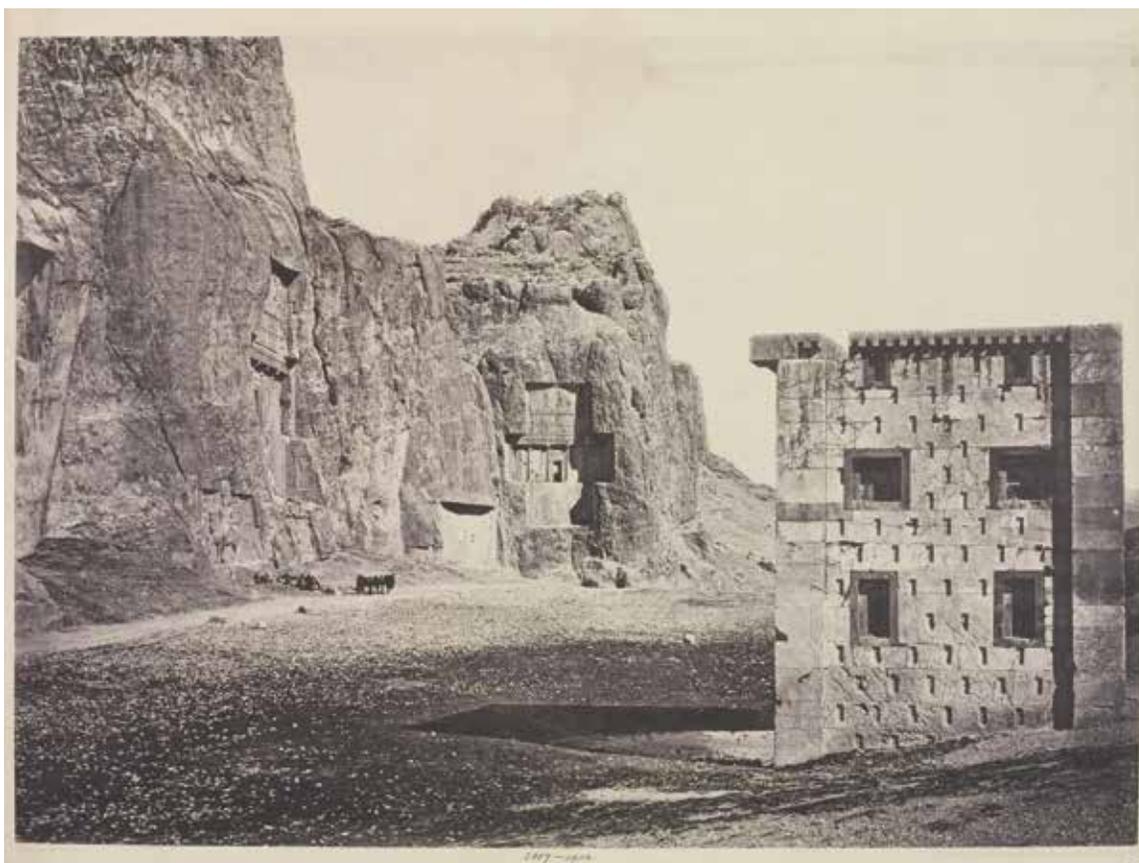
also drew an Achaemenid tomb and various Sasanian rock reliefs, although these were not very detailed but nevertheless were far more accurate than previous depictions. De Bruijn was aware of this and argued that it was due to the fact that not only were previous visitors not good at drawing but that they also did not devote the time at the sites to draw them as carefully as would be necessary.⁴⁷ Other visitors in the early nineteenth century, such as Robert Ker Porter and Willam Ouseley, had no interest in showing the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht with the rock reliefs, and either drew reliefs or drew the building of the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht separately and out of context.⁴⁸ Flandin and Coste, on the other hand, who visited the region in 1839–1841 and documented the region extensively, made detailed drawings of both the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht and the reliefs separately, as well a drawing of Ka'ba-ye Zardosht in the far left corner, with the mountain and the reliefs.⁴⁹ It is likely that Sevruguin would have seen the printed versions of at least some of these accounts and therefore would have been influenced by them in the way that he composed his own images.

Iranian artists also documented the ancient reliefs of Naqsh-e Rostam and other sites (fig. 4.6a–b), although there is nothing yet published in the Metropolitan Museum of Art by Ahmad Naqqash (1838) and Lutf' Ali Khan (1860) showing the



Ka'ba-ye Zardosht. The depictions of the reliefs are not dissimilar to the majority of those made by Western artists in that they tend to lack detail.⁵⁰

The Sevruguin photograph here contrasts with the photographs of the tomb and the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht that were taken by Sevruguin for Herzfeld and Sarre (fig. 4.7). Sevruguin's photograph of the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht published in the book and attributed to Sarre features a close-up of the monument and is devoid of people, and second photograph that also is empty of people.⁵¹ Another picture published in the book by Sevruguin shows people in the landscape, but they are very small. Similar to the other photograph, however, these individuals are sitting with their horses in front of the Sasanian relief, which once again draws one's eye in that direction.⁵² These individuals appear in additional photographs taken by Sevruguin at Naqsh-e



LEFT: Figure 4.7. Photograph of Ka'ba-ye Zardosht with reliefs in the background published in Sarre and Herzfeld 1910 (Victoria and Albert Museum, PH.2857-1903, ©Victoria and Albert Museum, London).

OPPOSITE: Figure 4.8a-b. Antoin Sevruguin, Photographs of the tomb of Cyrus the Great at Pasargadae (The Myron Bement Smith Collection, FSA A.4 Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives. Gift of Myron Bement Smith, Antoin Sevruguin, FSA A.4 2.12.Sm.20; and The Myron Bement Smith Collection, FSA A.4 Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives. Gift of Myron Bement Smith, Antoin Sevruguin, FSA A.4 2.12.Sm.19).





Rostam and Persepolis published in Sarre and Herzfeld's book. Sevruguin's wide shots of the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht represent an innovation from other photographers, such as Stolze. When Stolze photographed the monument he also made a wide shot, placing the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht in the far right-hand corner, but it is angled in such a way that the Achaemenid tomb and Sasanian reliefs on the far left are not visible, and while one can see one Achaemenid tomb, it is very much in the background. The landscape is also completely empty of any people.⁵³

The way Sevruguin constructs some of his photographs makes the monuments also look far more active and the archaeological landscape appear lived in, rather than empty or otherwise staged with a small number of people. If we contrast his two photographs of the tomb of Cyrus the Great at Pasargadae (fig. 4.8a-b), this becomes clear. In one picture, Sevruguin has



Figure 4.9a-b. LEFT: Photograph from Jackson 1906. RIGHT: Sir Robert Ker Porter; Watercolor of tomb of Cyrus the Great at Pasargadae, June 1818 (British Library, Add. Ms. 14758, f. 57. ©British Library).

filled the entire photograph with a picture of the tomb, and there are no people in it. The emphasis is very much on the architecture of the tomb itself. In the second picture, the tomb is not as emphasized. Rather, it is very much in the background against which we see a variety of people and horses, making the monument appear much more in use. Although someone is standing on the steps of the monument, they are quite small and definitely not the focus of the photograph. In the version of this picture published by Jackson in 1906 (fig. 4.9a), the sky has been cropped, leaving the monument more prominent in the space.⁵⁴ This also shows that the way that the photograph is ultimately presented also impacts how we see it (see Poinot, this volume, chapter five). The Qajars were active in various types of photographic technology, including the enlargement of pictures from negatives made from glass plates. Indeed, the enlargement of one royal photograph was considered important enough that it appeared in the inscription.⁵⁵ Sevruguin is known to have printed pictures in different sizes, which apparently depended on the purchaser and what they wished to collect.⁵⁶

It is also clear that views of monuments such as Pasargadae had become typified, meaning that Pasargadae was normally drawn, or then photographed, from a particular angle, and this was largely followed by Sevruguin. In 1818, for instance, Sir Robert Ker Porter visited the country, arriving at Tehran in 1818 (fig. 4.9b), and recorded its monuments. A painter, Sir Robert Ker Porter was able to record monuments with considerable accuracy. His depiction of a standing bas-relief at Pasargadae included the unnamed local guide, leaning on the monument in order to indicate scale,⁵⁷ as does his depiction of the Tomb

of Cyrus where the individual who appears to be the local guide is pictured with one other person. In the picture, the Tomb of Cyrus fills the picture, with the people pictured very small and barely visible unless one looks at the picture closely. In the background, one can also see other ruins, emphasizing the vastness of the monument in a largely empty landscape, which fits into Ker Porter's published description of the monument. There he described it as "majestic in its simplicity and vastness."⁵⁸ William Ouseley published several views of Pasargadae, showing the tomb at various scales,⁵⁹ as did other travelers to the area.⁶⁰ Flandin and Coste published several views of Pasargadae showing the tomb from an angle, with people in the image for scale, as well as the tomb viewed straight on;⁶¹ and the Dieulafoys adopted a similar approach, except that Marcel-Auguste showed Pasargadae with no people, and Jane Dieulafoy included a fanciful reconstruction of what the monument would have looked like in the Achaemenid period.⁶²

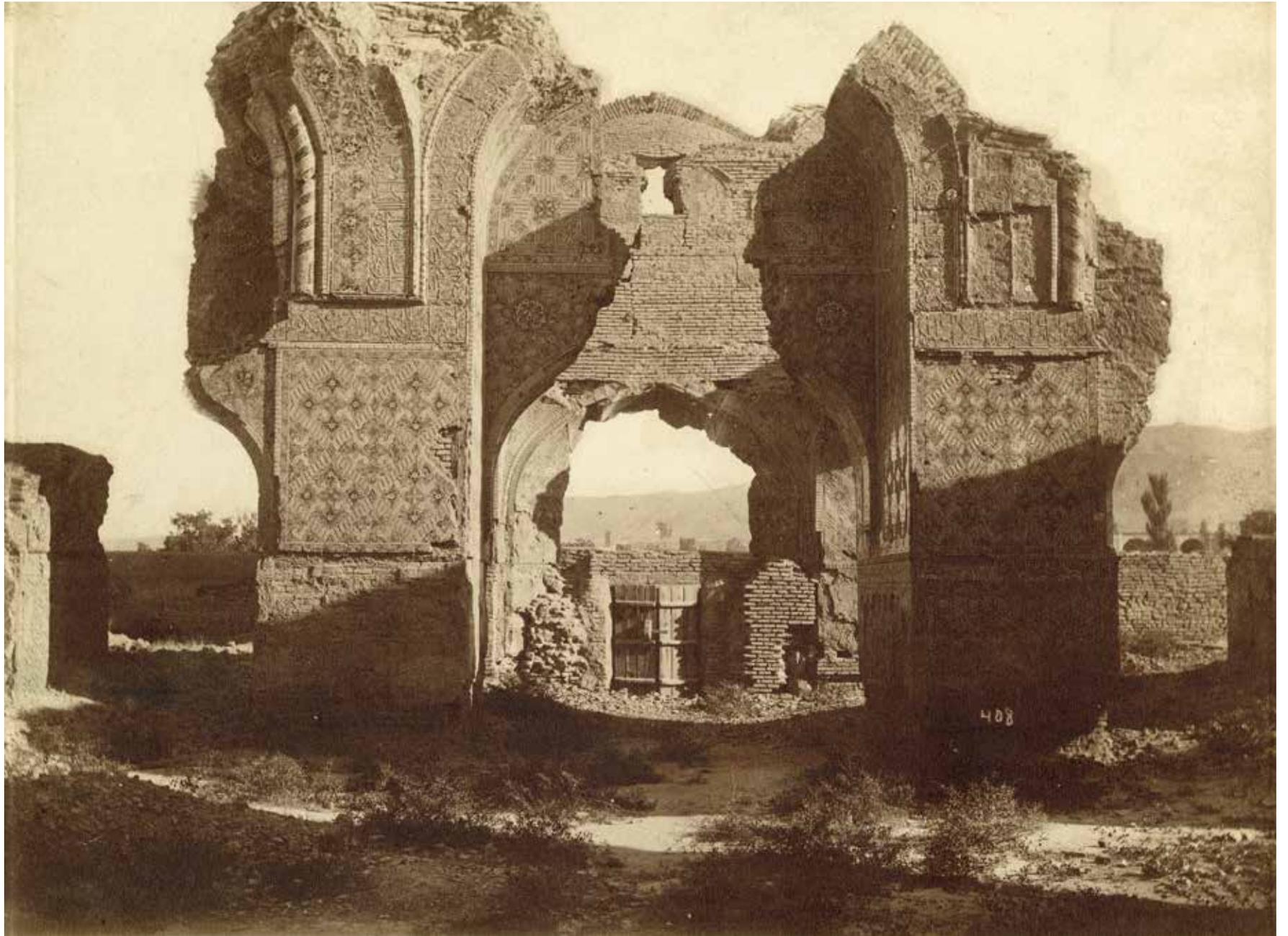
The earliest photograph of Pasargadae was that of Luigi Pesce (fig. 4.10), who was the first to photograph the monuments in the Persepolis region in 1858, and his photographs survive in an album in Nasir al-Din Shah's collections in the Golestan Palace.⁶³ Pesce's photograph of the Tomb of Cyrus is taken from an angle, showing the door and one side of the tomb. The picture fills the space and looks odd because the steps are incomplete on the left side and seem to be hanging in space. A man stands on the steps for scale.⁶⁴ It seems evident that Sevruguin was inspired by the images of Pesce, as indicated by the close correlation of the facade of the Blue Mosque of Tabriz, which was photographed by Pesce⁶⁵ and a very similar photograph by Sevruguin (fig. 4.11a–b).

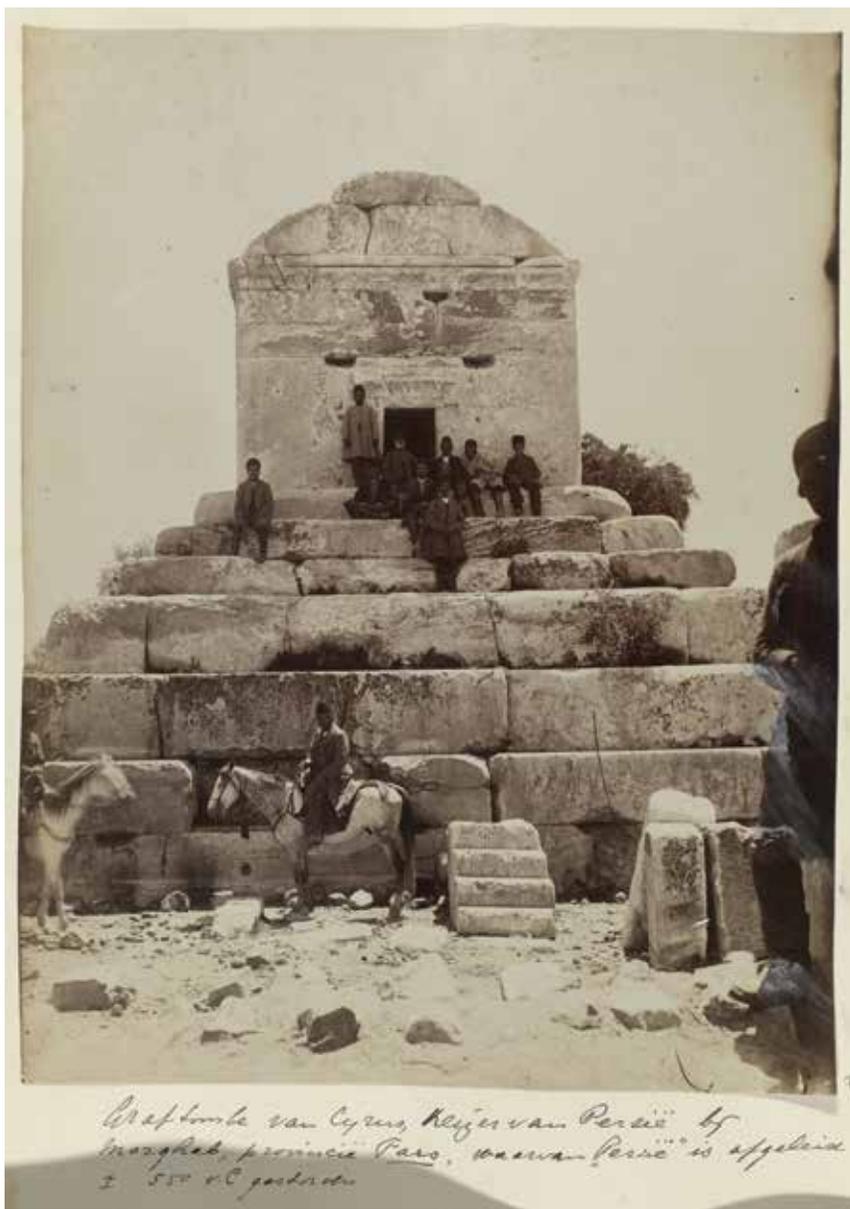


Figure 4.10. Luigi Pesce. Photograph of Tomb of Cyrus, 1858 (Metropolitan Museum of Art 67.606.18, gift of Kay Gregory, 1967).

Figure 4.11a-b.
RIGHT: Luigi Pesce.
Photograph
of the Blue
Mosque of Tabriz
(Metropolitan
Museum of Art
1977.683.43, gift
of Charles K. and
Irma B. Wilkinson,
1977). OPPOSITE:
Photograph by
Sevruguin
(cat. no. 126, P.
1230 / N. 23649).







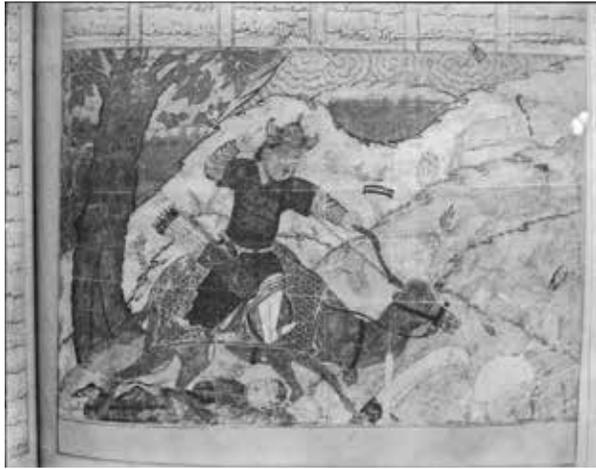
There are other images similar to other photographs of Sevruguin. Stolze⁶⁶ photographed the Tomb of Cyrus at Pasargadae from the back, from an angle quite similar to Sevruguin's later photograph. He also photographed it from the front,⁶⁷ again from a similar angle, but from quite far away, making the monument seem lost in the landscape.

Hendrik Dunlop, a Dutch textile merchant who worked for J. P. Hotz and Son in Shiraz, collected a different photograph by Antoin Sevruguin that is more atypical and original (fig. 4.12). The picture shows again a very crowded monument. This time, the tomb almost entirely fills the horizontal and vertical space of frame. But there are a large number of individuals sitting and standing at the top of the steps by the entrance of the tomb. Other people are below on horses, and one person seems to have walked into the frame on the right as Sevruguin was taking the photograph. Once again, the overwhelming feeling is of people in the space.⁶⁸ Another photograph of Pasargadae taken by Sevruguin but claimed to be by Sarre shows the back of the monument, and again a number of people,⁶⁹ while a different picture shows the monument devoid of individuals.⁷⁰

OBJECT PHOTOGRAPHY

While less well-known than his photographs of monuments, Sevruguin also photographed a large number of Iranian objects such as pottery, metalwork, and manuscripts. Sevruguin photographed miniatures in Iranian Shahnama manuscripts, including the fourteenth-century Great Ilkhanid

Figure 4.12. Antoin Sevruguin. Photograph of Pasargadae (Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, RP-F-F01048-BD).



Shahnama (fig. 4.13a-b). At the time that he photographed the manuscript, it was still intact. Although the emphasis of the picture is Bahram Gur Hunting with Azada, it also shows the edge of the facing page, demonstrating that at the time he took the picture, the manuscript was still intact. The manuscript was acquired by the French antiquities dealer Georges Demotte around 1910 in Paris. It was then torn up and

Figure 4.13a-b. LEFT: Photograph by Sevruguin of the Great Ilkhanid Shahnama before dispersal (The Myron Bement Smith Collection, FSA A.4 Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives. Gift of Myron Bement Smith, Antoin Sevruguin, FSA A.4 2.12. GN.07.01). RIGHT: After dispersal. Bahram Gur hunts with Azada (text, recto, painting, verso) illustrated folio from the Great Ilkhanid Shahnama (Book of Kings) (Harvard Art Museums / Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Gift of Edward W. Forbes. ©President and Fellows of Harvard College).



the miniatures were dispersed. This particular miniature is now at the Harvard University Art Museums 1957.193.⁷¹ The photograph is also important because it shows various changes that have taken place with the manuscript since this initial photography. There are losses in the manuscript that are not currently present, suggesting the presence of overpainting and restoration of the manuscript since then.

Further, one can use the photographs of Sevruguin to study the restoration of medieval Iranian bowls. One *mina'i* bowl photographed by Sevruguin (fig. 4.14) has been extensively studied by Watson and Norman, who showed that the bowl underwent heavy restoration. It came into the hands of the Kelekian collection in New York, and subsequent studies of the bowl (now in the Kuwait National Museum, cat. P.3) showed it had undergone extensive restoration. The earliest photograph of the bowl known Watson and Norman had been from Lane's 1947 *Early Islamic Pottery*,⁷² but Sevruguin's picture dates from before his death in 1933. Both the 1947 photograph and Sevruguin's photograph shows the bowl after it was restored, but before part of one side was restored prior to its acquisition in the Kuwait National Museum. This is interesting because it demonstrates the original full restoration occurred at a fairly early date. Sevruguin also photographed his pottery in the way that many archaeologists did at the time, showing that he was aware of trends in object photography. Although he photographed individual objects, he also arranged others together on tables.⁷³



Figure 4.14. *Mina'i* bowl (The Myron Bement Smith Collection, FSA A.4 Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives. Gift of Myron Bement Smith, Antoin Sevruguin, FSA A.4 2.12.GN.07.01).

CONCLUSION

Sevruguin documented a changing Iran, but he also made important contributions to the way that Iran's monuments were viewed. This included selling pictures of monuments to tourists, but also being commissioned by scholars to document inscriptions and rock reliefs. While Sevruguin would include people for scale in some of his photographs, people are entirely absent

in others or simply part of the lived-in landscape where the monuments were situated. Now, his work is often seen not only for its aesthetic value, but also for the fact that it can help us better understand Iranian monuments and the dispersal and alteration of objects outside of Iran that he photographed. Therefore, we can see that Sevruguin's legacy of Iranian cultural heritage is complicated and contributes to seeing his vision of Iran, past and present, in different ways.

Endnotes

- ¹ Bohrer 1999a, 48; Bohrer 1999b, 58, 62, cat. nos. 1 and 5; Sheikh 1999, 55–56; Behdad 2008, 169; Vorderstrasse 2018.
- ² For similar observations for the Assyrian-Armenian Ottoman photographer Pascal Sébah, see Woodward 2003, 366, 368; Grossman 2015. See also Çelik 2008.
- ³ Gregory 2001, 115–16.
- ⁴ Vianello 2014, 56.
- ⁵ See Scarce 1976, 1. After demonstrating convincingly that Höltzer was clearly interested in promoting a frozen view of Iran that was anything but objective, Scarce then congratulates Höltzer for “his great capacity for objectivity.”
- ⁶ Hedin 1910, 155–56.
- ⁷ Jackson 1906, 47–48, 419–20.
- ⁸ Vianello 2013, 49; Amiri 2015, 66. This was also true in the Ottoman Empire. Abdul Hamid II albums commissioned by the Ottoman Sultan and meant for the UK and the US were a mixture of Orientalist photographs and photographs representing modernism, and they failed to reach an audience of any kind. See Eldem 2015, 113–14.
- ⁹ Qajar rock reliefs were frequently visited by tourists but do not seem to have been very well understood. See Diba 1998, 48–49; Floor 2005, 187, 190.
- ¹⁰ See, for instance, Spurr 2002.
- ¹¹ Wright 1992, 18; Sheikh 1999, 56.
- ¹² Stein 2013, 29.
- ¹³ Guha 2002, 95–96; Baird 2011; Shanks and Svabo 2013, 90, 93; Weiler 2013, 42, 47–49; Grossman 2015, 115, 117; Behdad 2016, 33–34, 57–58.
- ¹⁴ Weiler 2013, 41.
- ¹⁵ Bohrer 2008, 182.
- ¹⁶ Lerner 2015, 166.
- ¹⁷ Ousterhout 2011, 136–37.
- ¹⁸ Ousterhout 2011, 137–38; Bohrer 2015, 101–8.
- ¹⁹ Keller 2019, 9, 11.
- ²⁰ Canepa 2014; Canepa 2018.
- ²¹ Canepa 2010, 566–67, 569–71; Canepa 2018.
- ²² Canepa 2010, 572–80 fig. 4, 584–90; Canepa 2014, 62, 67–68, 74–76; Moayeri Pazargadi and Terpak 2014, 56; Canepa 2018. For the composition of the rock reliefs, see Thompson 2008.
- ²³ Luft 2001; Lerner 2017, 108–9; Roxburgh 2017, 16–17.

- ²⁴ The existence of this album was signaled by Coloru 2012, but at the time it was written the album had not yet been acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Coloru only knew that it probably existed but not what was in it. Metropolitan Museum of Art 2019.116, purchase, Friends of Ancient Near Eastern Art and The Ishtar Society Gifts, 2019.
- ²⁵ Metropolitan Museum of Art 1998.6.1–4, gift of Mr. Sassan Mokhtarzadeh, 1998.
- ²⁶ Barnett 1957, 57; Mousavi 2012, 145–46, no. 93.
- ²⁷ Bonetti and Prandi 2013, fig. 10.
- ²⁸ Mousavi 2002, 217–18; Lerner 2015, 158–59.
- ²⁹ For an overview of the interest in Persepolis see Mousavi 2012; Vuurman 2015.
- ³⁰ Allen 2013.
- ³¹ Blair 1986, 139, 144; Brambilla 2012, 10–16; Irani 2015, 2–3 fig. 2; Tarafdari 2015, 54.
- ³² Vuurman 2015, 117.
- ³³ Tolman 1908, 44, nos. 12–14; Weissbach 1911b, 86–91.
- ³⁴ Weissbach 1911a, 12–13, 19, 50; Tolman 1923.
- ³⁵ Schmitt 2002.
- ³⁶ Vuurman and Martens 1999, 25–26; Krasberg 2008a, 37, 39; Pérez González 2012, 33; Lerner 2015, 166–67; Behdad 2016, 92. Krasberg suggests that since Sarre paid for the expedition to the Persepolis region and each photograph, this explains why it was not thought necessary to acknowledge Sevruguin’s work.
- ³⁷ Herzfeld and Sarre 1910, fig. 1; Weissbach 1911a, fig. 14. Both publications use the same photograph, but the Weissbach version cuts off the edges that are shown in Sarre and Herzfeld, making the photo appear more zoomed-in so that one cannot see the Sasanian relief of Shapur and Gordian, presumably because his interest was in the Tomb of Darius itself. It is not clear that Weissbach was aware that this photograph was published by Sarre and Herzfeld.
- ³⁸ Jackson 1906.
- ³⁹ Durand 1902.
- ⁴⁰ Stein 1983, 268, 281; Pérez González 2012, 31; Vuurman 2015, 119.
- ⁴¹ Grossman 2015; Keller 2019, 40–41.
- ⁴² Bohrer 1999a, 34.
- ⁴³ Navab 2002, 134–37; Vuurman 2015, 120.
- ⁴⁴ Rameder 2016, 25.
- ⁴⁵ Schmidt 1970, 17–49; Canepa 2010, 580–84.
- ⁴⁶ Chardin 1711, 117.
- ⁴⁷ Mousavi 2012, 106; Coloru 2017, fig. 1.
- ⁴⁸ Morier 1812, pls. XV–XVII; Kerr Porter 1821, pls. XVI, XXI, XXV; Ouseley 1821, pl. XLVIII. A more detailed version of the relief is available in the original watercolor. See www.bl.uk/collection-items/a-sassanian-bas-relief-at-nakshi-roustam. Visitors in the later nineteenth century also documented the landscape similarly, such as Marcel-Auguste and Jane Dieulafoy in 1881–82. See Dieulafoy 1884, pl. VI and Dieulafoy 1887, 384, 388. For more on the Dieulafoys see Mousavi 2012, 145.
- ⁴⁹ Flandin and Coste 1851, pls. 172, 179, 185.

- ⁵⁰ Ahmad Naqqash (Metropolitan Museum of Art 2019.116, purchase, Friends of Ancient Near Eastern Art and The Ishtar Society Gifts, 2019); Lutf 'Ali Khan (Metropolitan Museum of Art 1998.6.1–4, gift of Mr. Sassan Mokhtarzadeh, 1998).
- ⁵¹ Sarre and Herzfeld 1910, abb. 2–3.
- ⁵² Sarre and Herzfeld 1910, fig. 1. Victoria and Albert Museum, PH.2857-1903. <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1065886/photograph-sevruguin-antoin/>
- ⁵³ Stolze 1882, 113.
- ⁵⁴ Jackson 1906, between 290 and 291.
- ⁵⁵ White 2020.
- ⁵⁶ Schwerda 2017, 88. Such photo enlargers do not seem to have been common, however. The first photo enlarger in Isfahan was brought there by the Armenian photographer Minas Patkerkhanian Mackertich in the early twentieth century. He also had a button machine that printed photographs onto buttons to make them for clients. See Damandan 2004, 20–21.
- ⁵⁷ British Library Add. 14758, fig. 56. Online at www.bl.uk/collection-items/bas-relief-of-cyrus-the-great-on-a-pillar-at-pasargadae, accessed July 19, 2020. The guide is absent in the published version of the monument in 1821. For more on Sir Robert Ker Porter, see Mousavi 2012, 127–31.
- ⁵⁸ British Library Add. 14758, fig. 57. Online at www.bl.uk/picturing-places/articles/painting-persepolis, accessed July 19, 2020. For more on the tomb in general, see Stronach 1978.
- ⁵⁹ Ouseley 1819, pls. L–LI, LIII.
- ⁶⁰ Morier 1812, pl. XXI.
- ⁶¹ Flandin 1851, pl. LXXXIII; Flandin and Coste 1851, pls. 194–95.
- ⁶² Dieulafoy 1884, pl. XIX; Dieulafoy 1887, 365, 377.
- ⁶³ Mousavi 2012, 138–39; Bonetti and Prandi 2013, 18–21; Moayeri Pazargadi and Terpak 2014, 51–52, 55.
- ⁶⁴ Metropolitan Museum of Art 67.606.18, Gift of Kay Gregory, 1967. Luigi Pesce, Tombe de Ciro a Morgab, 1858.
- ⁶⁵ Metropolitan Museum of Art 1977.683.43, gift of Charles K. and Irma B. Wilkinson, 1977.
- ⁶⁶ Stolze 1882, 128.
- ⁶⁷ Stolze 1882, 129.
- ⁶⁸ Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, RP-F-F01048-BD, www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/collectie/RP-F-F01048-BD, accessed July 25, 2020.
- ⁶⁹ Sarre 1910 and Herzfeld, abb. 76.
- ⁷⁰ Sarre and Herzfeld 1910, Taf. XXIX. Victoria and Albert Museum. PH.2885–1903. <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1065858/photograph-sevruguin-antoin/>
- ⁷¹ Blair 1989, 128; Blair 2004; Soucek 2011.
- ⁷² Norman 2004, 80–83; Watson 2004, cat. P. 3.
- ⁷³ Baird 2011, 440–42.

CHAPTER FIVE

REGARDING THE ONE WHO IS
REGARDING THE PAST

Delphine Poinso

The Sasanian dynasty ruled the Iranian-Mesopotamian Empire during late antiquity (AD 224–651), its authority ending with the Arab conquest. The heart of this empire lies in present-day Iran and Iraq, but its borders extended to the eastern part of Afghanistan and west to Armenia. Of the archaeological remains left by this dynasty, the rock reliefs are among the most famous. These reliefs were ordered by the Sasanian rulers and are carved into the mountains. The majority of the reliefs can be found in Fars, a region in the southwest of present-day Iran that is supposedly (according to post-Sasanian textual sources) the origin place of the dynasty's first ruler, Ardashir I (AD 224–242). These reliefs have various iconographies, but three main themes can be distinguished: the investiture of the sovereign by the god Ahura Mazda,¹ the commemoration of military victories,² and finally, scenes of royal hunting.

The Oriental Institute owns two of the photographs that Antoin Sevruguin took of these Sasanian monuments. One (fig. 5.1) is a photograph of the relief known in scientific literature as Bishapur II. This relief dated to King Shapur I (AD 242–270) is located in the Chogan gorge, a natural gorge in the region of Fars a few kilometers north of the city of Kazeroun. In this gorge, King Shapur I had a canal built that leads to the city he founded, and which bears his name: Bishapur. In this gorge, just at the cliff's foot and on the canal's edge, six reliefs were carved by Sasanian rulers, three of them by Shapur I (Bishapur I, II, and III). Bishapur I is an investiture scene. Bishapur II and III present the same central scene and thus seem to commemorate the same event. On this central scene, Shapur I is shown on horseback, along with three Roman emperors who all look the same. Shapur holds one by the sleeve; the other is kneeling in front of Shapur I's horse; the third is lying under the horse's hooves. On the Bishapur II relief, on the left, in two registers, Sasanian horsemen have been carved, and on the right, in two registers, there are figures bringing various objects. As early as 1811, Sir William Ouseley³ identified the

kneeling emperor as Valerian, whom Shapur took prisoner. The standing Roman emperor would then be Philip the Arab, who paid Shapur tribute, and the one under the horse's hooves is Gordian III, who dies during the battle.⁴ A more recent study⁵ identifies the three Roman emperors as one and the same character, represented three times:⁶ the emperor-usurper Uranius Antonius (died in AD 254). He was the high priest of the city of Emesa (Syria), the center of the sun cult to Elagabal. In the middle of the third century, he claimed imperial purple, probably in order to lead the resistance against the Sasanian advance in Syria. The Bishapur II and III reliefs would then be a commemoration of the city of Emesa's surrender to Shapur I.

The second photograph presented here (fig. 5.4) shows one of Taq-e Bostan's ayvan, dated to the king Khosrow II (AD 590–628). Taq-e Bostan is located in the present province of Kermanshah in western Iran and is a Sasanian paradise,⁷ i.e., a vast, enclosed royal hunting park. On the side of the mountain facing an artificial pool are two unnatural caves and a relief. The relief represents the investiture of Shapur II (AD 309–379) and his victory over the Roman Emperor Julian in AD 363.⁸ Next to this relief, two ayvan were dug into the mountain. Ayvan is a Persian term used by art historians and archaeologists to designate a single large and vaulted hall walled on three sides and opening directly on the outside on the fourth. It is the most consistent feature of Iranian architecture since Parthian times.⁹ Both Taq-e Bostan ayvan are carved with reliefs. In the smaller one, only the back wall is carved. It is a relief depicting Shapur II and his son, Shapur III (AD 383–388). The other ayvan—the largest, and the one shown in the photograph studied here—is carved on all its walls, as well as its exterior façade. The back wall is divided into two registers. The upper register represents the investiture of Khosrow II (AD 590–628) and the lower register a horseman in armor, perhaps Khosrow II himself. The side walls show scenes of royal hunting. They show the king hunting game, accompanied by his court: the noblemen, but also musicians, elephants-beaters, dromedaries and their drivers. The left-side wall is a boar hunt; the right-side wall, the one we see in the photograph, is a deer hunt.

The context in which these photos were taken is difficult to identify. Antoin Sevruguin was a court photographer for Naser al-Din Shah,¹⁰ who asked him to take photographs that document Iran and that could be sold to tourists.¹¹ In addition, it is known that Sevruguin took photographs of ancient Iranian reliefs for the *Iranische Felsreliefs*, a work documenting the Iranian reliefs published in 1910 by F. Sarre and E. Herzfeld, but in which his work is not acknowledged.¹² The two photographs of the Oriental Institute do not appear in this publication but may have been taken in this context. Finally, although it cannot be stated with certainty, it would seem that the Oriental Institute's prints are originals from the hand of Sevruguin himself.¹³ Antoin Sevruguin's photographs are scattered throughout the American collections, and the Freer Gallery owns a glass plate negative (fig. 5.2) that appears to be the one corresponding to Chogan gorge's relief's print (fig. 5.1). The Oriental Institute's photograph could then be an enlargement of this negative.¹⁴

The study proposed here focuses on the photographs kept at the Oriental Institute, a corpus highlighted through this catalog, and thus concerns only two photographs of Sasanian rock reliefs, although Sevruguin had taken several more of these photographs. A very interesting work could be done on all the photographs Sevruguin made of the monuments of ancient Iran, but this work goes beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, the two photographs presented here can be the first objects examining the way Sevruguin treats Sasanian reliefs. The way Sevruguin photographed the monuments of Iran's past should be studied in a more nuanced global approach.

STAMPING THE CLIFF: CHOGAN GORGE

Substantiating a Recess

The framing of this photograph (fig. 5.1) is tight, and the shot is almost frontal, making the relief, at first glance, the main subject. However, the framing is also done in such a way that it takes into account the edges of the cliff, above and below the relief. These edges form two horizontal lines that frame the relief, almost like a painting. The upper edge of the cliff is all the more visible, as it appears clearly above a dark area. In addition, on the upper left edge of the photograph, a rocky area is visible above the ridge. This photograph thus gives full visibility to the rock and the cliff as a natural setting for the relief. The focal length allows a strip of land in front of the cliff to be included, which then appears limited in space, at least at its lower edge.

In many contemporary photographs available on the internet, the framing is tighter, and the foot of the cliff is rarely seen. This can give the impression of an abstract rocky mass around the relief. In Sevruguin's photo, despite the tight framing, the foot of the cliff is delineated and gives a much more precise expression of the relief's inscription in the cliff.

The inclusion of a grassy strip of land in the foreground also adds thickness to the cliff. The rock platform at the relief's foot can be seen, especially on the lateral parts. Moreover, the photograph was taken from a sufficient distance as to show the depth and height of this platform. In addition, the elements of the photograph are divided into three planes: the grassy strip of land forms the closest plane to the viewer, the second plane is occupied by the cliff, and the third plane is located next to the rocky relief. This division accentuates the effect of the relief being pushed away and pushed into the cliff, an impression of entrenchment that is further intensified by the contrasts. For example, the rather wide shadow zone on the upper part of the relief blurs the line of demarcation with the cliff's return, creating a dark well that gives the impression of endless depth.

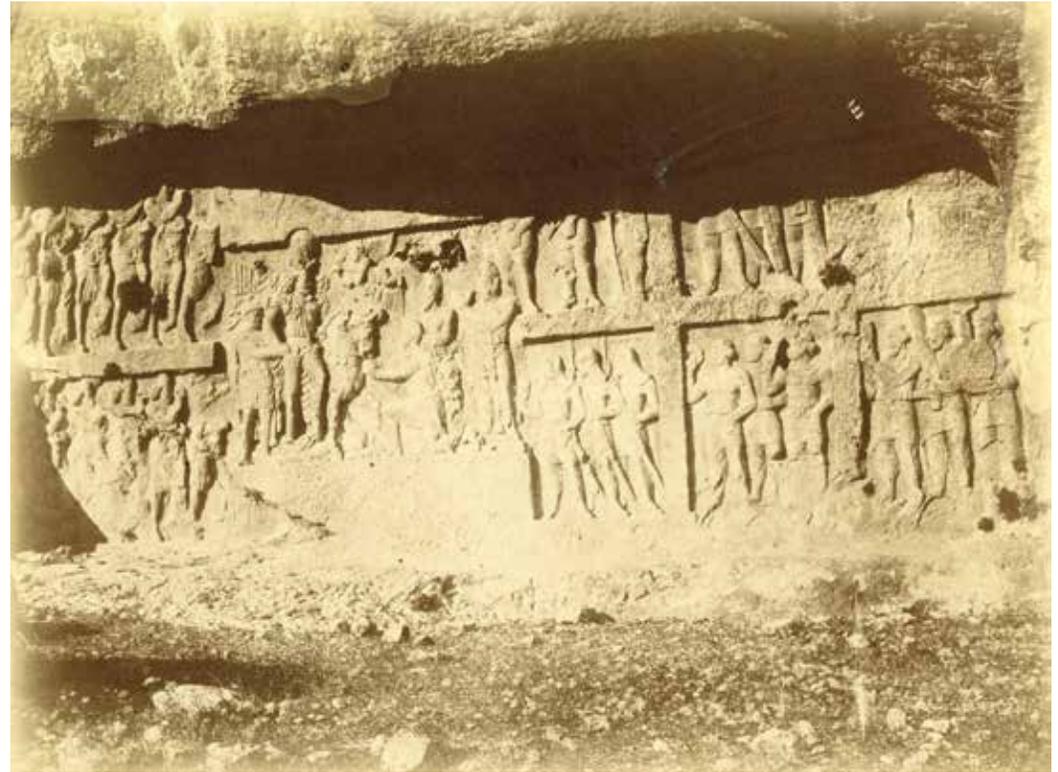


Figure 5.1. Chogan gorge rock relief, Victory of Shapur I (cat. no. 133, P. 1237 / N. 23692).

Telling the Landscape

Although the relief is the main subject and a major part of the photograph, it does not seem that documenting its content accurately is the photographer's primary goal. On this subject, one must be interested in the way Sevruguin treats light. In the Oriental Institute's photograph, it is particularly concentrated on the lower part of the relief, and especially on the sculpted platform upon which are represented Shapur I and the three avatars of the emperor-usurper Uranius Antoninus, or the three emperors Valerian, Philip the Arab, and Gordian III. This part of the photograph has very little contrast, making the kneeling and trampled versions of the Roman emperor(s) rather inconspicuous. This bright, almost white focus in the photograph is particularly noticeable because it is framed by two darker areas. One is formed by the large shadow on the upper part of the relief. The other is on the left side and is formed by the lateral shadow and puddles. The eye is therefore attracted to this white area, which is also the dramatic point of the bas-relief narration. But this dramatic area is precisely the least legible and the least discernible on the relief because of the lack of contrast. This effect may have been accentuated by the colors chosen for the print—and it is difficult to say with certainty whether Sevruguin did it himself—as well as by the fading of the photo. One can, however, notice the same play of light and shadow on the negative kept at the Freer Gallery (fig. 5.2). Comparing the negative with the Oriental Institute's photograph, it is therefore quite probable that Sevruguin, when taking the photograph of the relief from Shapur, was looking for the dramatic effect created by focusing on the brighter areas on the central part of the rock relief. It thus seems that documenting the representation of Shapur I's victory over the Roman Uranius Antoninus, or the Romans

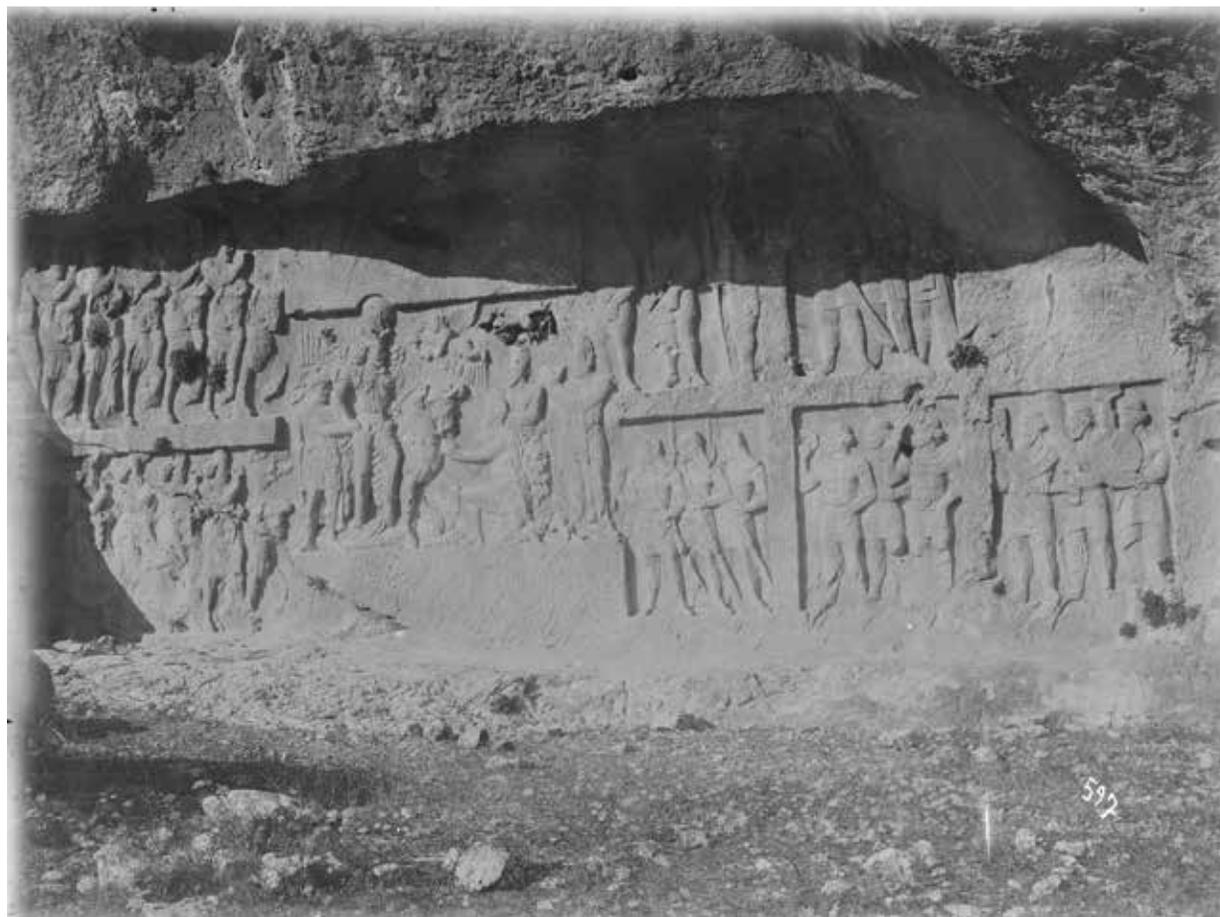


Figure 5.2. Chogan gorge rock relief, Victory of Shapur I (The Myron Bement Smith Collection, FSA A.4 Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives. Gift of Myron Bement Smith, Antoin Sevruguin, FSA A.4 2.12.GN.38.05).

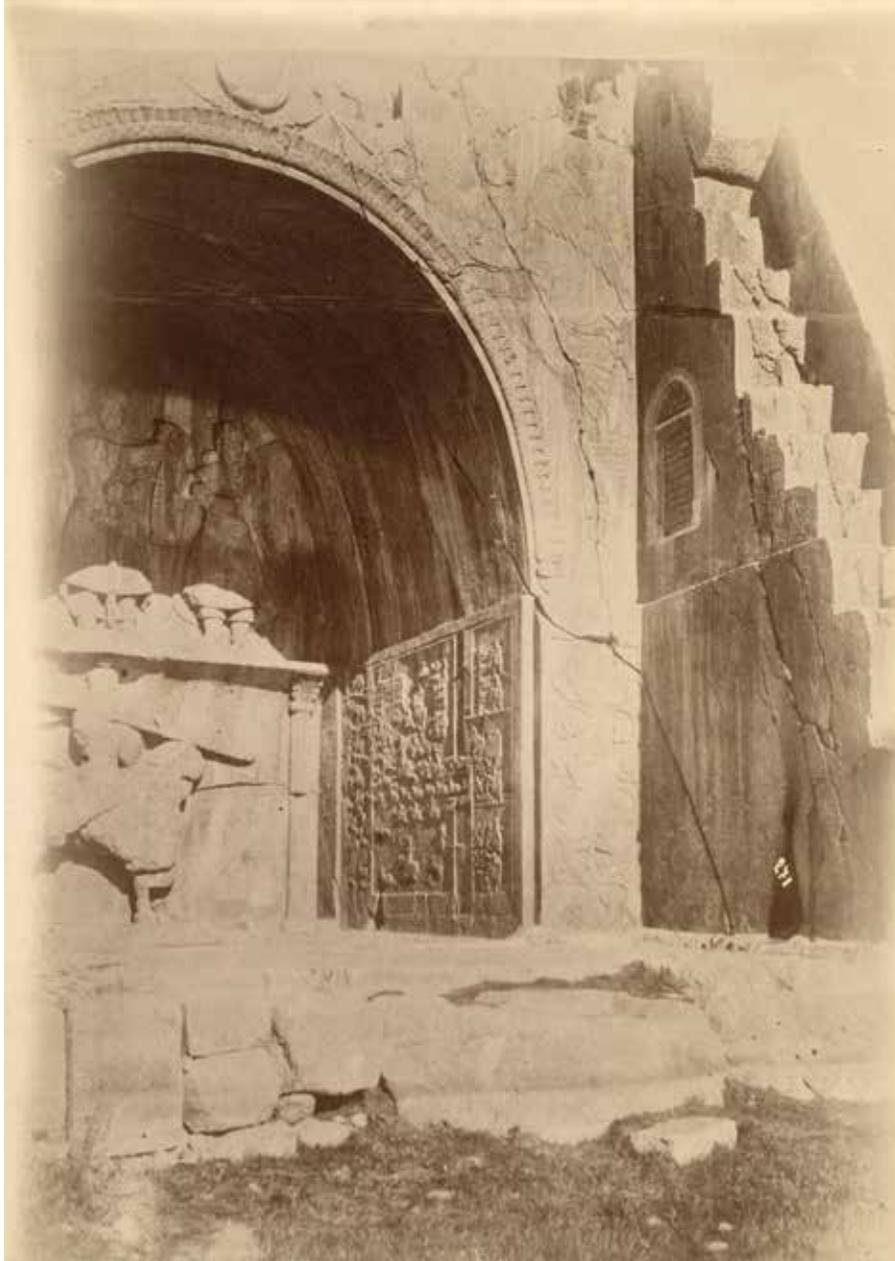


Figure 5.3. Chogan gorge rock relief, investiture of Bahram I (Ernst Herzfeld Papers, FSA A.6 Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives. Gift of Ernst Herzfeld, 1946, FSA A.6 04.27.056).

struck Sevruguin. It is seen in a photograph of another relief, the investiture of Bahram I (AD 273–276), which is also in the Chogan gorge (fig. 5.3). For this photograph, Sevruguin chose an angle of view offset from the center of the relief and forming an acute angle with its surface. As with Shapur's relief, the dramatic point of the relief (the handing over by the god Ahura Mazda of the ring and tiara symbolizing the royal authority) is almost illegible, because of the much greater luminosity at this point. On the contrary, the thickness of the cliff's edges framing the relief is quite noticeable, a thickness made visible by the chosen view angle. These two photographs indicate that Sevruguin was not only interested in the contents of the Sasanian reliefs but also in the way they were carved into the cliff. His curiosity was not limited to the image but extended to the gesture that placed a relief in the heart of the mountain.

Valerian, Philip the Arab, and Gordian III, is not really what interests Sevruguin in this photograph.

On the relief's upper left part, the figures are largely invisible, as they are left in the shadow of the cliff. Because the relief is embedded in the cliff, it is difficult to give them a very high visibility. However, this large dark area could have been reduced by taking the photograph at a time when the sun is more vertically above the cliff. In addition, Sevruguin often seeks to minimize shadows in the photographs he takes outdoors.¹⁵ Since the context of this photograph is unknown to us, we cannot conclude whether Sevruguin was able to choose the moment when he took this photograph. However, in view of his work on shadows, and in particular his taste for almost invisible shadows, it is likely that he wanted this large dark area to materialize the depth of the cliff but leave a number of characters in the shadows. The sinking into the cliff seems to be a characteristic of the Sasanian reliefs that particularly



SCULPTING THE MOUNTAIN: TAQ-E BOSTAN

This gesture, this technical feat, undoubtedly struck him in Taq-e Bostan, the ancient paradise of the Sasanian kings in whose mountain two artificial caves were dug. In the Oriental Institute's photograph (fig. 5.4), we see Khosrow II's (AD 590–628) cave, the larger of the two and the one whose walls are carved with reliefs. This photograph does not show the mountain, which Sevruguin has as if erased. In this photograph, Sevruguin uses planes and light to unfold the architecture of the ayvan from the back wall to the outer wall closest to the viewer.

Substantiating a Monument

This photograph was taken quite close to Khosrow II's cave, the left side wall of which is not visible. Moreover, in this photograph, the focal length and angle crop out the mountain that continues above the cave. Neither can one see what is on the other side of the staircase, which is the rocky outcrop of the mountain above the smaller cave of Shapur II. The framing therefore only takes into account the man-made architectural elements: the artificial ayvan and its relief-carved walls, its ornate outer facade, and finally the stone staircase. All the natural character of the place has been erased. The

Figure 5.4. Tanq-e Bostan, Khosrow II's ayvan (cat. no. 132, P. 1236 / N. 23591).

character of a cave dug into a rock is lost; only the built character of the ayvan remains. For those who do not know the Taq-e Bostan cave, the photograph may seem to be that of an ancient palace and thus reminds us of the great ayvan of Ctesiphon (fig. 5.5).

Ctesiphon is an ancient city located on the Tigris River's banks, close to the ancient Hellenistic city of Seleucia and about 35 km south of Baghdad. Capital of the Sasanian empire and city where the coronation of the king of kings (title given to the Sasanian emperor) took place, it was also used as a winter residence by

the Sasanian rulers who thus continued a tradition established by the Parthian dynasty (250–226 BC).¹⁶ Today it contains the remains¹⁷ of a Sasanian palace, called Ayvan-e Kesra, and built in the sixth century.¹⁸ Ayvan-e Kesra shows this vault typical of Sasanian architecture, including the ayvan, which served as an audience hall.¹⁹ It is difficult to say whether Sevruguin had actually sought to recall, in his photograph of Taq-e Bostan's ayvan, the palace of Ctesiphon, or any other Sasanian monument in his knowledge that possessed this distinctive feature.²⁰ Nevertheless, his approach as a photographer underlines the monumental character, not only in the sense of what is imposing but also in the sense of what has an architectonic character.



Figure 5.5. Palace of Ctesiphon (LC-M33-4661, G. Eric and Edith Matson Photograph Collection, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC).

Telling the Feat

Digging a monument in the mountain seems to have been a gesture that particularly struck Sevruguin, and which he wants to make the subject of these photographs, much more than the pictorial content of the reliefs.

The photograph of the cave is taken in such a way as to materialize a vanishing point, which is located at the corner of the right-side wall and the back wall. Sevruguin plays with the very architecture of the cave to draw vanishing lines. They are thus marked by two diagonals, formed on the right by the wall's edge below the window and the hunting relief's upper edge, and on the left by the separation between the horseman relief and above investiture relief. The materialization of perspective in the photograph could be traced back to Sevruguin's study of, and taste for, painting.²¹ It may also be a way of underlining the cave's sinking into the mountain, thus marking the technical prowess that certainly struck Sevruguin.

In addition, the photograph is constructed on four planes. The first is the platform, the second the staircase, the third the façade of the ayvan, and finally, the last is the cave. This construction, which pushes the cave to the last plane, adds to the materialization of the vanishing point, underlines the sinking of the cave into the mountain, and accentuates the technical gesture of the digging. This is further underlined by the contrasts. A large, clear area extends from the platform to the horseman relief, blurring the materialization and the evaluation of the distance between the first and last shots. However, this distance is again materialized by the use of contrasts on the right side. There is an alternation of light areas (the horseman relief, the ayvan's facade, and the staircase) and dark areas (the upper part, the cave, the side wall, and the staircase wall), which form a screen image that unfolds opens like a folding screen and reminds us of the amount of rock that has been dug out. Although the mountain is absent from this photograph, Sevruguin, using lines and contrasts, has been able to render the technical feat: to drive a decorated, completely artificial ayvan deep into the very heart of the mountain.

REGARDING THE ONE WHO IS REGARDING THE PAST

It does not seem that Sevruguin always sought to document Sasanian reliefs as objectively as possible. On the contrary, he plays with these ancient monuments and stages them in certain of his photographs: he brings the relief out of the cliff at the Chogan gorge and creates the illusion of a palace at Taq-e Bostan. He also sculpts, light and shadow being his tools of staging. Sevruguin also seems to play with the viewer of photography, who looks at the past, and he shifts the focus of attention from this past. At the Chogan gorge, he almost makes the key element, the relief itself, disappear. In Taq-e Bostan, he almost makes the natural frame disappear and plays with the one who knows or does not know the natural frame. But in doing so, he shifts the focus from the content of the relief (characters, elements of decoration) to the gesture that prevailed at the creation of these reliefs: marking the mountain. This shift of attention is interesting for the art historian of Sasanian Iran. Antoin Sevruguin's photographs are a reminder that Sasanian reliefs are not limited to their pictorial content.²² This may seem obvious, but the question of the context, of the inscription of the bas-reliefs, has not always been fully taken into account in their study.²³

Marking the Road at the Chogan Gorge

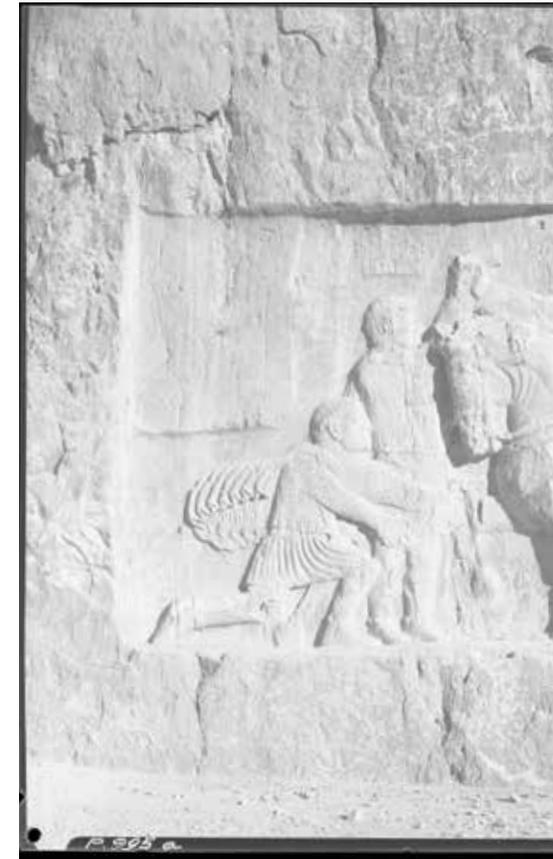
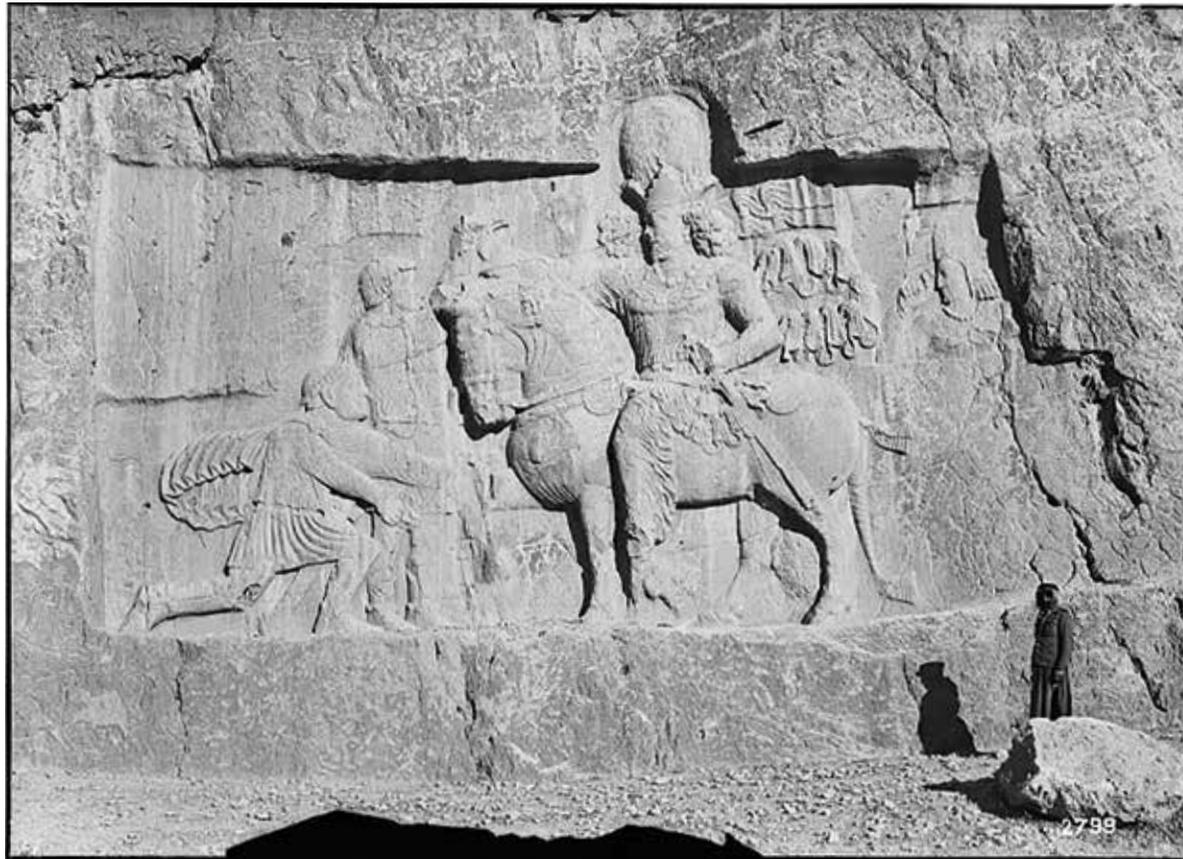
The Chogan gorge is one of the access points to the city of Bishapur, especially for travelers coming from the east from Istakhr. This gorge is thus a road to a city founded by King Shapur I, who had three reliefs carved there: one representing his investiture, and two others, including the one studied in this article, depicting his victories over the Romans. As we have seen, Sevruguin's photograph shows us little of Shapur's victory over the Romans. Rather, it shows us the particular positioning of the relief, very low on the cliff and right on the roadside. This photograph finally reminds us that the relief must have been unmistakable for anyone passing on this road to get to Bishapur. It is difficult to say who these anyone was. With the Chogan gorge leading to a royal city, the access may not have been completely free. But for those who went there, Shapur's relief could not have been invisible.²⁴ What Sevruguin's photograph shows is that Shapur I left his mark on the region: he had a city built that bears his name; he had a canal built that bears his name (today the river Shapur, which flows at the bottom of the Chogan gorge) on one of the access roads; and he placed his image on this access road. Antoin Sevruguin's photograph, which takes into account the location of the relief, right on the side of the road, and its sinking into the cliff, makes it possible to apprehend it as a seal. That is to say, as one of the tools enabling the king to put his mark on the environment he governs.

The "Caprice" of a King in Taq-e Bostan

Taq-e Bostan is a royal paradise, an enclosed hunting and garden area, built by Khosrow II (AD 591–628) in the present province of Kermanshah, in the west of Iran. Little is known about the functioning of the paradises, but they were probably of rather limited access, permitted only to the king himself, his court, and the people responsible for the proper functioning of the hunting. As we have seen, Antoin Sevruguin's photograph does not show us the surrounding landscape, the mountain at the foot of which is carved Khosrow II's ayvan, and the spring at the edge of which is the mountain. What Sevruguin's photograph shows us, on the contrary, is the strictly man-made architectural character of the ayvan. It is a reminder that there is a form of grandiloquence in the gesture of Khosrow II. This grandiloquence was a little more than a "caprice." By transforming the mountain in this way, the idea was to show the king's power to those who frequented the paradise, mainly the noblemen. Throughout the Sasanian era, the noblemen were at times a real counter-power to the king's authority. It could therefore be useful to symbolically remind them of the extent of his power, capable of digging the mountain.²⁵ Finally, these two photographs by Antoin Sevruguin remind us that, beyond the story told by the Sasanian reliefs (the victory over the age-old enemy, the victorious hunt), there is a gesture which is that of stamping the landscape.

In conclusion, I would like to compare Sevruguin's work seen through the two photographs of the Oriental Institute with three other photographs. These are three photographs of the rock relief representing the triumph of Shapur I over the Roman emperor Valerian, at Naqsh-e Rostam, a site situated a few kilometers from Persepolis. One is a photograph taken as part of Ernst Herzfeld's excavations in Persepolis between 1923 and 1934;²⁶ the second is taken as part of Eric Schmidt's excavations in Persepolis between 1934 and 1939 (fig. 5.6a–c), and the last is a contemporary photograph by Marco Prins for the livius.org website.

Figure 5.6a-c. Rock relief of Shapur I at Naqsh-e Rostam photograph by Ernst Herzfeld (Ernst Herzfeld Papers, FSA A.6 Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives. Gift of Ernst Herzfeld, 1946, FSA A.6 04.GN.2799), photograph by Erich Schmidt (P. 58796), modern photograph by Marco Prins, livius.org website.



The rock relief of these three photographs is not the same as the relief visible on the two Sevruguin photographs kept at the Oriental Institute. However, the rock relief of Sapur I at Naqsh-e Rostam has a situation and iconography very close to the rock relief of the same king at the Chogan gorge (fig. 5.1), and the photographic treatment of these reliefs can therefore be compared. The photographs of Herzfeld and Schmidt are almost similar, the framing of Herzfeld's photograph being simply wider. In these two photographs, the framing is quite close to what Sevruguin did at the Chogan gorge. The focus is on the relief, but with sufficient distance to include in the foreground a strip of land and the cliff that frames the relief. A person is in the foreground, probably to give a sense of scale. Very few shadows are visible; the relief is low in contrast, giving a fairly flat rendering. In Marco Prins's contemporary photograph, the framing is even tighter; there is no visible land band, and the cliff is



reduced to a rather thin strip.²⁷ Again, there are very few shadows, and therefore very little contrast, reducing the relief of the sculpture. In these three photographs, both the relief and the rock character are reduced. The modeling of the sculpture fades in the service of a flatter reading of the image.²⁸ These three photographs document the image by giving priority to the content: the aim is to inform who is represented but not necessarily how. These three photographs are necessary for the documentation and the study of this relief by Shapur. They give access to details of the content necessary for its correct understanding (for example, the character's dress, which allows their identification). The two photographs of Sevruguin studied, by shifting the attention away from the characters, document, in their own way the context in which the images appear. They remind us that the rock reliefs are neither murals nor paintings, but precisely images sculpted in the mountains.

Endnotes

- ¹ Ahura Mazda is the main god of Zoroastrianism, the official religion of the Sasanian authority.
- ² Mostly victories over the age-old enemy, the Roman Empire.
- ³ Ouseley 1819, 284–85.
- ⁴ Hermann and Curtis 2002.
- ⁵ Overlaet 2009 and 2017.
- ⁶ This multiple representation often appears in Sasanian art, especially in hunting scenes where the same animal may be depicted twice: one depiction of the animal alive and being hunted by the king, and one depiction of the animal dead and lying under the horse's hooves. However, this would be the first and only attestation in rock relief.
- ⁷ Canepa 2018, 345.
- ⁸ The emperor is represented dead under the feet of Shapur II.
- ⁹ Grabar 1987.
- ¹⁰ On Sevruguin's role in rediscovering the Iranian past during Naser al-Din's reign, see Lerner 2015.
- ¹¹ Vorderstrasse 2018, 6.
- ¹² See Vorderstrasse, this volume.
- ¹³ The photographs in the possession of the Oriental Institute were given by Mary A. Clarke, principal of the American Presbyterian Church School in Tabriz and then assistant superintendent of the Boy's High School in Tehran. She probably bought them from Sevruguin himself (Vorderstrasse 2018, 4).
- ¹⁴ For the Qajar period, we have examples of photographic enlargements made by court photographers, notably to create monumental photographs of Naser al-Din Shah (see Vorderstrasse, this volume, chapter four).
- ¹⁵ See Vorderstrasse 2018, 6.
- ¹⁶ Kröger 1993.
- ¹⁷ A major flood in 1888 destroyed one third of the remains, according to the valuable photographs published by Dieulafoy (Dieulafoy 1884).
- ¹⁸ Canepa 2018, 327–28.
- ¹⁹ Keall 1987.
- ²⁰ Sevruguin could have known the Sasanian palace of Ardashir-Khwarrah, near the present-day city of Firuzabad (Iran), of which one can still see an ayvan (Canepa 2018, 327 fig. 16.2).
- ²¹ Vorderstrasse 2018, 7.
- ²² The author would like to thank Olivia Ramble (PhD candidate, École Pratique des Hautes Études), whose ongoing work on Sasanian reliefs has been a source of inspiration.
- ²³ In his cataloging of the Sasanian reliefs, Herrmann included a fairly complete description of the surrounding landscape. See Herrmann and Howell 1977, 1980, 1981, and 1983, and Herrmann, MacKenzie, and Howell 1989. On the inscription of the reliefs within the natural environment, see Callieri 2006 and Canepa 2018.
- ²⁴ It should be added that the reliefs were painted, and therefore had to stand out sharply from the cliff.
- ²⁵ The recent study by M. Canepa (Canepa 2018) shows very clearly how Sasanian kings were using built and natural environment as mediator in their kingship's conception.
- ²⁶ Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, FSA A.6 04.GN.2799.
- ²⁷ Characteristics shared by contemporary photographs visible on the internet.
- ²⁸ Nevertheless, both Herzfeld and Schmidt, as part of their archaeological documentation, took photographs with wide framing, making it possible to see where the rock reliefs were located on the cliffs of Naqsh-e Rostam or Persepolis.

CHAPTER SIX

TO BE OR NOT TO BE AN ARMENIAN: (RE-) IDENTIFICATION AND ASSIMILATION OF ARMENIAN PHOTOGRAPHERS IN THE QAJAR, RUSSIAN, AND OTTOMAN EMPIRES¹

Tasha Vorderstrasse

This catalog and the exhibition built around it takes the view that Sevruguin should be described as an “Armenian-Iranian” photographer. This is a description that acknowledges Sevruguin’s ethnic background as well as the fact that he was born and spent most of his life (although not his childhood and young adulthood) in Iran. It obscures the fact that Sevruguin’s family is from the Russian Empire and that he spent his formative years there (see below), or the fact that he uses Cyrillic throughout his life, was a member of the Russian Orthodox church, and in some instances describes himself as a “Russian photographer.” This is now generally the most commonly used description for Sevruguin, but others have also appeared including, “European,” “Western,” “French,” “Russian,” “Georgian,”² or even “foreign,” that is “not-Iranian.”³ He would not have been seen as a westerner, however, by the Europeans, even if the Iranians might have thought of him in this light.⁴ His Western contemporaries referred to him as “[unnamed] an Armenian in Teheran,”⁵ or a “Teheraner,” with no ethnic affiliation,⁶ and “Antoin Sevruguin of Tehran.”⁷ All of these different descriptions of Sevruguin, whether knowingly or not, emphasize different aspects of his biography and his

identity. While Armenians had played an important role in Iranian society, particularly after the forced migrations of Shah Abbas, in the nineteenth century it is not only Armenians who had been in Iran for several generations who begin to play an important role in society and politics, but also those like Sevruguin, who had come from the Caucasus. This chapter argues that Sevruguin's Armenian background as a photographer was an important part of his biography and that he should be seen within the context of the wider community of Armenian photographers in the Middle East, as well as within the Armenian community of Iran.

ANTOIN SEVRUGUIN (ca. 1851–1933)

Sevruguin's biography informs us about the interesting role that he played in Qajar society, as he was both part of and yet outside of Qajar Iran. Equally, the facts about his life are problematic, with there even being a lack of agreement about his date of birth or his ethnicity. Traditionally, it has been claimed that Sevruguin was born to Russian Armenian diplomat Vasili Sevruguin and his wife Achin Khanoum. Vasili was one of the Armenians who served the Russians in the diplomatic service, helping them to rule their empire. After Vasili died, Achin Khanoum moved her young family back to her hometown of Tiflis (now known as Tbilisi).⁸ While traditionally Sevruguin was said to be born in the 1830s, recent work suggests that his date of birth may actually be later in ca. 1851.⁹ The move to Georgia has led to suggestions that Achin was Georgian,¹⁰ but both Vorderstrasse¹¹ and Scheiwiler¹² suggest that this is not the case, arguing that Achin was part of the Armenian diaspora living in Georgia. Possible evidence for this may come from the fact that when Tbilisi was too expensive for the widow and her children, they moved to Agulis, which is now located in the Nakhchivan region of Azerbaijan, which had a large Armenian community, and Armenians moved between this area and Tiflis. Further, the Russian Empire had resettled Armenians who had left Persia in the region.¹³

Tiflis was an important center of photography, and as will be shown, a number of photographers working in the area had complicated biographies that added to the complexity of their photography. Dmitri Ermakov, Sevruguin's mentor, was born in Georgia, but his mother has been described either as a Russian or an Austrian woman who was from Georgia. Alternatively, the Austrian woman was Ermakov's wife, who he later divorced.¹⁴ Initially, photography in the Caucasus had been largely restricted to the military, although it expanded into a competitive market by the end of the nineteenth century. Many of the portrait photographs made in Georgia showed signs of Russian influence, and photographers who documented the region wished to glorify the greatness of the Russian empire by showing the diversity of its peoples, a strategy that was followed by a variety of photographers, including Prokudin-Gorsky at the beginning of the twentieth century (see Vorderstrasse with Tulisiak, this volume, chapter nine). Ermakov traveled to Qajar Iran (where he was appointed court photographer), Ottoman Turkey, and throughout the Russian Empire, including to Central Asia. His backstamp makes his connection to Qajar Iran, declaring himself "court photographer" in Russian, with accompanying Qajar symbols.¹⁵

Therefore, it was critical that Sevruguin studied photography with Dmitri Ermakov (1845–1916), whose techniques and approaches to photography were a major influence on him. Indeed, it can be difficult for modern scholars to always tell the

difference between Ermakov and Sevruguin. Ermakov even seems to have marked Sevruguin's pictures with his own stamps.¹⁶ Sevruguin and his surviving brothers went to Iran in 1870 with a caravan and photographed Iranian Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, and Luristan. He first opened a photography studio in Tabriz in 1883 and subsequently moved to Tehran, where he opened a photographic studio on Ala-al-dawla Street (now Firdaws Avenue). He became embedded in the local Armenian community, marrying a local Armenian woman whose family lived in Tehran. Singularly successful, Nasir al-Din Shah appointed Sevruguin as official court photographer, and in addition to taking photographs that documented the country of Iran that could be sold to tourists, he also made studio portraits. He continued to travel through Iran, documenting the country, its people, and monuments, in addition to this studio work. His success is clear from the fact that the family owned two houses in Tehran, in addition to a house in the country. The family was clearly part of the elite of the time, and Sevruguin was able to travel to Europe, notably to Vienna, and win prizes at the World's Fair in Brussels in 1897 and in Paris in 1901. In total, Sevruguin made about seven thousand carefully numbered glass plate negatives, but most of these were destroyed at the beginning of the twentieth century. Only 696 survived in the American Presbyterian Mission in Tehran and were ultimately given to the Smithsonian by their purchaser, Myron Bement Smith.¹⁷

There was a sizeable Armenian community living in Iran, particularly from the seventeenth century, when Shah Abbas forcibly deported Armenians from the Caucasus to Iran, settling them in cities such as New Julfa (named for their city of Julfa, now located in the Nakhchivan region of Azerbaijan), a suburb of Isfahan where they played an important role as merchants. There was also a small but growing community in Tehran, which was an expanding city in the nineteenth century. At that time there were large Armenian populations throughout the region, including the northwest Azerbaijan province of Iran, and in Tbilisi, where they were the majority of the population for much of the nineteenth century.¹⁸ There were also migrations of Armenians to Iran from the Caucasus. The contacts between Armenians in the Russian, Qajar, and Ottoman empires were assisted by the technological connections between the regions, and the borders were not well defined. There were telegrams, as well as trains that assisted the movement of peoples. Although trains did not exist in Iran except for one exception, it did allow the Armenians and others in the Russian Empire to move widely through the Russian Empire and travel close to Iran.¹⁹ Armenians in Iran had what Berberian called a "double identity," first as members of the Christian Armenian community and then secondly an Iranian identity.²⁰ The Caucasus were seen as a multicultural, hybrid society.²¹ In addition to Armenians from the Russian Empire, there were other Russians active in Iran, including serving military officers, diplomats, and travelers.²²

Sevruguin in Context

The influence that Armenian photographers had on the history of photography of the Middle East in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century is considerable. The local photographers who were active in the Ottoman Middle East were almost invariably Armenian or other minorities. Armenians were found to be the dominant photographers throughout the Ottoman Empire in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in both large cities and smaller provincial centers. They

had the advantage that they were able to interact with both the Europeans and the local population.²³ They frequently had backstamps printed in Armenian, French, and Ottoman Turkish²⁴ reflecting their multilingual clientele. Famous Ottoman Armenian photographers included the Abdullah Frères (former Abudallhian brothers), who opened their photography studio in 1858 in Constantinople.²⁵ Armenian photographers were active in the Russian Empire, not only in places with large Armenian populations, such as Kars and Alexandropol (modern Gyumri), but also in Tbilisi, Baku, and Central Asia (see the backstamps at the website www.lusarvest.org). In Qajar Iran, Armenians also played an important role in the production of photography in cities such as Tehran and Isfahan, the latter of which had a large Armenian minority in the suburb of New Julfa.²⁶ Further, there was the German Ernest Höltzer (1835–1911), who married a member of the Armenian community in Tehran and lived in New Julfa.²⁷ It is evident that photography was not a cheap enterprise; in order to afford the photography equipment, the studio space, and expertise, the Dildilian family had to mortgage their house.²⁸

In addition to being involved in photography, Armenians and other minorities in Iran were involved in early cinema at the beginning of the twentieth century. Sevruguin had several cinemas, including one initially in his own house, and he assisted a fellow Armenian, Ardashes Badmagerian, in opening a cinema in 1909—the first cinema to show Pathé-Frères films in Iran. He also apparently made his own films, but the films were somehow burned, after which he did not make any more.²⁹ Nasir al-Din Shah’s former favorite Malijak records in his filmgoing record that he visited the home cinemas of Sevruguin and Badmagerian. On June 13, 1910, for instance, he records going to see the “nice views” that Antoin Sevruguin showed on his portable projector. Interestingly, by December 9, Malijak states that Sevruguin had gone bankrupt.³⁰

Sevruguin’s pictures are highly innovative, even when we look at them today, due to his skilled use of photographic technology to create the effects that he wanted (see Johnson, this volume, chapter three). The transfer of the knowledge of photography from the West to other lands such as Russia, where Sevruguin learned photography, was not something that should be considered one-sided; it went both ways: Russian photographers were not simply passive actors but rather innovative in new photographic techniques and involved in photography soon after its invention.³¹ Photography technology also reached the Eastern Mediterranean quickly, particularly thanks to the influence of tourism,³² but there is some indication that photographic technology may have reached parts of the Ottoman provinces via the Russian Empire rather than the West. A story by the Armenian author Vahe Haig (1898–1983) told of a Caucasian (presumably Armenian) photographer who came to the town of Kharpert (now located near Elazığ in eastern Turkey) to take photographs of the town’s inhabitants in the 1860s. This did not prove to be popular, but photography later grew to be a popular medium in the Ottoman Empire³³ and may have become more acceptable as the population became more accustomed to new forms of technology.³⁴ Further, Ottoman Armenians such as the Hovaness and Mardiros Soursourian brothers, also from Kharpert, learned photography in Tbilisi before founding a studio in their home city. Their backstamps show the name in Ottoman Turkish, Armenian, and Russian, which shows ties to the Russian Empire.³⁵

One sees in Iran, as in the Ottoman and Russian empires, that the technology of photography (in this case making daguerreotypes) arrived only a few years after it had been invented in Paris, and it was then intensely sponsored by Nasir al-Din Shah.³⁶ This is in contrast to the Ottoman Empire, where the rulers were not as involved in photography as Nasir al-Din

Shah, who took photographs of members of his harem and encouraged the local development of photography after initial European photographers arrived in the 1850s.³⁷ The shah's early enthusiasm for photography may explain why the practice of photography in Iran was not confined almost entirely to minorities as it was in the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, there were a number of members of the Qajar royal family who worked in photography, most notably Abdullah Mirza Qajar, who studied in Paris and Salzburg.³⁸

The Name Antoin(e) Sevruguin(e)

The way that Sevruguin affixed his name to his work obscures, rather than illuminates, his Armenian heritage. It is clear

that this was a deliberate choice made on the part of not only Sevruguin but his family. The use of Persian and French was common in backstamps and photograph mounts, but it was the use of Russian that marks Sevruguin apart from most, but not all, of his contemporaries in Iranian photography. The most obvious marker that hides Sevruguin's Armenian identity is the spelling of his name. It was evidently Sevruguin's grandfather who changed the family name from "Sevrugian" to the more French-sounding "Sevruguin."³⁹ In Imperial Russia, French had begun to be used by the elites in the eighteenth century, and the language played an important role in nineteenth century Russia.⁴⁰ As the language of diplomacy, it was also important, and used in Qajar Iran as it was in the Ottoman Empire.⁴¹ Additionally, speaking French was seen as being



Figure 6.1a-b. Backstamps of Sevruguin's photographs (Nina Avakyan and Joel Montague Collections, Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran website, Record Nos. 1260A51 and 908A7).

“cosmopolitan,”⁴² meaning that the Sevruguin familial linguistic choices fit in well in both Russia and Iran.

Further, Sevruguin also spelled his name in an even more French way as “Antoine Sevruguin” on some of his photographic mounts and at graffiti in Persepolis.⁴³ Sevruguin himself also clearly saw himself as a product of different worlds and clearly wanted to appeal to different audiences. This hybridity is reflected in his name, which was spelled at different points in French, Cyrillic, and Persian, and the imprints he stamped on the back of his photographs that for a time labeled him a Russian (Western) photographer, but only in Persian. In his earlier photographs, Sevruguin signed his name in Cyrillic directly on the photograph itself, sometimes prefaced by an abbreviation for “photographer.” He also signed his photographs with the initials “A. Kh.” His later backstamps drop the Cyrillic and instead are in Persian and French. In a later version, the medals won by Sevruguin in Europe have the Cyrillic names of the cities rather than the French (fig. 6.1a–b). One backstamp is only in French. Meanwhile, his photo mounts are usually in French alone, but on rare occasions some are written solely in Persian (fig. 6.2). He also embossed and stamped his work on the fronts of his photographs in French.⁴⁴ Non-Armenian Persian photographers usually signed their work in either Persian only or in Persian and French, such as Abdullah Mirza Qajar.⁴⁵ The presence of both local and foreign languages could also show that his clients were both foreign and local.⁴⁶

Sevruguin’s rejection of Armenian script and his use of Cyrillic may therefore be more a religious statement and one of expediency than anything else. He may





OPPOSITE: Figure 6.2. Photo with the inscription in Persian: The photo studio of Monsieur Antoin Khan Sevruguin, Tehran, 1324 [1906 or 1907]. (Parvin Gharibshahi (Sadaqat Yazdi) Collection, Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran website, Record No. 14132A37).

ABOVE: Figure 6.3a–b. Photograph of a child, Joseph Papazian (Joel Montague Collection, Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran website, Record No. 908A1).

have felt that it was more prestigious to imply he was a “European” photographer than an “Armenian” one, which is interesting considering how the Armenian photographers in the Ottoman Empire used their Armenian Christian identity to cultivate European and American clients. As Sevruguin’s family was Russian Orthodox, however, he may have felt that it was important to use Cyrillic⁴⁷ to emphasize this connection, and the gravestones of his family in the cemetery in Tehran have been documented as being in Cyrillic,⁴⁸ meaning that this continued to be an important part of the familial identity after his death. Nevertheless, Sevruguin did act as a mentor for the Armenian photographer and early pioneer of cinema Badmagerian,⁴⁹ for example. And according to Malijak, Antoin Sevruguin would on some evenings only have Armenian guests.⁵⁰

Still, Antoin Sevruguin’s deliberate linguistic choices differentiate him from many, although not all, of the Armenian photographers active in the late nineteenth century. Joseph Papazian/Papazintz (fig. 6.3a–b) used French, Persian Armenian, and Russian in some of his backstamps,⁵¹ while another Armenian-Iranian photographer, Aghaiantz Armeni, used French, Armenian, and Persian,⁵² as did H. Hovsepianz of Tabriz.⁵³ Other Armenian photographers had backstamps in Persian and Armenian only, or with Latin script, Armenian, and Persian.⁵⁴ Still others only signed their names in English.⁵⁵ This deliberate obscuring of Sevruguin’s identity fits in with the Armenian photographers Abdullah Frères (1858–1899) working in Istanbul, who, like Sevruguin, were court photographers and the preeminent local photographers of the Ottoman empire. The grandfather of the three Abdullah brothers (Vichen, Hovsep, and Kevork), changed the family name from the clearly Armenian Hurmuzyan to the

Ottoman-sounding Abdullahian.⁵⁶ The family identified and used their Armenian heritage to identify with their European clientele, but at the same time largely only used French and Ottoman Turkish on their photographic mounts and backstamps. Their initial stamp indicated it was only for internal consumption, as it had backstamp in Ottoman Turkish, Armenian, and Greek. This was soon abandoned, and they did not use Armenian again. Interestingly, their ads and bills appeared in Ottoman Turkish, Greek, Armenian, and French.⁵⁷ Like Sevruguin, it is clear that the Abdullahian brothers were still actively involved in the Armenian community and had connections with other Armenians.

Kevork wrote in the Armenian press, and his work included discussions of various issues that concerned the Armenian people.⁵⁸ Other Armenian photographers working in the Ottoman Empire took a variety of approaches, including those who just had their mounting frames in French,⁵⁹ those who had inscriptions in French and Ottoman Turkish,⁶⁰ and others that were written in Ottoman Turkish, Armenian, and French.⁶¹ In other cases, even identifying who the individuals are is problematic. A photographer known as Ordén or Hordet, who took pictures in Central Asia, Caucasus, and Iran, signed his captions in French and Russian while signing his name in Cyrillic, leading to suggestions he was a French photographer, while others have argued that he was Russian.⁶² It may be that Hordet was from France and happened to have a studio in Russia like Wilhelm Schönfeld, who was from France but had a studio in St. Petersburg, and his backstamps are in French and Russian.⁶³

Sevruguin's response to Qajar society is not unique, however, and we see other photographers who also had complicated identities. Mehdi Russi Khan Ivanov (1875–1968), whose true name remains unclear, and who claimed that his father was British and his mother was a Russian Tatar, is described “an ethnic hybrid and social chameleon.”⁶⁴ His backstamp reflected this complicated heritage, once again using Cyrillic, as well as French and Persian (fig. 6.4). He opened a photography studio



Figure 6.4. Backstamp of photograph of Russi Khan, 1900 (Armine Ghazariyan Collection, Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran website, Record No. 1264A3).

as well as a cinema in a courtyard next to the studio in 1907.⁶⁵ Ivanov was a royalist and closely associated with the royal family, meaning that when Mohammad Ali Shah was deposed, the public sacked his shop and destroyed his films and equipment, much like the fate of Sevruguin's negatives. Ivanov joined Mohammad Ali Shah in exile in France and died there in 1968.⁶⁶

CONCLUSION

While Antoin Sevruguin's story is unique to him, his position within Middle Eastern photography is not surprising. As noted in this article, prominent Armenian photographers could be found throughout the Middle East, and many photographers and early cinema owners had minority backgrounds. The main difference between the Ottoman, Qajar, and Russian empires seem to have been that under the Qajars, photography was the subject of considerable patronage. That is not to say that the Ottoman rulers were not interested in photography; they were, but not to the extent that the Qajar rulers were. Sevruguin himself never presented himself linguistically as an Armenian. He identified far more with his Russian roots and the fact that his family was Russian Orthodox, as reflected in his use of Cyrillic in different contexts throughout his life. Nevertheless, his position as an Armenian in Qajar Iran meant that he held a unique position between different worlds, much as the Armenian photographers did throughout the Middle East.

Endnotes

- ¹ The title of this article is inspired by Navab 2002 and examines some of the issues brought up there.
- ² Tatjarian and Sevruguin 2008, 55.
- ³ Vuurman 2015, 116.
- ⁴ Bohrer 1999a, 36, 39.
- ⁵ Hedin 1910, figs. 43–44; Pérez González 2012, 34.
- ⁶ Weissbach 1911a.
- ⁷ Jackson 1906.
- ⁸ Vuurman and Martens 1999, 23; Navab 2002, 117–21; Navab 2003; Krasberg 2008a, 29; Navab 2011, 74; Pérez González 2012, 31; Riegg 2020, 5.
- ⁹ Scheiwiller 2017a, no. 25, citing her forthcoming work that gives his year of birth as circa 1851, see now Scheiwiller 2018c.
- ¹⁰ Navab 2002, 117–21; Navab 2003; Behdad 2008, 167; Navab 2011, 74; Schwerda 2015, 173.
- ¹¹ Vorderstrasse 2018.
- ¹² Scheiwiller 2018c.
- ¹³ Navab 2002, 117–21; Navab 2003; Krasberg 2008a, 29; Aslanian 2011, 73, 191; Navab 2011, 75; Vuurman 2015, 119; Scheiwiller 2018c; Vorderstrasse 2018; Berberian 2019, 77; Riegg 2020, 70, 72–74, who notes that the Russian Empire resettled both Persian and Ottoman Armenians throughout the South Caucasus.

- ¹⁴ Mamatsashvili 2014, 30.
- ¹⁵ Vuurmen and Martens 1999, 24; Vuurman 2007, 93, 97, 99; Mamatsashvili 2014, 32, 34; Solovyova and Kouteinikova 2016, 135–38, 141; Gutmeyr 2018, 164, 167–69, 172; Scheiwiller 2018c, 151.
- ¹⁶ Vuurman 2007, 99, 100 no. 12, 103; Schwerda 2017, 85, 103–4 nos. 44, 50; Scheiwiller 2018c, 150–51.
- ¹⁷ Ballerini 1999; Vuurman 1999, 171–70; Vuurman and Martens 1999, 23–24; Navab 2002, 117–21; Navab 2003; Krasberg 2008a, 27, 31, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41; Navab 2011, 75–76; Vuurman 2015, 119–20; Schwerda 2017, 85; Scheiwiller 2018c.
- ¹⁸ Bournoutian 1998, 58, 64; Chaquèri 1998, 3–5, 12–13; Berberian 2000, 71–72; Berberian 2001, 5–6, 16–17, 21–22, 34–39, 48–50; Krasberg 2008b, 13; Nercissians 2008, 191; Navab 2011, 90; Papazian 2011; Kondo 2015, 5, 17–20, map 2; Berberian 2019, 85, 102, 152; Maeda 2019, 169; Riegg 2020, 17.
- ¹⁹ Berberian 2019, 49–50, 64–65, 74–75.
- ²⁰ Berberian 2001, 8–9.
- ²¹ Berberian 2019, 84.
- ²² Andreeva 2007, 3; Cronin 2012, 147–48, 170–71.
- ²³ Navab 2002, 133–34; Nassar 2003, 322–23, 325–26; Nassar 2006, 143, 145–46; el-Hage 2007a, 11, 15; el-Hage 2007b, 22, 25–26; Low 2015, 33, 36; Hanoosh 2016, 5; Sheehi 2016, xxxiv–xxxv; Marsoobian 2015, 44; Marsoobian 2017.
- ²⁴ Marsoobian 2017, 14, 68.
- ²⁵ Özendes 1998; Khazindar and Chakour 2007; Ertem 2011; Navab 2011.
- ²⁶ Damandan 1999, 110–15; Bournoutian 1998, 57; Damandan 2004; el-Hage 2007, 11; Damandan 2012; Behdad 2008, 411.
- ²⁷ Pérez González 2012, 31; Schaal 2015, 46.
- ²⁸ Marsoobian 2015, 44, 48; Marsoobian 2017, 15.
- ²⁹ Naficy 2011, 105; Rekabtelaei 2015, 26; Rekabtelaei 2019, 35, 37.
- ³⁰ Naficy 2011, 105, 107.
- ³¹ Gutmeyr 2018, 157–58, 160, 163.
- ³² Micklewright 2003, 67; Hanoosh 2016, 4.
- ³³ Lowe 2015, 41. For more on Haig see Hovannisian 2002, 6.
- ³⁴ Marsoobian 2015, 47; Marsoobian 2017, 13, 17.
- ³⁵ Low 2015, 42–43.
- ³⁶ Pérez González 2012, 27–28.
- ³⁷ Stein 1983, 259, 263–64; Raby 1998, 79; Vuurmen and Martens 1999; Behdad 2001, 145; Diba 2013, 85–86; Stein 2013, 24; Brusius 2015, 59–60; Behdad 2016, 106–7; Schwerda 2017, 82–85.
- ³⁸ Pérez González 2012, 36.
- ³⁹ Scheiwiller 2018c.
- ⁴⁰ Dmitrieva and Argent 2015; Offord et al. 2015.
- ⁴¹ Nolan 2019.
- ⁴² Hanoosh 2016, 8.
- ⁴³ Simpson 2005, 56; Simpson 2015.

- ⁴⁴ See discussion in Bohrer 1999a, 35–36 fig. 2; Krasberg 2008a, 51 no. 39; Navab 2011, 72; Vuurman 2013, 41; İhtishāmī 2017, 220 fig. 433; Scheiwiller 2018c, 146–47, 152–53, 156, 161 figs. 1, 4, 6; Vorderstrasse, this volume, introduction and chapter six. Although it is difficult to see the embossed signature published in Scheiwiller 2018c, figure 6 appears to be the same as the one published in this volume.
- ⁴⁵ Pérez González 2012, 90.
- ⁴⁶ Hanoush 2016, 9.
- ⁴⁷ Bohrer 1999a, 36; Scheiwiller 2018c, 161.
- ⁴⁸ Scheiwiller 2018c, Fig. 3.
- ⁴⁹ Naficy 2011, 105; Rekabtelaei 2015, 26.
- ⁵⁰ Rekabtelaei 2019, 37.
- ⁵¹ İhtishāmī 2017, 204 fig. 360; Pérez González 2012, 36; For the backstamp see, Zoka 1997, 63. He also used an English backstamp. See İhtishāmī 2017, 215 fig. 399. For more on his work see Emani 2019a; Emami 2019b.
- ⁵² Pérez González 2012, 36; For the backstamp see, Zoka 1997, 105.
- ⁵³ İhtishāmī 2017, 208 fig. 373.
- ⁵⁴ İhtishāmī 2017, 216 figs. 404, 406, and 411 (Latin script only), 219 figs. 424, 426 (Armenian, Latin script, Persian), and 431 (Armenian, Latin script, and Persian).
- ⁵⁵ İhtishāmī 2017, 202 fig. 354 (Thooni Johannes), 208 fig. 372 (Matosaghakhan). Matosaghakhan Karakhanian also signed his name in French, Persian, and Armenian. See Damandan 1999, 108–11.
- ⁵⁶ Özendes 1998, 20–21, 27; Sheehi 2016, 8–9.
- ⁵⁷ Özendes 1998, 203–24; Hanoush 2016, 8.
- ⁵⁸ Özendes 1998, 65, 69, 75, 94; Sheehi 2016, 10.
- ⁵⁹ el-Hage 2007, 12–13.
- ⁶⁰ el-Hage 2007, 13.
- ⁶¹ Hanoush 2016, 8; <http://www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/harentz-s-g/>, accessed March 17, 2020.
- ⁶² el-Hage 2007, 11; Pérez González 2012, 31–33.
- ⁶³ Schwerda 2017, 83, 101 no. 9.
- ⁶⁴ Naficy 2011, 63.
- ⁶⁵ Naficy 2011, 63; Rekabtelaei 2015, 26; Rekabtelaei 2019, 35, 38.
- ⁶⁶ Naficy 2011, 66.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ANTOIN SEVRUGUIN IN THE CONTEXT OF RUSSIAN CULTURE IN THE CAUCASUS

Polina Kasian

Antoin Sevruguin was in the development of the photographic scene in Persia at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. He was an owner of a successful photo studio in Tehran, the winner of numerous medals at international expositions in Europe, and his photographs were published in travel guidebooks and scientific publications.¹ His photographic archive reveals a unique image of Persia during the time of the Qajar dynasty.

Despite a very productive career, successful business, and frequent collaborations with renowned scientists of his time, Antoin Sevruguin and his archive were mostly forgotten until the 1980s, when the Smithsonian Institute organized the first exhibition of the largest collection of his photographs.² Since then, there have been a number of publications about Sevruguin's heritage and his legacy in documenting the Middle East of the early twentieth century. Though most of those publications concentrate on his life in Persia and how his multiethnicity helped form the artistic style of his photographs, we would like to look at his life in the Russian Empire. The early life of Sevruguin remains mostly undocumented, but even the few known details help us to understand the context of the development of his artistic career. We will try to reconstruct the framework in which his unique point of view as a photographer was formed. We will discuss art education of the time, the development of photography, and the cultural scene in Georgia and the Russian Empire in the second half of the nineteenth century.

THE SEVRUGUIN FAMILY

Antoin Sevruguin was born in the Russian Embassy in Tehran in 1851 (fig. 7.1).³ Before moving to Persia, his father, Vasily Sevruguin, studied at the Lazarev Institute of Oriental Languages.⁴ The institute was established in 1815 as a cultural center of the Armenian diaspora in Moscow and later became a school of the Oriental languages: Armenian, Persian, Arabic, and Turkish. As the Russian Empire began to expand its territories to the Caucasus and later to Central Asia, the graduates of the Lazarev institute, Vasily Sevruguin among them, became valuable translators, diplomats, and embassy clerks. Like many Russian Armenians who took state jobs,⁵ he changed the typical Armenian ending of his last name, -ian, from Sevruguian to Sevruguin.

Antoin Sevruguin's mother, Achin Khanoum, was originally from Tbilisi,⁶ where the family moved following the tragic death of his father Vasily. In the nineteenth century the city of Tbilisi was the capital of the Georgian Governorate of the Russian Empire. This governorate was established in 1801 after the annexation of the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti by the Russian army. During the next thirty



Figure 7.1. Sevruguin with the family (The Myron Bement Smith Collection, FSA A.4 Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives. Gift of Myron Bement Smith, Antoin Sevruguin, FSA A.4 2.12.GN.27.09).

years, Russia strengthened its presence in the region, winning several Russo-Persian wars in 1804–13 and 1826–28.⁷ By the end of the second war, Persia ceded the large territory of the Caucasus—including eastern Georgia, modern-day Azerbaijan, Dagestan, Armenia, and other khanates—located between the Black and Caspian Seas. Thus, the Russian Empire gained a politically unstable, but strategically important, area with access to two seas and control over several important trading routes.

In 1844, Tbilisi became the capital of the Caucasus Viceroyalty controlled by the governor general, appointed by the tsar himself. The important role of Tbilisi in the region and its strong connection with Saint Petersburg provided for rapid industrial and commercial development in the city, and steady population growth. In addition to the local Georgians and a large Armenian community, the presence of Russian state officials, officers, troops, clerks, and their families meant the city had a sizeable Russian population as well.

Unable to afford life in the capital of the Georgian Governate, Sevruguin's family decided to move to the town of Agulis.⁸ In the second half of the nineteenth century, Agulis was a town on the southern edge of the Russian Empire along its border with Persia. Located at the crossroads of several trading routes, the town was a commercial center in the region, and as a result, had a large merchant population. Like other trading towns, Agulis had a diverse population of Armenians, Russians, Persians, Georgians, and Tatars.⁹ These different ethnic groups lived in both homogenous and mixed neighborhoods and were highly multilingual. In addition, there was a developed network of Russian schools with French and Russian languages as mandatory subjects.

Ulrich Krasberg, the author of the article “Artists of the Sevruguin Family,”¹⁰ mentions that Antoin and two of his brothers, Nikolai and Emmanuel, went to the Perch-Proschian school. However, Staci Scheiwiller, in the article “Relocating Sevruguin: Contextualizing the Political Climate of the Iranian Photographer Antoin Sevruguin (ca. 1851–1933),” points out a discrepancy in the dates of Sevruguin's biography and the location of the school. Scheiwiller suggests that the three brothers likely studied under Perch Proschian¹¹ at the Nersisyan School in Tbilisi. Despite the lack of concrete information about where the Sevruguin children received their primary education,¹² we can still recreate what they studied in school and what constituted a typical school education at the time.

In 1843, Tsar Nicolas I signed a decree allowing students from the Caucasus to enroll at the universities and colleges of Saint Petersburg and Moscow for free.¹³ Only a small number of students were able to take advantage of the program in its infancy due to inadequate local schooling, which did not meet acceptance requirements at Russian universities. However, that deficiency was soon corrected via the development of a Russian school system in the region. Primary education during that time included studies of arithmetic, history, geography, chemistry, French language, etc. Thereby, we can suggest that in graduating from school, Antoin Sevruguin likely already spoke a few languages: Armenian, the language of his parents; Georgian, the language of the country in which he grew up; and Russian and French, the languages used in his schooling.

After finishing their primary education, Antoin Sevruguin and two of his brothers, Nikolai and Emmanuel, received a recommendation to work for a merchant in Baku, but Antoin decided to pursue a career in art and moved back to Tbilisi.



Figure 7.2. Close-up of map *Asie Occidentale*, by Colonel Niox, 1890-1892 (Paris: Ch. Delagrave. Courtesy of the University of Chicago Library's Map Collection, www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/collections/maps/middleeast19/G7420-1892-N6.html).

RUSSIFICATION AND THE EXPLORATION OF THE CAUCASUS

As previously mentioned, in 1844 Tbilisi became the capital of the Caucasus Viceroyalty and the home of the governor general's residency. By that time, the Russian Empire controlled much of the region and, despite a number of continuous military conflicts, began to change its strategy from military conquest to the establishment of cultural policies (fig. 7.2).¹⁴

The Russification of the area included the development of an extensive network of Russian schools, the incorporation of Russian language in state institutions, the spread of orthodoxy as the main religion, and the foundation of various cultural institutions. Those institutions shaped Tbilisi's cultural life in the second half of the nineteenth century and, as we posit, strongly affected the development of Antoin Sevruguin's career in art and photography.

In accordance with European colonization practices, the Russian Empire began scientific exploration of the Caucasus shortly after the establishment of the Caucasus Viceroyalty. The study of the region was supposed to introduce the Caucasus and its resources to the government and its subjects, and to strengthen its status as part of the Russian Empire.

The first geographical and ethnographical expeditions to the Caucasus began in the 1850s, and the leading role in their organization was played by the Imperial Geographic Society. This society was established in 1845 in Saint Petersburg and was initially financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹⁵ Later, with the increased interest in geographic exploration among the public, the majority of expenses were covered by private donations. The mission of the society was to collect and study the geography, history, and ethnology of the different regions of the vast territory of the Russian Empire. Among its first members were geographers, linguists, historians, botanists, ethnographers, artists, and military topographers. Military topographers may sound like a surprising addition to the scientific expeditions, but it was one of the first professions of the time to use photographic cameras to create accurate records of the terrain for the creation of maps.

With the growing number of expeditions organized by the Imperial Geographic Society and the importance of its mission in the Russian Empire's broader colonization policy, it was decided to open a few remote chapters in those regions with the most potential. Therefore, the Caucasus Department of the Russian Imperial Geographic Society was opened in Tbilisi in 1850.¹⁶ The results of active exploratory work in the region were reported in the periodic publication *Notes of the Caucasus Department of the Russian Imperial Geographic Society*.¹⁷ The publication featured a variety of topics with articles on the various climates, iron trading, idiomatic language, and of course ethnographic descriptions and images of the local populations (fig. 7.3a–b).

By 1864, the Imperial Geographic Society in Tbilisi established the Caucasus Archaeological Commission under the administration of the Imperial Archaeological Society in Saint Petersburg. The main work of the commission was supposed to study the extensive state archive of historical documents about the development of states on the territory of the Caucasus.¹⁸ Later its mission was extended to study the history of the material culture of the region and to collect and publish the results of its research. The chairman of the commission was Adolph Berge, a Russian Orientalist who lived in Tbilisi from the early 1850s and studied the history of the Caucasus and the Middle East. It is interesting to note that before taking the position of chairman, Berge traveled to Persia a few times as part of diplomatic missions.¹⁹

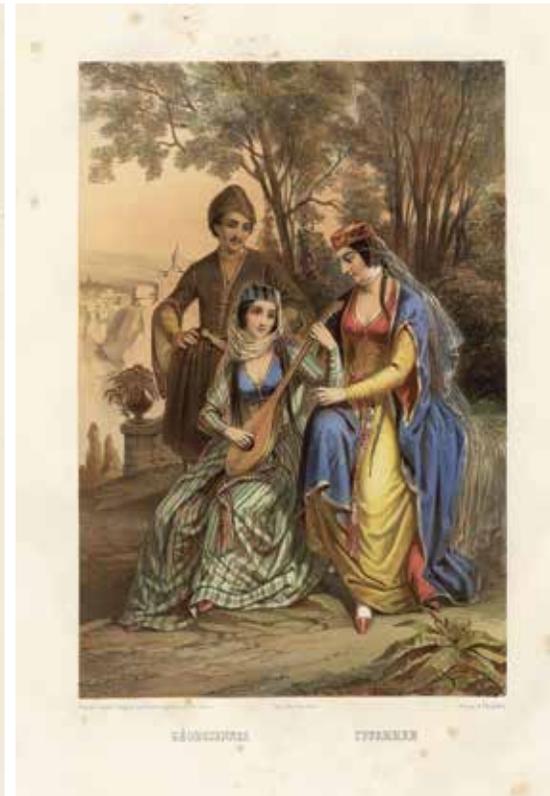


Figure 7.3a-b.
*Deputies of
 Caucasian tribes
 who attended
 the coronation of
 Emperor Alexander
 II in 1856 and
 Georgian Women
 from Pauly, Gustav
 Fedor. Description
 ethnographique
 des peuples de
 la Russie. Saint
 Petersburg,
 Russia: Imprimerie
 de F. Bellizard,
 1862 (Retrieved
 from the Library
 of Congress,
[www.loc.gov/
 item/2018688983/](http://www.loc.gov/item/2018688983/)).*

Persia controlled much of what is now eastern Georgia from the sixteenth century until the early nineteenth century when the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti became a part of the Russian Empire. Despite Russian control in the first half of the nineteenth century, the locals retained a strong connection to Persian culture. For Berge and other Russian and European scientists of the region, Persia was a logical destination for their research of the history and ethnography of the Caucasus. The Russian diplomatic missions to Persia throughout the nineteenth century consisted not only of diplomats and translators, but also included artists, and later photographers, who would document and collect objects or places of interest. For example, Berge, who participated in a few diplomatic missions, was able to assemble an impressive collection of rare Persian manuscripts, books, and firmans—Islamic state law documents.

As the collections of the Imperial Geographic Society and the Archaeological Commission in Tbilisi grew due to the active research in the region, the chairman of the local chapter, Prince Alexander Baryatinsky, who was also the governor general of

Tbilisi, signed a decree to establish the Museum of the Caucasus. Originally, the museum collection was located in the Tbilisi Library, but by 1870 it was relocated to a separate building. In 1871 the Museum of the Caucasus was opened to the public to generate interest and to promote the region among Russian and European travelers. The collection was divided into several departments such as zoology, botany, geology, archaeology, ethnography, and a research library. Since the museum was established as a research institution, the exploration and study of the region was its top priority. In addition to the organization of exhibitions and its permanent collection, the museum published catalogs, and research was conducted by its staff (fig. 7.4).²⁰

Figure 7.4. Tbilisi Youth Palace, formerly the Palace of Viceroy of Caucasia. 6 Rustaveli Ave., Tbilisi, Georgia. Built in 1845–47, renovated in 1858–59, and completely rebuilt in 1865–69. The original Viceroy Palace was built in the Russian classical style, especially popular in nineteenth-century government building construction. Although the Museum of the Caucasus did not survive in its original form to present day, its architecture was similar to this residency of the governor (photo by Alsandro, public domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tbsyouthpalace.jpg>).



EARLY PHOTOGRAPHY IN GEORGIA

The ambitious goals of the three mentioned institutions—the Imperial Geographic Society, the Archaeological Commission, and the Museum of the Caucasus—required large staffs who could assist in the exploration of the region. In addition to professional archaeologists, linguists, and geologists from Saint Petersburg and Moscow, the expeditions also hired artists and photographers to document the material culture. Heretofore unmentioned, the Military Topographic Department of the Caucasus played a significant role in the exploration of the region via its preparation of military photographers and topographers.



Together with the Russian Imperial Geographic Society in Saint Petersburg, the Military Topographic Department of the Caucasus worked to create accurate maps of different territories in the Russian Empire (figs. 7.5–6).²¹

LEFT: Figure 7.5. Military road. Fortress in the Dariel Ravine, Caucasus, Russia (Photochrom, color. LOT 13419, no. 002; Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC).

OPPOSITE: Figure 7.6. Rudnev Brothers album, Aul (village) in Ossetia, early 1860s (Russian Museum of Ethnography, coll. 5339-8).



By the time the Military Topographic Department opened its Caucasus chapter in Tbilisi, photography and the study of daguerreotypes were a part of standard topographical training in almost every military school and academy in Europe. From its inception in 1839, photography was quickly recognized as an important tool in the documentation of landscapes and the production of cartography. A few years later, the Russian Imperial Technical Society and the Military Topographic Department in Saint Petersburg began training their staff in the use of the first photo cameras and in the production of daguerreotypes. In Russian, language daguerreotypes were termed *svetopis*, meaning the ability to depict something with light. A special section of *svetopis*—pictorial photography—was founded as a part of the Military Topographic Department of the Caucasus in 1855.²²

Among the topographers working for ethnographic expeditions were many artists and photographers who had successful careers apart from their state jobs. Notable among them was Dmitri Ermakov—Antoin Sevruguin’s mentor, according to his biographers (fig. 7.7a–c).²³

Dmitri Ermakov was born in Tbilisi in 1846 or 1848²⁴ to an Italian architect father, Ludwig Cambaggio, and a Georgian mother of Austrian descent, who later remarried a Russian man and took his surname, Ermakov. According to Lika Mamatsashvili, Ermakov was the illegitimate son of Cambaggio and a woman from the Molokan religious group. Thus, Dmitri was given the last name of his mother’s family, Ermakov. In 1860, he graduated from classes organized by the Military Topographic Department in Tbilisi, where he studied topography and the photographic process. By the end of the 1860s he was actively involved in a number of archaeological, ethnological, and geographical expeditions, and he created a catalog of the archaeological collection in the Museum of the Caucasus. Following his studies, Ermakov opened his first photography studio, specializing in portraits in the center of Tbilisi, together with Russian artist Piotr Kolchin.²⁵ This collaboration between a military topographer and a portraitist played an important role in the development of the photographic style of Ermakov and likely later influenced Sevruguin as well.

Unfortunately, the details of Piotr Kolchin’s life are largely unknown. He was born around 1838 and in 1855 enrolled in the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture. In 1864 he submitted one of his paintings, *A Man in a Fur Coat*,²⁶ to the Imperial Academy of Art and was awarded with a small silver medal recognizing him as a specialist in portrait paintings.²⁷ The award provided Kolchin with the status of a free artist, and sometime in the middle of the 1860s he moved to Tbilisi. Over the next few years, he met Dmitri Ermakov, and together they opened the photographic studio, Photography by Artist Kolchin and Ermakov, on Dvortsovaya Street. The studio specialized in a particular type of portraiture, the so-called *Cartes de visite*,²⁸ or small portraits printed on a piece of card, which were extremely popular among the city inhabitants due to their cheap production cost. In addition to portraits, Ermakov sold cards with views of various cities and images of locals from different parts of the Caucasus. The cards were easy to produce in large quantities, and they were popular souvenirs for travelers from Russia and Europe.

The photographic studio of Kolchin and Ermakov was not the only documented collaboration between them: in 1884 Kolchin painted a portrait of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar from a photograph made by Ermakov after his visit to Tehran.²⁹ The portrait was sent to the shah as a gift for his art collection in his Tehran palace. Later in the 1870s and ’80s, Kolchin taught at the School of



Figure 7.7a-c. Photograph mount and backstamps of Ermakov and Kolchin and Ermakov (National Parliamentary Library of Georgia, digital library "Ivereli").



Figure 7.8. *View of Tiflis*, by Roinov (Getty Research Institute Special Collections. Pierre de Gigord collection of photographs of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey. Series III. Loose and mounted photographs).

the Arts Society of Tbilisi, producing genre paintings showing everyday life along with ethnographical details (figs. 7.8–9).

The Kolchin-Ermakov business alliance was not unique in Tbilisi's cultural scene in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. The first photography studios existed in Tbilisi in the 1840s and were usually operated by two people. Most often it was a collaboration between an artist with a classical art education and a photographer with a technical education, often military. The earliest known photography studio was opened in Tbilisi by Henry Haupt and Ivan Aleksandrovsky in 1846.³⁰ In the 1850s Russian artist and icon painter Fiodor Khlamov also opened a studio with the help of a young local, Alexander Roinashvili. Later, Roinashvili shortened his last name to Roinov and became one of the most famous and successful photographers in Tbilisi. In the 1860s, Roinov opened a photo studio named Drawing, and later two more, Rembrandt and Camaraderia.³¹ The choice of those three names for his salons indicated not only his professional ambitions but demonstrated the common connection for that time between early photography and pictorial realism, which was the primary genre of Russian art in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Although Dmitri Ermakov began his photographic career fairly late in the 1860s, he was already able to present some of his photographs in Europe at the Tenth Photographic Exhibition of the Paris Photographic Society³² in the 1870s. Following international recognition, Ermakov was invited to become one of the official court photographers of the shah of Persia (the same status would later be given to his student, Antoin Sevruguin, after he moved and opened his studio in Tehran). This status, together with the growing popularity of his photographs and studios, provided him an opportunity for extensive traveling throughout the Caucasus and neighboring countries. In addition to producing cards and photographic albums with images of local life, landscapes, and city views, Ermakov was an active collector of works by other photographers of his time. Among the photographers whose works can be found in Ermakov's collection is Antoine Sevruguin. This fact shows that the relationships between the two photographers was more multidimensional than that of a mentor and pupil and had later developed into professional esteem.



Figure 7.9. *A Painting Trip to the Caucasus*, by Pyotr Kolchin (Painters / Alamy Stock Photo).



THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ART SCENE IN GEORGIA

Antoin Sevruguin likely moved to Tbilisi to study art in the late 1860s or early 1870s.³³ By that time, a rapid growth of the city population and relative financial stability created a favorable environment for the development of an art scene. Artistic life in Tbilisi during those times was just beginning to take shape under the influence of the cultural life in Saint Petersburg. Russian officers and state officials brought with them contemporary cultural trends in the arts, and Russian artists who could meet those tastes.

Although there were not any specialized art schools in Tbilisi until 1873,³⁴ the city had a healthy art community, which consisted of mostly Russian, Armenian, and Georgian artists who graduated from the Imperial Academy of Art in Saint Petersburg or the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture and were sent to the Caucasus Viceroyalty for mili-

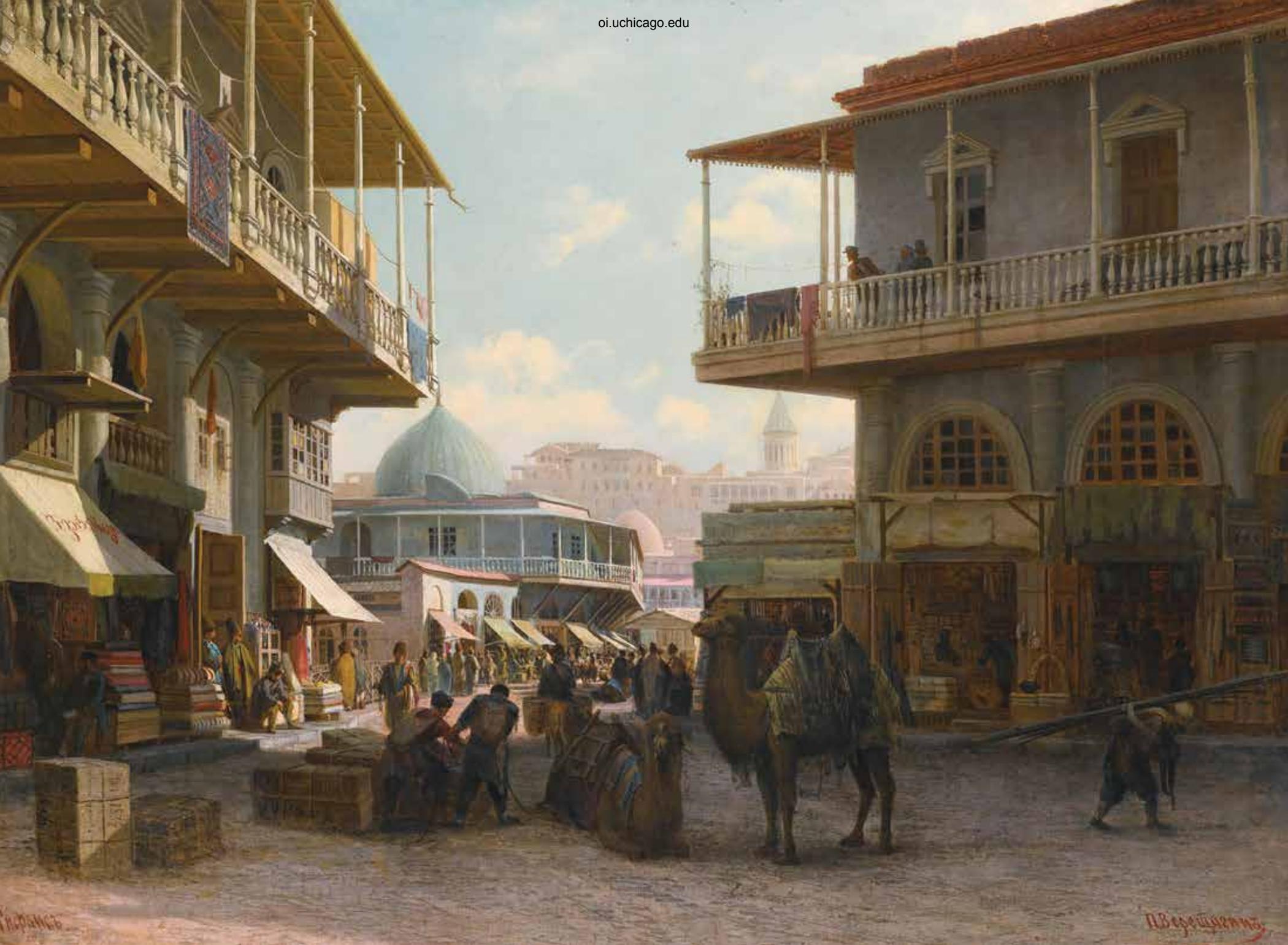
tary or state jobs. In addition to their work on state expedition projects, many of them taught art in local schools and gymnasiums, or conducted private lessons.³⁵ Thus, any informal art education received by Antoin Sevruguin in Tbilisi in the early 1870s would have likely been based on the traditions of Russian academic art.

Russian academic art education was originally formed under the influence of the French academy of art in the late eighteenth century, which viewed the historical genre of painting as most important. The historical genre concentrated on the heroization of the subject—often of a historical, mythological, or biblical source. The romanticization of nature and the inhabitants of the Caucasus was particular to the Russian artists who traveled to the region in the 1830–1850s. Most paintings of that time depict breathtaking views of mountain ranges, ancient fortresses and churches, and panoramas of cities and ports (figs. 7.10–11).³⁶

LEFT:
Figure 7.10. *View of Tbilisi*, by Nikanor Chernetsov, 1832 (Heritage Image Partnership Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo. ©Fine Art Images / Heritage Images).

OPPOSITE:
Figure 7.11. *View of Pyatigorsk*, by Michael Lermontov, 1837–38 (Album / Alamy Stock Photo).





The landscapes produced by Russian artists in the Caucasus were often reproduced in lithography³⁷ and published in numerous research publications of the Imperial Geographic Society, as well as informal panoramic view and cityscape albums. Those albums with landscapes and scenes of local life became important tools in the introduction and popularization of the Caucasus to the rest of the empire. Thus, the burgeoning popularity of those same subjects in early photography in the region grew from the well-spread tradition of lithography in the first half of the nineteenth century and the demand of the audience to see these relatively well-known views of Caucasian nature (fig. 7.12).

By the 1850s, at which point the military situation in the region was largely stabilized, many of the artists who came to the Caucasus as a part of the military campaign remained in Tbilisi. At the same time, a new generation of graduates of the Academy of Art started to return to Tbilisi, bringing with them the newly developed, realistic genre of painting. Realism, with its importance on the true representation of the subject and almost ethnographical interests in the details, certainly affected the way in which the Caucasus were represented in painting and photography in the 1860s and 1870s.

OPPOSITE: Figure 7.12. *View of Tiflis*, by Vasili Verschagin, 1869 (Art Collection 2 / Alamy Stock Photo).

RIGHT: Figure 7.13. *Woodsmen*, by Ivan Kramskoi, 1874 (The Picture Art Collection / Alamy Stock Photo).

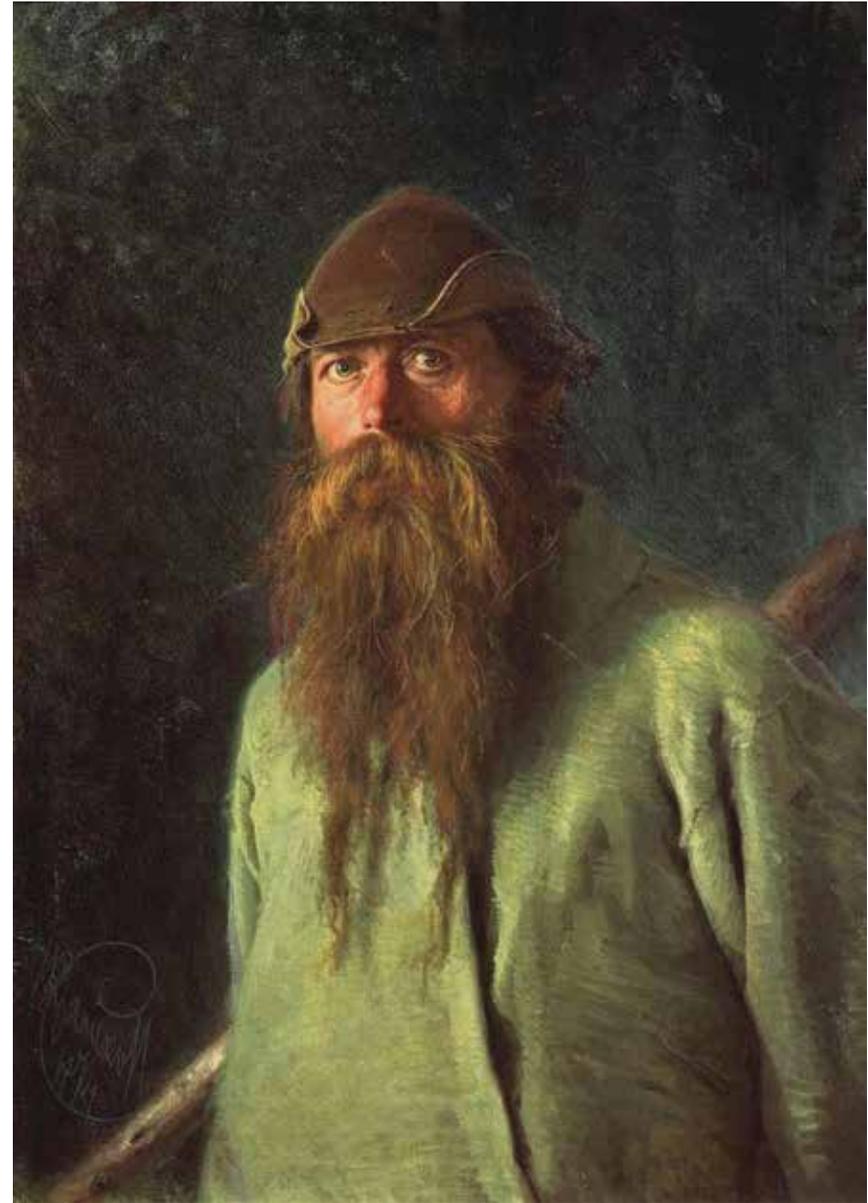




Figure 7.14. *Meditator*, by Ivan Kramskoi, 1876 (The Picture Art Collection / Alamy Stock Photo).

The widespread popularity of realism in Russian art of the second half of the nineteenth century was mainly due to the work of Peredvizhniki (the Wanderers)—a group of realistic artists who left the Academy of Art in protest of its outdated (in their opinion) academic principles of education. As a result of their protest, they founded a cooperative of artists whose main mission was to promote the realistic genre. The art activities of the group included the organization of annual exhibitions in Saint Petersburg and Moscow, which were widely covered in newspapers of that time (figs. 7.13–14).³⁸

The subjects of their paintings ranged from landscapes representing local nature and of the changing seasons, to portraits reflecting the psychological conditions of the character, to social genre scenes with special attention given to the lives of peasants, city workers, and the middle class. The interest in the depiction of common people helped foster the development of ethnographical paintings in the same period (figs. 7.15–16).



LEFT: **Figure 7.15.** *Noble Intentions*, by Pyotr Kolchin, Tbilisi, 1880 (Sphinx Fine Art, London).

RIGHT: **Figure 7.16.** George Kennan album. Purchased by George Kennan in 1870 on his trip to the Caucasus. Dmitri Ermakov. "Voenno-Gruzinskaia doroga. Skala mezhd u Pasa naurom i Meltom. (Georgian Military Road) (The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Photography Collection, New York Public Library. Voenno-Gruzinskaia doroga. Skala mezhd u Pasa naurom i Meltom." The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1870-1879. <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47db-a5ef-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>).



TRADITIONAL ART MEETS PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE CAUCASUS

As photography spread throughout the region, without established precedents for the medium³⁹ early photographers employed all manner of styles and subjects. However, as previously mentioned, close collaboration between early photographers and artists at the time, combined with the overall interest in the exploration of the Caucasus and nearby territories, led to the general prominence of three main genres in the local photography: landscapes, social scenes, and portraiture. These same genres were actively promoted by Russian realism in the second half of the nineteenth century and were widely developed in ethnographic art.

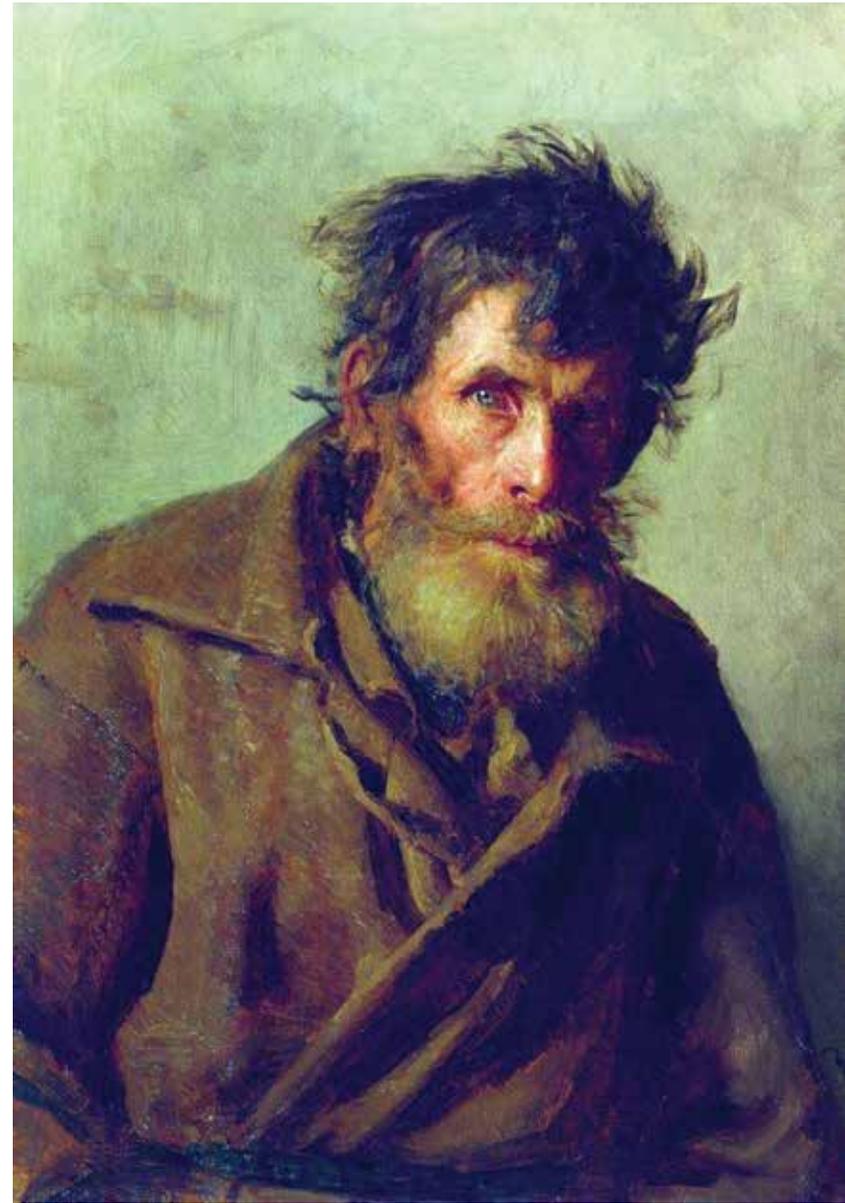
Landscapes, social scenes in cityscapes, and portraits served the mission of cultural state organizations like the Imperial Geographic Society, the Archaeological Commission, and later the Museum of the Caucasus by documenting the exploration of the region and promoting it as a part of the Russian Empire. As most of the photographers in those organizations were topographers without artistic backgrounds, their first attempts at depicting their surroundings were closely connected with attempts to duplicate the classical traditions of painting, whereby the subject or the scene would be framed and put in a static position.

Being a student of Ermakov and Kolchin, Antoine Sevruguin actively applied principles of the realistic genre in his photographic work. It is especially noticeable in his half-length portraits of dervishes (figs. 7.17–7.18b) where he concentrated on reflecting the psychological conditions of the characters, often positioned in a three-quarter view. Despite the fact that the majority of Sevruguin's portraits of locals taken on the streets of Tehran and other Iranian villages were produced as ethnographical illustrations, his approach to the topics and models was first and foremost artistic.

The development and growing popularity of realism in the region naturally supported the growth of photography and provided new ways for early photographers

RIGHT: Figure 7.17. *A Shy Peasant*, by Ilya Repin, 1877
(Volgi archive / Alamy Stock Photo).

OPPOSITE: Figure 7.18a–b. Portraits of dervishes, by Sevruguin
(cat. no. 145, P. 1249 / N. 24548 and cat. no. 139, P. 1243 / N. 24542).





to represent their subjects. Among the photographic borrowings from realism include the depiction of locals engaged in everyday and largely banal activities—a popular subject of ethnographical paintings.

These were the cultural and photographic trends of the region when Antoin Sevruguin made his move to Tbilisi to pursue a career in arts. Building upon the work, and under the instruction of early pioneers like Dmitri Ermakov, and within the context of cultural and artistic trends forwarded by the Russian Empire, Antoin Sevruguin expanded upon local photography as both an ethnographic tool and an artform. His work helped move photography to an inflection point where the emotional condition of the subject was just as important as the ethnographic information contained within the photograph.

Endnotes

- ¹ Navab 2003.
- ² Tatjarian and Sevruguin 2013.
- ³ Scheiwiller 2018c.
- ⁴ Tatjarian 2015.
- ⁵ Tatjarian 2015.
- ⁶ Navab 2003.
- ⁷ Dzalaeva 2017.
- ⁸ Navab 2003; Tatjarian 2015; Krasberg 2012.
- ⁹ Minassian 2019.
- ¹⁰ Krasberg 2012.
- ¹¹ Perch Proschian (1837–1907), Armenian writer and educator.
- ¹² Scheiwiller 2018c.
- ¹³ Dzalaeva 2017.
- ¹⁴ Dzalaeva 2017.
- ¹⁵ Pavlov 2010.
- ¹⁶ Pavlov 2010.
- ¹⁷ Notes of the Caucasus Department of the Russian Imperial Geographic Society was published by the Imperial Geographic Society in Tbilisi, Pyatigorsk, and Kazan from 1852 until 1913. This periodic publication included thirty books.
- ¹⁸ The results of the Archaeological Commission became the impressive twelve-volume collection of the local archival history entitled *Acts, Collected by the Archaeological Commission of the Directorate of the Viceroy of the Caucasus* (Tiflis, 1866–1886).
- ¹⁹ Mukhanov 2004.
- ²⁰ Pavlov 2010.
- ²¹ Solovyova and Kouteinikova 2016.
- ²² Solovyova and Kouteinikova 2016.

- ²³ Navab 2003; Tatjarian 2015; Krasberg 2012.
- ²⁴ de Herder 2008.
- ²⁵ Mamatsashvili 2014; Vuurman 2007.
- ²⁶ The painting was lost.
- ²⁷ Kondakov 1914. All graduates of the Imperial Academy of Art were granted medals ranging from the Big Gold Medal, which granted its recipient the opportunity to receive a sponsored Grand Tour to Europe in order to study the arts from its finest examples, to the Small Silver Medal, which provided the status of free artist with the specialization in one or more genres, such a historical paintings, marines, portraits, etc.
- ²⁸ Solovyova and Kouteinikova 2016.
- ²⁹ Mateshvili, 2010.
- ³⁰ de Herder 2008.
- ³¹ The Editors of Tiflissky Journal 2013.
- ³² Mamatsashvili 2014.
- ³³ Scheiwiller 2018c.
- ³⁴ Tbilisi Art society was founded in 1873 with a mission to promote art and art education in the region. In 1874, the society opened a professional art school, and in 1886, the school become a chapter of the Imperial Academy of Art.
- ³⁵ For example, Polidor Babaev (1813–1870) and Vasily Vereshchagin (1842–1904)—both painters of battle scenes and realistic genre—were teaching art during their life in Tbilisi.
- ³⁶ See View of Tbilisi, by Nikanor Chernetsov, 1832, and View of Pyatigorsk, by Michael Lermontov, 1837–38.
- ³⁷ Solovyova and Kouteinikova 2016.
- ³⁸ One of the most famous Russian art critics of the time, Vladimir Stasov actively covered the activities of the Peredvizhniki and advocated their mission in periodicals. The status of Stasov and his opinion in the cultural life in the Russian Empire of the second half of the nineteenth century was important enough to play a significant role in the rise in popularity of the realistic genre in art.
- ³⁹ Solovyova and Kouteinikova 2016.

CHAPTER EIGHT

WHAT CAN(NOT) BE SEEN/UNSEEN: INTENTIONALITY IN SEVRUGUIN AND BEYOND

Tasha Vorderstrasse

Sevruguin occupies an interesting place in Qajar photography thanks to his status as an Armenian whose family from was from the Russian Empire, despite being born and spending most of his life in Iran and being married to an Iranian-Armenian (see Vorderstrasse, this volume, chapter six). This means his photography has been interpreted in different ways, just as Sevruguin has himself been described in different ways, and the question is how the photographs reflect his own identity.¹ Discussions of Antoin Sevruguin and the intentions of his photography have occupied scholars since his pictures were rediscovered several decades ago. These discussions have focused on his pictures, which were consumed by the tourist market and purchased by visitors to Iran who then brought these collections back to the West. Foreigners who visited the Middle East saw the lands they visited in different ways and with different intentions, meaning that they took their own photographs in different ways or purchased different pictures of the lands that they visited. It was particularly popular to represent the lands that they saw as being ruins empty of individuals (see Vorderstrasse, this volume, chapter four) or as a series of ethnic and religious “types.”² At the same time, local Middle Eastern photographers such as Sevruguin are often seen by scholars as being imitators of Western photography for the Western market, but many had hybrid identities.³ Sevruguin, like other local photographers, depicted traditional Iranian life that appealed to individuals who visited Iran

in the nineteenth century as well those who were interested in the country but had no opportunity to visit it.⁴ One cannot strictly divide the photographs of Sevruguin in a simple opposition of “modernity” and “traditionalism,” however.⁵ Some of the photographs taken by Sevruguin are clearly inspired by Orientalist photography present in Western photographs of the Middle East, and specifically in Iran. On the other hand, he did have a specifically Iranian point of view, thanks to the fact that he was a local photographer. And as a court photographer, he had to carefully negotiate his way within the Qajar court.⁶ His photography exists in a zone between the European and Iranian worlds.⁷

There is a question as to whether or not Sevruguin’s work can be seen as reflecting Orientalism or rather a subversion of that Orientalism. Sevruguin seems to be able to produce photographs that are Orientalist in style, while at the same time accurately depicting Qajar society.⁸ This has also been observed in the Ottoman Armenian photographers Abdullah Frères, who produced Orientalist photographs that appealed to a European audience as well as photographs that spoke to a Middle Eastern audience and some pictures had elements of both.⁹ This is also true of other local photographers, such as the Assyrian-Armenian Ottoman photographers Pascal Sébah and his son.¹⁰ While local photographers do appear to have made photographs in an Orientalist style, they have been seen as adaptors rather than copiers of these styles.¹¹ Nevertheless, the way that these pictures are viewed remains a matter of considerable debate and subjectivity.¹²

Orientalism, like colonialism, can be experienced in different ways¹³ and perpetuated by different individuals, including those who were local.¹⁴ Materials such as travel accounts and photographs have multiple meanings, depending on the context in which they are viewed.¹⁵ Indeed, some exhibitions of Sevruguin’s work have taken a more radical approach: not analyzing the photographs at all and simply presenting them, allowing the viewer to interpret the pictures themselves.¹⁶ This chapter examines the paradigms behind the intentions of Sevruguin, but also those of his clients and those who purchased his photographs. Therefore, it is important to look beyond the style and subjects of the photographs to their context. This means that it is useful to look at the photographer, the network of clients, and how the photographs were received by these clients.¹⁷

Many of Sevruguin’s photographs were posed, but this would not have been problematic for the nineteenth-century consumer. They knew that photographs had to be staged to reflect the fact that there were long exposure times.¹⁸ Despite this, photographs would have been as seen as being valid documentation of reality rather than something that had been created artificially.¹⁹ One can also see the impact of gaze of the viewer on these photographs. The photographs served to reinforce hierarchies between civilized and uncivilized, naked and unclothed, traditional and modern, which demonstrate what Edwards calls “assymetrical power relations.”²⁰ Nevertheless, Edwards has also argued that the photographs were not entirely one-sided, and that one can see signs of resistance even in photographs where the power dynamic is clearly delineated. Individuals were not passive, but rather they were trying to understand not only the photographs themselves, but also their overall context.²¹ Therefore, in this instance, it is not only how Sevruguin made his photographs, but also how they circulated and were preserved.²² When one looks at the photographs, the question is often what the context of the photographs were and what was happening in particular images. One has to understand the temporal context of the photography, but also what one as the viewer can see when looking at a particular photograph.²³

INTENTION BY SEVRUGUIN: NASIR AL-DIN SHAH HUNTING WITH MALIJAK

As a court photographer, Sevruguin was busy commemorating Nasir al-Din Shah and other members of the Qajar royal family and court, as well as Qajar buildings and other instruments of power. Nineteenth-century rulers made considerable efforts to create, control, and manipulate images because people were influenced by the photographs that they saw.²⁴ Nasir al-Din Shah made paintings and drawings²⁵ as well as photographs himself, meaning that he not only controlled the narrative surrounding the royal family, he also participated in perpetuating it. It was important that the image was “correct,” and the shah would send a photograph of himself as a stand-in for ceremonies that he could not attend personally.²⁶ The Qajars, like the Ottomans, wanted to portray themselves as a “modern” society fully able to act on the world stage. As in the case of the Abdullah Frères, Sevruguin as court photographer represented the way in which the Qajar empire wished to be seen and provides an example of their own ideology.²⁷ Thanks to his keen sense of photography, Nasir al-Din Shah was very well aware of the power of images and the importance of documenting his reign for posterity. He had a number of photographers who worked for him who participated in this endeavor, and he compiled a large collection of pictures that documented Iran at the time.²⁸

The photograph here (fig. 8.1) calls into question the intentions of Sevruguin, as well as the way that the photograph can be interpreted. It has been carefully composed (see Johnson, this volume, chapter three), showing Malijak in the center of the photograph, smiling and looking directly at the camera. He is holding a gun upright. In the right-hand corner of the photo is Nasir al-Din Shah, looking off in the distance, while the court historian, Etemad al-Saltaneh (1843–1896), is holding a letter and sitting profile with his legs outstretched, head turned towards the camera, and eyes looking directly at the viewer. It is likely that this picture was carefully constructed by Sevruguin, as the emphasis in the picture is very much on Malijak rather than the shah, thereby



Figure 8.1. Photograph of Malijak (CENTER), Nasir al-Din Shah (RIGHT), and Etemad al-Saltaneh (LEFT) (cat. no. 2, P. 1101 / N. 23688).

emphasizing his importance vis-à-vis the shah. Positioning was also literally very important for the Qajar court. Prince Arfa', Malijak's social tutor, noted that it was important who sat next to whom.²⁹ Therefore, the fact that Malijak is close to the shah is significant, while Etamad being located closer to the camera and slightly farther away emphasizes his distance from the other two and implies a lesser importance. At first glance, this seems to be a fairly typical outdoor photo of the Qajar ruler, but the positioning reveals much more beyond this.

What is more controversial is who Malijak was. While the picture would seem to suggest that the shah was on a hunting party with his son, this is not the case at all. Indeed, when pictured with Malijak, the shah shows affection for the boy that is not present when he is photographed with his own children.³⁰ When one has additional information about the sitters, one can see Qajar photographs in new and different ways. Therefore, pictures that appear at first glance to be benign can also transmit far different messages when we look at the histories behind the photographs themselves. Malijak was a favored individual at Nasir al-Din Shah's court, the nephew of one of his wives, Amina Aqdas, the son of his former favorite who was also known as Malijak, and later married one of Nasir al-Din Shah's daughters. This picture was taken in 1892 when Malijak was between thirteen and fifteen years old, and Nasir al-Din Shah also sketched drawings of him on this trip. Iranians at the time did not approve of Malijak (who was also given the name Aziz al-Sultan or "Beloved of the Shah"), were concerned about his "fondness" for the boy, and they complained that he was poorly behaved and smelled. There was also the issue that he and his family were lowborn and yet received many honors, including land and military commands. The precise relationship between Malijak and the shah still remains debated among scholars.³¹

While Etamad al-saltana argued that the shah was not physically involved with Malijak (although he did refer to him as the "shah's romantic love," there were many rumors to that effect inside and outside Iran. Another Iranian contemporary, 'Ayn al-Saltaneh, referred to him as the "shah's lover" in his diaries. Indeed, the assassin of the shah pointed to this relationship as one of the reasons for justifying his actions.³² Other contemporaries were more circumspect, such as Prince Arfa', who was put in charge of Malijak's social education and simply stated that the Shah told him, "If he [Malijak] is happy, then I shall be happy."³³

In Qajar society, there were relationships between older and younger men, including boys who would now be considered underage. In these relationships what was important was not the age or sex of the partners, but rather who was active and who was passive.³⁴ It has been noted that in Qajar Iran, there is no differentiation between gender in adjectives for beauty, and both men and women looked similar, sometimes making it difficult to assign gender to individuals in pictures or photographs.³⁵ Further, nineteenth-century constructions of sexuality in general are very different from modern ideas in that children were seen as adults in miniature. Therefore, it was acceptable not only for marriages to occur with and between children, but also for marriages to be consummated at a young age, the minimum being nine years old, and with special permission could happen earlier.³⁶ Such societal constructions were not merely present in Iran, however. It was only in the 1880s in England that the age of consent for girls was raised from thirteen to sixteen, and in the United States this happened considerably later.³⁷

When we know that Malijak was likely to have been sexually involved with Nasir al-Din Shah in some way, it necessarily gives the picture a new level of meaning. In the family photographs of Princess 'Esmaat al-Dowleh Qajar (daughter of Nasir

al-Din) and her family, these ambiguities are also present. Princess 'Esmaat helped her husband, Amir Doost (1856–1913), run his photography studio. The happy pictures of 'Esmaat and her husband, and 'Esmaat's daughter 'Esmaat al-Moluk and her husband, masks the reality of the situation and only shows set moments in time. Amir Doost did marry another woman and spent time away from his wife for some years in Paris studying photography, while 'Esmaat al-Moluk's husband eventually took multiple wives. The matter was further complicated by Scheiwiller noting an allegation in a presentation by Khosronejad that Amir Doost sexually assaulted his other daughter Fakr al-Taj. According to her, the allegation would be presented in his forthcoming book,³⁸ but the allegation is not in the book.³⁹ When such actions are proven, it is difficult to reconcile the artistic legacy of the individuals with their actions.⁴⁰ The controversial nature of this picture would have been recognizable to the Iranian audience and is hinted at in the commentary written by Mary Clarke on the portrait photograph of Malijak in the OI collection by an unknown photographer. Malijak is pictured formally, but even here his attitude seems to be one of relaxation. He seems to be lolling on the chair rather than sitting stiffly and formally with his legs stretched out and his feet crossed (fig. 8.2).

It is clear from contemporary accounts that people disapproved of Malijak and had concerns about the shah's relationship with him. It is important in this context, however, to focus on what Malijak himself is reported to have said about his situation with the shah. First, there are the statements allegedly made by Malijak at the time that the Shah was alive that are



Figure 8.2. Portrait of Malijak by an unknown (cat. no. 10, P. 1110 / N. 23695).

recorded by others. Apparently, Malijak had an answer to the question from Etemad al-Saltaneh about why the shah had loved him so much, and he allegedly responded: “Why do you think Mahmoud desired Ayaz?”⁴¹ This was a reference to the loving relationship of the ruler Mahmud of Ghazni and his slave Ayaz in the eleventh century AD, which was celebrated in Persian literature. Further, Ayaz became an extremely powerful individual in the Ghaznavid court, and his influence survived the death of Mahmud.⁴² In addition, there was an incident according to Prince Arfa’, when Malijak pushed his carriage in front of Mozaffar al-Din, the crown prince, and Prince Arfa’ remonstrated with Malijak. He pointed out to him that the prince would likely remember the slight and that it might not end well. Malijak allegedly replied, “It is now the period of Naser-od-Din Shah. After him, I don’t want to remain alive! If I am still alive, let him do what he wants!”⁴³

In addition to these alleged statements, there are Malijak’s memoirs, which give Malijak a voice and also help us to see how Malijak viewed the situation, admittedly after the Nasir al-Din Shah’s death. According to Malijak’s memoirs, it was important for the shah to keep him young, and therefore the shah delayed circumcising him.⁴⁴ As an adult, Malijak gives every indication that he was proud of the relationship, stating in his published memoir, “The king’s love for me reached the point where it is impossible for me to write about it . . . [He] held me in his arms and kissed me as if he were kissing one of his greatest beloveds.”⁴⁵ This would therefore suggest that Malijak chose to not only be proud of his relationship with the Shah but apparently also cast it in epic, romantic terms that would have resonated with his audience. It also strongly suggests that it was a romantic relationship, and further, that Malijak wanted to compare himself with Ayaz, the slave who rose to be one of the most powerful individuals in the Ghaznavid empire. It is evident that whatever the precise nature of his relationship with the Shah, Malijak portrayed himself ultimately as not a victim of his circumstances but rather an important independent individual in his own right. As Behdad notes in his study of this photograph, while Malijak is seen frequently as a symbol of the shah’s dissipation and corruption, Sevruguin depicts him as a “sympathetic and powerful figure” who is a “precocious child, manipulative . . . and cognizant,”⁴⁶ thereby giving him the agency that he seems to claim in later life.

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY

The study of Sevruguin’s pictures has been largely restricted to what was collected by tourists rather than by looking at privately commissioned studio photography. This is not surprising, given that most of the material we have in museums around the world comes from private collectors who purchased their photographs in Iran. The addition of a negative number indicates that the photograph was not commissioned by a sitter, but rather had been available for sale commercially,⁴⁷ although not all Sevruguin photographs have a negative number. Most photographers in the Middle East did produce “ethnic types” photography in large numbers, meant to be sold to visitors and reflect the ethnic diversity of the empire while simultaneously reinforcing Orientalist stereotypes.⁴⁸ It is also important to note, however, that these photographs

also circulated in Iran itself. Not only are they found in Iranian photograph albums, they are also found reproduced on postcards that have captions in Persian and French.⁴⁹ Given the staged nature of Sevruguin's studio photography and exterior genre pictures, one has to ask the question as to whether or not the people in these commercial pictures are who they are alleged to be. In the case of FSA A2011.03 A30a in the Stephen Arpee album at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Washington, DC, the model is identified by the caption in the album as "Armenian." This is one of the models who is frequently used by Sevruguin,⁵⁰ but it is unclear if this woman was actually Armenian, had been identified by Sevruguin to the buyer as Armenian, or how they came to this conclusion. In one Persian photograph album a woman is identified as a "Kurd," while in another she is said to be a Jewish woman who worked for Mohammad 'Ali Mirza in Tabriz who then had to flee.⁵¹ In Ottoman photography the same woman poses as a "gypsy" and as a "Kurd."⁵² Sevruguin's friend, the Jewish doctor Nur Muhammad,⁵³ has been misinterpreted as an Islamic religious scholar and doctor in Sevruguin's photographs.⁵⁴ Therefore, photographs of a family friend are essentialized into "ethnic types" for some viewers of these pictures because they lack the entire context.

There is also an element of people pretending to be what they were not. Armenian and other Christian women apparently posed as harem women,⁵⁵ and pictures were faked with props.⁵⁶ While clothing distinguishes various groups from one another, and people actively photographed certain ethnicities or religions⁵⁷ as a way to preserve a record of vanishing traditions and ethnic groups,⁵⁸ there is no guarantee that the person dressed in these clothes was of a particular religion or ethnicity. Further, the staged nature of the photographs meant that there is an underlying tension between the seeming reality of the photographs on the one hand, but also non-realism.⁵⁹

Sevruguin took his genre pictures both inside and outside the studio. Such genre pictures were highly artificial.⁶⁰ Ertem has observed that these pictures in the Ottoman Empire were frequently taken in a studio and detach the individual from their environment. The individual is therefore pretending to do their profession in a place that is completely alien, and this is reflected in the discomfort of those subjects, who often seem unclear about what they are supposed to do, since they had probably never been photographed before. Their expressions are often vacant, and they stare straight ahead.⁶¹ Still, some photographers did work with their models outdoors due to space limitations in the studio.⁶² When Sevruguin photographed some scenes, he very clearly recreated daily life as he wished it to be seen.

In studio photography the name of the individual (when it is known) is clear, but even then, their identity may be called into question. Once again, the pictures were staged, but in this case, it was the sitters who selected the clothes that they wished to be photographed in. This could include their best clothes, which they would not have worn on a usual basis, or perhaps fancy dress costumes. Therefore, the photographs document how they wished to look at a particular moment in time, rather than how they looked all the time.⁶³ It is not only local Iranians who were photographed in fancy dress, but also foreigners, following a similar practice in oil paintings.⁶⁴ Photographers such as Sevruguin made portrait photographs people of different religious and ethnicities wearing traditional and Westernized dress in a studio that was based on Western norms⁶⁵ but still arranged in an Iranian way.⁶⁶ Even the act of owning a photograph was to be "modern," given that it was

a new invention.⁶⁷ Therefore, costume choice helps us understand the way people wished to present themselves.⁶⁸

The study of Sevruguin's images have focused far more on his ethnographic or monumental photography than his commissioned portrait photography. Nevertheless, portraiture was an important part of Sevruguin's work and shows the influence of Iranian patrons⁶⁹ even when Qajar photographers were clearly inspired by Western models.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, one can see certain commonalities between his commissioned photography and his photography of ethnographic types, probably based on the fact that they were both done in his studio. For instance, the figures are often posed, reclining or sitting on a piece of furniture or leaning on a table. This is partly practical, thanks to the fact that the sitters had to pose for long periods of time without moving because of the long exposure times involved. Further, however, the use of backdrops and props also served other purposes. When looking at this for the Ottoman empire, Sheehi notes that one should not see this copying of Western photographic techniques as being simply derivative. Rather, he argues that the Ottoman world is pushing back against the Western idea that it was not a modern empire by taking Western formulations and using them in their own formal photography.⁷¹ In terms of clothing, one starts to see in the late nineteenth century more sober clothing for men with Western clothing or Western clothing made in the Turkish style, while women wore the layered in-skirts that were apparently inspired by Western ballerinas—often Western garments were covered with a chador when going out,⁷² as Sevruguin documented in one of his ethnographic genre pictures. At the start of the twentieth century, women started wearing more Western clothing.

The portraits of Heripsima Abrahamian (1884–1957) taken by Antoin Sevruguin provide an insight into this process of self-representation and presentation. Born in Hamadan, Heripsima Abrahamian was a member of the Armenian community in Iran (her husband was born in Tehran) and had a studio photograph (fig. 8.3) made of herself that was taken in Sevruguin's studio around 1913 before she married her husband in 1915. In the photograph, Heripsima is dressed completely in Western style, leaning on a



Figure 8.3. Heripsima Abrahamian (later Heripsima Basil) (1884–1957) (Shahin and Arsineh Basil Collection, Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran website, Record No. 1144A100).

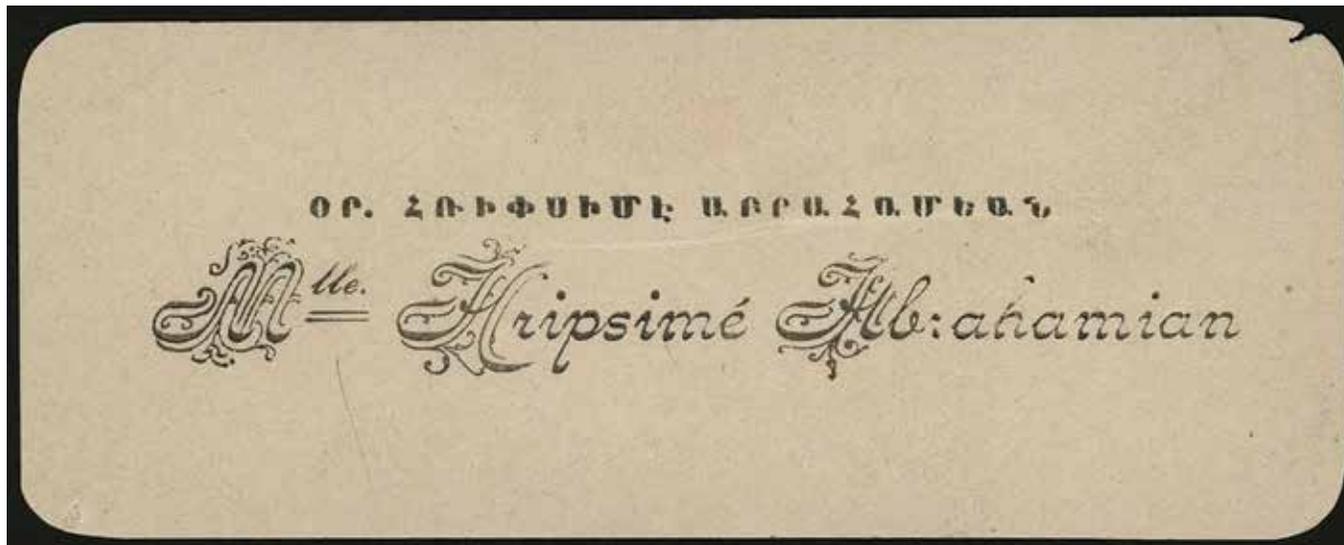


Figure 8.4. Heripsima's visiting card (Shahin and Arsineh Basil Collection, Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran website, Record No. 114A55).

pedestal (which appears in two pictures of a little girl also by Sevruguin), next to a chair in front of a backdrop. The only sign that this is not a Western context is the carpet that she is standing on—a prop that features in many of Sevruguin's portrait and non-portrait photographs—and the presence of the name of the city of Tehran on the photograph mount. The prevalence of being photographed in Western dress and with Western accoutrements such as carriages and cars has also been observed for members of the Armenian community in Isfahan photographed in the early twentieth century by Armenian photographer Minas Patkerkhanian Mackertich (1885–1972).⁷³

This Western presentation can also be reflected in the other ways that Heripsima presented herself. Her visiting card also reflects different identities. The largest type in the card is given over to her name in French with the abbreviation “Mlle.,” while her name and title in Armenian is present, but much smaller. No Persian appears on the card (fig. 8.4).

Sevruguin also photographed Heripsima several years before this portrait, this time in a type of photograph that is also a commissioned photograph but much different (fig. 8.5). While the portrait of Heripsima is her as a single person in the photography space, the other photograph shows her outside as part of a group. This photograph is a postmortem picture of the funeral of a young boy, surrounded presumably by family and friends. The young boy is dressed in Western clothes and the people surrounding him are wearing a mixture of Western and traditional clothing. The most prominent women in the picture, including Heripsima, all stand to one side together and wear Western dress, while the women in the center are wearing traditional dress.⁷⁴



Figure 8.5. Heripsima Abrahamian (later Heripsima Basil) (1884–1957), left in black and hat, in a postmortem photograph dated to 1906 taken by Antoin Sevruguin (Shahin and Arsineh Basil Collection, Women’s Worlds in Qajar Iran website, Record No. 1144A46).

Postmortem photographs appear among the Armenian communities in Qajar Iran, although they are not commonly attested. Heripsima appears in another postmortem photograph (fig. 8.6), this one of a more mature gentleman. Again, Heripsima is wearing Western dress, but this time the majority of the other women are wearing traditional dress, while the men who can be seen are in Western suits. The coffin is also in a different position than the child's postmortem photograph, showing him horizontal rather than raised up; most of the Ottoman Armenian postmortem photographs display the coffin lying vertically. In this case, Heripsima may have been more connected to the deceased, as she wrote a poem about her grief on the back of the picture in Armenian.

Such postmortem photographs have been studied as they appear among the Armenian communities in the eastern part of the Ottoman Empire. These postmortem photographs follow trends in Victorian England and the United States, which was to commemorate the dead through photography. In contrast to pictures of punishment or execution (what Fraser terms as “punitive photographs”), which were popular not only in Qajar Iran but also in other foreign locales such as China,⁷⁵ these photographs were only meant to circulate among those for whom they would be relevant. The individual is photographed in clothing that indicates their status, and they are usually seated in a chair or in a coffin. They are surrounded by individuals

who are family and friends, who bow their heads in respect.⁷⁶ Important deceased individuals were photographed sitting in their chairs dressed in their full regalia.⁷⁷

While postmortem photographs of children were popular in the West in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they seem to have been less common in Qajar and Ottoman contexts. Postmortem photography was largely reserved for older individuals, with the exception of this photograph (fig. 8.5) and one made in Isfahan by the Armenian photographer Minas Paterkhanian Mackertich.⁷⁸ The act of Ottoman and Qajar postmortem photography seems to have been a performative social occasion that was being commemorated in photographic form rather than a private mourning photograph. One exception aside from this picture is a Sébah studio



Figure 8.6.
Heripsima
Abrahamian
(later Heripsima
Basil) (1884–
1957), fifth person
from left, not
wearing a scarf,
in a postmortem
photograph
(Shahin and
Arsineh Basil
Collection,
Women's Worlds
in Qajar Iran
website, Record
No. 1144A108).

photograph depicting a dead child⁷⁹ that seems to largely resemble Western examples.⁸⁰ The picture here made by Sevruguin shows a young dead boy, who in contrast to many of the Ottoman and Qajar Armenian portrait photographs, is fully dressed rather than shrouded. The way the people are posed in the photograph is instructive, as it indicates the way that they wished to be viewed or the dead boy to be viewed.

WAYS OF VIEWING: COLLECTING SEVRUGUIN'S PHOTOGRAPHS

Finally, Mary Clarke's own background may have influenced what photographs she bought, although she collected photographs primarily made by Sevruguin, which are present in many other collections in Europe and North America. When describing the collecting of Ottoman photographs by European tourists, Behdad emphasizes what he calls a "visual regularity and consistency."⁸¹ In this case, it is the sameness not only of the subject of the photographs that she collects but the actual photographs themselves. Mary Clarke collected the same types of photographs (and often the exact same photographs) that all other European and North American travelers to Iran collected, whether they were short-term visitors to Iran, or like Mary Clarke, lived there for several years on two occasions.

Mary Clarke had been the principal at the Girls' Mission School in Tabriz in 1880–1883 before returning to the United States. The mission school had been opened by the American Presbyterian church in 1873 as a boarding and day school for Armenian and Muslim girls.⁸² After some time back in the United States, Mary Clarke went to Iran once again, this time to Tehran, where she served as the assistant superintendent of the Boys' High School in Tehran in 1892–1898. The boys' school had opened in 1872 and was later known as Alburz College.⁸³ Such mission schools were opened by a number of different Western European and North American Christian groups as a way to convert the Iranian population. Since it was problematic for them to convert Muslims, these early schools largely concentrated on Iran's Assyrian and Armenian populations.⁸⁴ Other missionaries also collected photographs from Sevruguin, such as can be found in the album of pictures collected after 1896 that Schwerda suggests was owned by an American missionary family living in northwest Iran.⁸⁵

Therefore, Mary Clarke was very happy to collect photographs showing ethnographic types, which were popular amongst missionaries,⁸⁶ as well as those depicting Persian monuments, landscapes, and the royal family. It is also interesting that where her photographs can be identified as belonging to another photographer, they are royal photographs. These commercially available photographs provided tourists or longer-term residents—such as Mary Clarke—who did not take their own photographs with them, tangible memories of daily life and other events in Iran.⁸⁷ On the other hand, there were certain types of photographs that she did not collect. For example, Mary Clarke did not collect many photographs of executions or punishments, which were popular in Qajar photography at the time. Further, although it has been little studied until recently, Qajar erotica was available, showing the models in various states of undress and exposure.⁸⁸ Once again, Mary Clarke was not collecting these images.

Figure 8.7a-d.
Nude models,
Antoin Sevruguin
(Getty Research
Institute Special
Collections, 2017.
R.25-82, 2017.R.25-
83, Collection
Nationaal Museum
van Wereldculturen.
Coll. no. RV-A6-121,
Getty Research
Institute Special
Collections, 2017.
R.25-80).





Sevruguin also took erotic photographs, including some where the individual is entirely clothed and reclining, such as his photographs of a boy from the early twentieth century. According to Scheiwiller, a certain young man was photographed by Sevruguin, shown in two different pictures. The first shows the young man—who resembles the idealized version of a desirable young man—pictured with two older men. In the second photograph, he is pictured alone, reclining on the ground. It is unclear whether this was a studio photograph that was sold to the public or a commissioned picture.⁸⁹ As Scheiwiller notes, it is not necessary for individuals to be unclothed for the pictures to be erotic, but Sevruguin probably introduced nude female photographs to Iran, his pictures including nude women posed partly covered (fig. 8.8a–c) and others that were full frontal nudity (fig. 8.7a–d).⁹⁰ These photographs have not been frequently discussed and do not appear in the



Figure 8.8a-c. Partially clothed or fully clothed models (C. R. Smith album, E.339:19-2010, given by Jane Podmore, Victoria and Albert Museum, ©Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Getty Research Institute Special Collections, 2017. R.25-81).

digitized collections of the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery,⁹¹ although they are present in the Getty Research Institute Special Collections album, which has French captions and the Russian *Kunstkamera* photographs with their Russian captions (see discussion in Vorderstrasse, this volume, Catalog Introduction).

Clarke did not collect these photographs, but she collected others that might have been considered slightly dubious in some quarters. Sevruguin had pictures of women that would have been considered provocative. This includes women who displayed their bare or stockinged legs in ballerina costumes, which was the latest fashion.⁹² In Europe, ballerinas were thought to be women of questionable reputations, but Iranian women were clearly not representing themselves in that way,⁹³ even if this is how the European and North American viewers might have seen them. It may be that Clarke was interested



in including these women for their exotic value, which might have outweighed any problematic connotations. In this and other pictures of women by Sevruguin, the subjects look directly at the camera; Behdad has commented that some of them have a “seductive gaze” that harken back to European Orientalist photographs of women in the Middle East. At the same time, however, Sevruguin’s pictures are presented as ethnographic types,⁹⁴ meaning that they could be collected by women such as Mary Clarke without difficulty (fig. 8.9).

Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that the photograph that Mary Clarke collected of a young woman who she does not identify, dressed in fashionable costume, is a close-up of the model, rather than the full picture. In the full picture, she is wearing the same outfit but posed slightly differently (fig. 8.10a–b). She is sitting on some cloth-covered object, and one can clearly see a large expanse of bare leg, with stockings and shoes. The overall effect of the picture is much different. In the first, it is an ethnographic photograph of a woman in fashionable dress. In the second, it is an ethnographic photograph seemingly with erotic overtones. On the other hand, as Behdad notes in his study of photographs of Ottoman and Iranian women, photographs of clothed women can still be both erotic and Orientalist.⁹⁵

LEFT: Figure 8.9. Woman in fashionable dress (cat. no. 106, P. 1210 / N. 24528).

OPPOSITE: Figure 8.10a–b. Photographs of same model (cat. no. 99, P. 1203 / N. 24251; Album, Firouz Firouz Collection, Women’s Worlds in Qajar Iran Website, Record No. 1275).



KNOW MORE/SEE MORE: INTERPETING AND REINTERPRETING SEVRUGUIN

Nasir al-Din Shah took a photograph of the Islamic scholar Hujjat al-Islam and apparently wrote on the photograph, “The people see in your picture [only] a place [in the size of] one inch; they are unaware of the world-size meaning that is in your picture.”⁹⁶ It is clear that nineteenth-century Iranians were aware that pictures would and could be interpreted in different ways. For an Iranian, they would have been familiar with many of the buildings and individuals illustrated, but the same could not be said for foreign viewers. This explains why some of the explanations present on the Oriental Institute Museum photographs are rather detailed. But Mary Clarke’s view has equally skewed the way in which we see Sevruguin’s pictures. Thanks to the photographs in this collection and the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives collection, I initially believed that Antoin Sevruguin was not the author of erotic photography. Therefore, discovering other collections and publications that discussed this changed my view of the types of pictures that he made. Further, knowing more about the subjects in the photographs also changes the way that we view them. While the hunting trip with Malijak seems at first a fun day out, knowing about the relationship between Nasir al-Din Shah and the young boy makes it seem far more sinister. Nevertheless, thanks to the words of Malijak, we know that he would not have characterized it in that way. Finally, if we look at the studio photography, we can see something else again—the way in which the clients of Sevruguin chose to depict themselves while commemorating important occasions, in both traditional as well as postmortem photography. All of this adds to the complexities and different ways that Sevruguin’s pictures can be viewed and will continue to change through time as we know more and can therefore see more of the context of his photography.

Endnotes

- ¹ Navab 2011, 70, 72, 93, 101-201; Scheiwiller 2018c.
- ² Sheehi 2016, xx-xxi.
- ³ Hanoosh 2016, 6-7.
- ⁴ Stein 2013, 29.
- ⁵ See Gregory 2001, 115-16.
- ⁶ Behdad 1999; Behdad 2001, 143-44; Behdad 2008, 167, 169, 175, 177; Behdad 2016, 74-75, 77, 82-98; and for Qajar photography in general, 111.
- ⁷ Krasberg 2008a, 37, 41; Krasberg 2008b, 17; Schwerda 2015, 174.
- ⁸ Bohrer 1999a, 46; Navab 2002, 125-26; Navab 2003; Tatjarian and Sevruguin 2008, 59; Navab 2011, 73-74, 81, 83, 85; Peréz González 2012, 31; Stein 2013, 27.
- ⁹ Roberts 2013, 53.
- ¹⁰ Woodward 2003, 363-64, 366, 368; Grossman 2015, 127.
- ¹¹ Woodward 2003, 371-73.
- ¹² See for example the lengthy discussion in Behdad 2016, esp. 77.

- ¹³ Edwards, Gosden, and Phillips 2006, 3.
- ¹⁴ Behdad 2001, 145.
- ¹⁵ Micklewright 2013, 89; Vianello 2013, 111.
- ¹⁶ Pérez González and Sheikh 2015, 134.
- ¹⁷ Hanoush 2016, 8.
- ¹⁸ Woodward 2003, 366.
- ¹⁹ Edwards 2011, 165.
- ²⁰ Edwards 2011, 172–73.
- ²¹ Edwards 2002; Edwards 2011, 175–76, 178–79.
- ²² Edwards 2011, 176–77.
- ²³ Brusius 2015, 64–65; Behdad 2016, 19; Edwards 2016, 313.
- ²⁴ Batgiray 2019, 41–42.
- ²⁵ Floor 2005, 12.
- ²⁶ Behdad 2001, 142–43; Floor 2005, 23; Brusius 2015, 59.
- ²⁷ Sheehi 2016, 20.
- ²⁸ Diba 2013, 87–88; Scheiwiller 2013, 35–38; Brusius 2015, 60; Behdad 2016, 106–9, 130, 137–50.
- ²⁹ Arfa' 2016, 152, 155–56.
- ³⁰ Scheiwiller 2017a.
- ³¹ Floor 2005, 41, no. 131; Amanat 2011; Bajramovic 2011; Bachtin 2015, 991; Arfa' 2016, 148; Scheiwiller 2017a; White 2019.
- ³² Amanat 1997; Afary 2009; Amanat 2011; Scheiwiller 2017a.
- ³³ Arfa' 2016, 148.
- ³⁴ Floor 2005, 279, 298–99, 302; Afary 2011.
- ³⁵ Najmabadi 2005, 11; Bajramovic 2011.
- ³⁶ Floor 2008, 38–39, 41–44, no. 31; Scheiwiller 2017a.
- ³⁷ Odem 1998, 11–14; Scheiwiller 2017a.
- ³⁸ Scheiwiller 2018a.
- ³⁹ Khosronejad 2018.
- ⁴⁰ Trying to reconcile artists' legacies when they are known to have done terrible things goes to the heart of the exhibition held by the Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft in 2017 on the famed Arts and Crafts artist Eric Gill. When one goes to the archived information about the exhibition, it is upfront in the first paragraph about Eric Gill being a great artist, but at the same time acknowledges that he sexually abused two of his teenage daughters. It then asks the question of whether or not knowing this information impacts our appreciation and understanding of Eric Gill as an artist (www.ditchlingmuseumartcraft.org.uk/event/eric-gill-body/, accessed May 18, 2020). As part of the exhibition, the museum examined its own involvement with how they treated Eric Gill's legacy and their own response to his actions. The museum's approach to the subject matter generated a wide variety of reactions from different parties (Farrington 2019).
- ⁴¹ Quoted in Afary 2009 and Scheiwiller 2017a.
- ⁴² Kugle 2002, 30–37; Raza 2011.
- ⁴³ Arfa' 2016, 206.

- ⁴⁴ Afary 2009.
- ⁴⁵ Quoted in Afary 2009.
- ⁴⁶ Behdad 2016, 81. See also Behdad 1999, 94.
- ⁴⁷ Stein 2013, 27.
- ⁴⁸ Eldem 2015, 110; Behdad 2016, 59–62, 89–90; Hanoush 2016, 16, 18–19, 12; Özendes 1999, 163–64.
- ⁴⁹ Şāfī 1989, nos. 69, 101–2, 119, 121, 188; Vuurman 2013, 38; İhtishāmī 2017, 176 fig. 288.
- ⁵⁰ See commentary by Shabnam Rahimi-Golkhandan on the Smithsonian Website (www.si.edu/object/arpee-album-photograph-young-woman-elaborate-costume-graphic:siris_arc_310311, accessed March 26, 2020).
- ⁵¹ Scheiwiller 2017a.
- ⁵² Özendes 1999, 165.
- ⁵³ Bohrer 1999b, cat. nos. 18, 75; Navab 2011, 86–90.
- ⁵⁴ Behdad 2008, 168 no. 68. See also Krasberg 2008a, figs. 12 and 68.
- ⁵⁵ Behdad 2016, 63, 66.
- ⁵⁶ Özendes 1999, 163–64.
- ⁵⁷ Goldenweiser 2005, 258, 261.
- ⁵⁸ Guha 2002, 97.
- ⁵⁹ Wright 1992, 28; Amiri 2015, 65.
- ⁶⁰ Behdad 2016, 35–36.
- ⁶¹ Ertem 2011, 300–304.
- ⁶² Erdoğdu 1999, 269, 272.
- ⁶³ Edwards 1992; Micklewright 2003, 73–74; Buckley 2006, 66; Nassar 2006, 147; Scheiwiller 2013, 40; Hartmann 2015, 122, 129; Batgiray 2019, 40–41; Hartmann 2019, 112–13, 120.
- ⁶⁴ Bohrer 1999a, 45; Micklewright 2003, 74; Codell 2012, 500–503; Mayer 2012; Gierlichs 2015, 151, 154, 171; Hartmann 2015, 129; Codell and DelPlato 2016, 1–2, 10–11.
- ⁶⁵ Hanoush 2016, 13.
- ⁶⁶ See a similar discussion for Gambia in Buckley 2006, 63.
- ⁶⁷ Micklewright 2003, 67.
- ⁶⁸ Batgiray 2019, 19–20.
- ⁶⁹ Bohrer 1999a, 41, 44.
- ⁷⁰ Diba 2013, 89–90 fig 4.
- ⁷¹ Sheehi 2016, 15–18.
- ⁷² Diba 2011.
- ⁷³ Damandan 2004, 28–29.
- ⁷⁴ A copy of this photograph also exists in the Arman Estepanian collection of Iranian photography but, confusingly, seems to be the identical photograph digitized by the British Library, suggesting that this may be a photograph of a photograph (<https://eap.bl.uk/archive-file/EAP001-5-1#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=20&xywh=-74%2C0%2C1872%2C1348>).

- ⁷⁵ Fraser 2010, 44–46. For these photographs in Qajar Iran see Schwerda 2015.
- ⁷⁶ Hartmann 2019, 115 no. 10, 118. For postmortem photography in the Ottoman Empire in general see Aytemiz 2013.
- ⁷⁷ Boghosion 1998, 250–51 fig. 1020; Hartmann 2019, 118.
- ⁷⁸ Damandan 2004, 30 fig. 35; Damandan 2012, 225 fig. 1200. The picture shows the funeral of a young girl, Mary Davitian. The coffin is lying horizontal on the ground, surrounded by the priests and mourners, and the dead girl is not very visible in contrast to the dead boy in the postmortem photograph with Heripsima. In this case, she is shrouded, and only her face is visible.
- ⁷⁹ Aytemiz 2013, 333 fig. 12.
- ⁸⁰ Postmortem photography was widespread in the United States in the nineteenth century, with photographers specializing in the practice. Ruby 1995, 50, 52–59, 97–98, 110. In the United States from 1880 to 1910, the most popular type of photograph was of the body of the deceased in a coffin. This includes photographs of families standing around the coffin and those standing around graves. For another example see Burns 1990, no. 71.
- ⁸¹ Behdad 2016, 42.
- ⁸² Rostam-Kolayi 2002, 185; Shahvar 2009, 35.
- ⁸³ Rostam-Kolayi 2002, 185; Shahvar 2009, 35.
- ⁸⁴ Chaquèri 1998, 14; Berberian 2001, 41–42, 46–48; Rostam-Kolayi 2002, 184; Mahdavi 2005, 181; Walcher 2008, 26–27, 206–9; Vianello 2013, 78; Berberian 2019, 78–79; Riegg 2020, 140.
- ⁸⁵ Schwerda 2017, 88.
- ⁸⁶ Bohrer 1999a, cat. nos. 12 and 69.
- ⁸⁷ Vuurman 1999, 171–70; Williams 2020, 29.
- ⁸⁸ Behdad 2016, 111–113; Schweiller 2017a; Khosronejad 2018, 12; 33–40, cat. nos. 22–30.
- ⁸⁹ Scheiwiller 2017a.
- ⁹⁰ Pérez González 2010, 92–93; Pérez González 2012, 128 figs. 112–13; Scheiwiller 2017a, fig. 5.9–10.
- ⁹¹ Behdad 2016, 180 no. 14.
- ⁹² Stein 2013, 27.
- ⁹³ Stein 2013, 29.
- ⁹⁴ Behdad 2001, 146–47; Behdad 2016.
- ⁹⁵ Behdad 1999, 87–88; Behdad 2016, 63–65, 114.
- ⁹⁶ Tsadik 2007, 63.

CHAPTER NINE

SEVRUGUIN REIMAGINED: VIEWING SEVRUGUIN THROUGH A CONTEMPORARY LENS

Tasha Vorderstrasse, with Josh Tulisaiak

Sevruguin's pictures do not merely make us think about Qajar Iran and our response to his pictures; they also allow us to create in response to, or because of, his work. Sevruguin's work influenced not only his contemporaries in terms of his photographic style,¹ it also influenced Qajar painters (see below). As we attempt to better understand the different layers of Sevruguin's work, we can also see how we ourselves speak back to it—not only through our interpretations of who Sevruguin was, what he was trying to do, and who collected his works, but through how we reinterpret and reimagine his work and the work of Qajar photographers in general. We can try to see the hues of Sevruguin's world by colorizing his photographs, which was also done at the time. This can give us a glimpse into a more colorful Qajar Iran than the black-and-white photographs would suggest. On the other hand, contemporary photographers have also taken inspiration from Sevruguin and other Qajar photographers or used Qajar-era photographs in their art. It is through these remixes and reinterpretations that we can get closer to thinking about the different layers that inform us all when we look at Sevruguin's photographs. The work of Yassaman Ameri (see this volume, chapter ten) in particular tries to give a voice to the unknown (and unknowable) women in her inherited Qajar photographs, in that her work reverses the narrative in that the female subjects in these photographs are without a past or a history. In posing these questions, she challenges us to think beyond the usual issues of historical context and consider the importance of personal narratives.

SEVRUGUIN IN COLOR

“Looking at Greene’s photographs, it is easy to forget that the world he encountered was both inhabited and in color.”² Keller was speaking of the mid-nineteenth-century American photographer’s pictures of Egypt, but he could also be speaking of Sevruguin and how we view his photographs. When we see Sevruguin’s pictures, we see them in through a black-and-white past,³ even though we know that past would have been in color.⁴ While digital colorization is a new field, the desire to create color photographs goes back almost as far as photography itself. There were various processes that were developed to create color photographs, but they were not practical for widespread use.⁵ As a result, photographs were hand-colored in the nineteenth century,⁶ which was a far cheaper process and achieved the impact of having color, even if this was somewhat negated by the saturated colors that were added that did not look natural. Nevertheless, practitioners paid close attention to the colors that they should use in hand-coloring.⁷ There were early attempts to make color daguerreotypes already in the Russian Empire in 1840,⁸ and even in fairly provincial towns there were attempts by the beginning of the twentieth century to experiment with these techniques. The Sevrobe brothers, for example, were active in the beginning of the twentieth century in the town of Shushi, now located in Nagorno-Karabakh. Their backstamp advertised that one could purchase “photo-enamels.”⁹ This technique transferred a photographic image to ceramics or glass. When the object was fired, the photograph would be permanently fixed. It also meant that one could use enamel colors to make the photograph appear in color.¹⁰ An Armenian female photographer in Baku, Ashken Aristakova, colored her photographs with watercolors and also printed photographs on silk and marble.¹¹

In Iran, the Qajars were aware of the various developing techniques of photography and other media and used them widely.¹² Lithographic printing, for instance, was extremely popular in Iran by the end of the nineteenth century.¹³ Luigi Montabone, one of the early Italian photographers active in Iran, made hand-tinted photographs of his trip in 1862,¹⁴ and a lithograph that was overpainted by hand by Abdullah Mirza Qajar also exists,¹⁵ though Vuurmans claims there was little demand for it in Iran itself,¹⁶ in contrast to Schwerda, who claims it was popular.¹⁷ There are contemporary photo-chromolithographs¹⁸ and color photogravures of Sevruguin’s photographs (see fig. 9.1a–b), which were made through color printing,



LEFT AND OPPOSITE: Figure 9.1a–b. Qajar relief of Fath Ali Shah located at Chesmeh-Ali in Rayy (cat. no. 43, P. 1145 / N. 23676) and color photogravure, *Autours du Monde: Aquarelles, souvenirs de voyages*, and Paris: L. Boulanger, pl. CCCXIX.





Figure 9.2. Women weaving a carpet (cat. no. 70, P. 1172 / N. 24493).

but these are not the same as actual color photographs, since the color is added after the photograph is taken. Actual color photographs were made in the Russian Empire by Sergei Prokudin-Gorsky¹⁹ and were created by using blue, green, and red filters on glass negatives. In order to see the image in color, it was necessary to superimpose the plates to project the colorized image through a triple magic lantern.²⁰

The advent of new technologies means that it is now easier than before to colorize old photographs. In the case of the Prokudin-Gorsky images, for example, the glass negatives were digitized and then digitally superimposed on one another to create the color image.²¹ As a viewer, we react very differently to viewing a photograph in color versus viewing one in black-and-white, and this difference can clearly be seen when viewing different types of images. In other cases, where glass negatives such as these do not exist, different methods are employed to try to recreate colors, even though this will never be a one-to-one correlation and represents an “informed guess.” Therefore, this exhibition colorized one of Sevruguin’s photographs of four people, two of whom are in another picture in this exhibition. The fact that it was taken in black-and-white distorts the colors: if there were any blue or violet hues in the photograph, those colors would appear lighter, while the reds and greens would be much darker, for instance.²² The colors utilized were based on Qajar paintings and costumes, as well as contemporary colorized images, in order to best reconstruct possible colors of the individuals’ costumes, as well as other features. The result is not meant to be a replacement for the original black-and-white images made in the Qajar period, but rather to give the contemporary audience a glimpse into the bright images that would have filled Qajar society.

This is demonstrated by the reimagining of Sevruguin’s photograph showing women engaged in carpet-weaving (fig. 9.2) by the painter Musa.²³ In this version there are a number of differences, not simply the fact that the oil painting is in color. First, one’s eye is immediately drawn to the brightly painted green skirt of the weaver in the center of the painting, just as in the original one’s attention is drawn to her skirt, which is a large splash of white across the photograph. Her companion weaver is in the painting turned towards the viewer, while in the photograph she is busy weaving. The woman in the yellow shirt in the background was accompanied in the photograph by a little girl, who along with the boys in the corner of the photograph, are missing. Indeed, the bright colors initially distract one away from the other aspects of the painting, such as the carpet weaving, which is more central to the viewer and clear in the photograph. Therefore, one can easily see the impact that the color has and the choices that the artist Musa made. He presumably guessed that these particular colors were likely to resemble the colors that would have appeared in the original photograph. As such, however, this is a valuable record of a Qajar artist trying to reconstruct colors from the Qajar black-and-white image. There were other copies of Sevruguin’s work, such as a watercolor of one of his other photographs discussed by Donna Stein,²⁴ but she does not note the color differences, simply that one figure present in the photograph was missing from the painting.

HOW TO COLORIZE A BLACK-AND-WHITE HISTORIC QAJAR PHOTOGRAPH

Josh Tulisaiak

(fig. 9.3) While there are many methods for adding color to black-and-white photos, it all comes down to how one wants the end product to appear. The goal here is to have a natural-looking, accurate representation of how this would have looked in person during the time the photograph was taken. A few methods were used to start, such as using curve adjustment layers to help identify regions of color, but in the end, it came down to using actual textiles from the appropriate time and place to approximate the colors that were to be used in this photograph. Essentially, this image was “painted-over” using Adobe Photoshop, employing a combination of solid color layers with level and curve adjustments, among other small tweaks here and there.

To start, it was obvious the original photograph needed some editing and adjustments before the color was to be added. The first step was to clean up all the dust, scratches, and imperfections of the original. Next, a black-and-white filter was added in order to remove any existing color, since the original is quite yellow by comparison. Adjusting the contrast followed, which helped bring out more detail. The final step before adding in color was to convert the image to CMYK mode, which helps with coloring our now black-and-white photo.

Following these preparatory steps, the color was then added. For each color, a new solid color adjustment layer was added. This helps if the color needs to be changed later on because the solid color layer can be always be adjusted. The layer mode then needed to be changed to “soft light” and inverted, in order for the detail of the photograph to appear through the color. Using the brush tool, one can now “paint” over the sections in which they want to display this color, while adding new layers for each color that needs to be added. For this particular photograph there are over fifty color layers. While this can be time consuming, the end result is a natural and realistic look.

SEVRUGUIN AND QAJAR PHOTOGRAPHY REIMAGINED

The work of Sevruguin and Qajar photography has been imagined and reimagined by different artists. Qajar lithographs, for instance, have become objects reimagined in contemporary Iranian art.²⁵ Although primarily working in the visual sphere, there have also been attempts to look at Sevruguin as part of a literary performative work,²⁶ but the main sphere, not surprisingly, is in photography where others have reimagined Qajar photographs. In other cases, however, we may be seeing similarities that are not there. In the case of Sadegh Tirafkan and his photograph project Persepolis, we see the images and think of Sevruguin photographing himself in the same place. Armen Stepanian, who knew Tirafkan, did not believe that he had done this as a deliberate imitation of the work of Sevruguin but rather that it was a coincidence.²⁷

OPPOSITE:
Figure 9.3.
Cat. no. 154,
colorized
version of
P. 1214 / N.
24532, by
Josh Tulisaiak.



One of the most famous proponents of looking to historical Qajar is the photographer Shadi Ghadirian and her 1998–99 photographic series, *Qajar*.²⁸ These are clearly supposed to be recreations and reinterpretations of Qajar-era studio photographs that use black-and-white imagery, fashions inspired by the Qajar past, and modern props, thereby situating the photographs in the present day.²⁹ Bahman Jalali, on the other hand, uses different layers to create photographs made up of other photographs, or drawings on top of old photographs, which creates a jarring effect—much like Shadi Ghadirian’s modern photographs. It is therefore perhaps not surprising to learn that Shadi Ghadirian was Jalali’s student.³⁰ Interestingly, in the NYU exhibition *Eye of the Shah*, the works of Jalali and Ghadirian were included at the end of the exhibition under the title “Contemporary Photographs,” without any discussion or explanation.³¹ Although it is not clear whether the exhibition itself discussed why this material was included, the addition of these photographs without any explanation in the printed catalog remains problematic to the viewer. A similar issue can be observed with artist and filmmaker Runa Islam. In contrast to the other contemporary artists discussed here, Runa Islam was born in Bangladesh and raised in London, meaning that she is the only non-Iranian artist discussed here who was inspired by Sevruguin’s work and Qajar photography in general. Islam selected a glass negative and made a film showing how it was developed under the red light of a darkroom; the film also commented on the 2011 “Arab Spring.”³² As reproduced in the article, an image from the film is saturated with red, once again creating a startling image for the viewer.

The juxtaposition of modernity with traditionalism by Ghadirian was misunderstood by the audience in London, who believed that the photographs were a correct representation of how modern women in Iran now dress;³³ their reaction surprised Ghadirian. Iranian viewers, on the other hand, clearly would be able to see the references to the Qajar past.³⁴ Although curator Rose Issa criticized the British audience she claims “misread” the pictures and “failed to see its wit and to understand” the photographs,³⁵ clearly Issa felt there was only one way to view these works. As this exhibition has argued in the case of Sevruguin, however, there are multiple ways his pictures can be viewed, and there is no reason the same should not be applied to Ghadirian as well. As Layla Diba put it in her analysis of the work of the visual artist Shirin Neshat, “I do not seek to argue for a direct lineage between Neshat and pre-modern Iranian art but seek to provide a general historical context. . . . However, if the reader chooses to see certain ineffable parallels between Iranian visuality and Neshat’s poetic vision and collaborative practices, so be it.”³⁶ Indeed, Behdad has criticized both Jalali and Ghadirian as being a neo-Orientalist, a contention that he notes they do not agree with.³⁷

Although clearly influenced by Sevruguin as well as other Qajar photographers, Ghadirian does not explicitly cite him as an inspiration. Indeed, the book on her work does not provide us an insight into her own ideas; rather, Issa and Weiss wrote the book and discuss her work, and a few quotes from her are provided. In an interview with the *Guardian*, Ghadirian discusses in more detail what inspired her about Qajar art, namely the photographs made by Nasir al-Din Shah of his wives.³⁸ In her work on modern Iranian photography, Rameder makes a distinction between the photographs of Azadeh Akhlagi (the chosen subject of her thesis), who tries to stage recreations of historic events, and other photographers inspired by the Qajar period, who use elements of that past. In one of her stage recreations, for example, Akhlagi included someone portraying Antoin Sevruguin.³⁹ Still others, such as Armen Stepanian, photograph themselves with large pictures that appear to be from the Qajar period. To make the connection even more explicit, Arman Stepanian titled one of these “Antoine & I,” which



Figure 9.4a-c.
 LEFT: Cat. no. 143,
 P. 1247 / N. 24546,
 Afro-Iranian Dervishes.
 CENTER: Ghasem—
 Gurband, Minab County,
 Hormozgan Province,
 Iran, *Afro-Iran*, by
 Mahdi Ehsaei, 2014.
 RIGHT: Ameneh—
 Gurband, Minab
 County, Hormozgan
 Province, Iran, *Afro-
 Iran*, by Mahdi Ehsaei,
 2014 (Reference:
 Ehsaei, Mahdi [2015].
 “Afro-Iran,” Heidelberg:
 Kehrer Verlag).

pictured him with three others in front of a picture hanging on the wall that Rameder states is by Antoin Sevruguin⁴⁰ and makes reference to Armenian subjects, or are photographs of Armenian gravestones. Additionally, he has done research on historic photography.⁴¹

Iranian-German photographer Mahdi Ehsaei has documented the lives of Afro-Iranians in his book, *Afro-Iran* (fig. 9.4a–c). In his photographs of the descendants of enslaved Africans and African traders who live in southern Iran, he is explicit about the connection to Sevruguin and the fact that Sevruguin is his inspiration.⁴² Specifically, he is using the category of ethnographic types that Sevruguin documented, and in this case, taking pictures of an ethnic group in Iran that Sevruguin and other Qajar photographers made visible, even if Sevruguin did not photograph them frequently. Indeed, one can see the influence of Sevruguin in Ehsaei’s careful staging and use of props, as well as how his subjects look at the viewer. The main difference between his work and that of Sevruguin in the way that he photographs his subjects is his use of color, which pops in the book and draws one’s attention immediately to what the individuals are wearing. Each one of the pictures contains information about the people that he photographed, including their names and where they were photographed.⁴³ This makes the photographs more personal than those taken by Sevruguin, where we do not have much information, even about their names. The photography album also draws attention to the presence of Iranians of African descent living in Iran, a subject matter that has recently begun to attract more attention on the part of scholars studying Qajar photography.⁴⁴

YASSAMAN AMERI AND QAJAR PHOTOGRAPHY REIMAGINED

It is the work of Yassaman Ameri that features in this catalog and future exhibition. When I first started doing research on a possible contemporary aspect for the OI exhibition, I found the work of Yassaman Ameri in the collection of the Los Angeles County Museum (LACMA). I was immediately struck by how much the pictures that she had put together spoke to what I was thinking when I thought about how Qajar art could be reimagined. Her ability to remix old photographs and create something that was new, but yet made sense in the context of Qajar photography as a discipline, was extremely interesting. The curator's notes from her work at the LACMA (M.2010.35.1-6) site explains as follows:

Using the computer, Ameri has framed the found photographs with colorful images of Qajar interiors or incorporated references to the nascent medium of photography in Iran. In doing so, she recontextualizes the women in fictive settings in order to afford them a new identity.⁴⁵

Or, as Scheiwiller has memorably noted, she sees Ameri's work as "archaeological spaces" where the artist has "excavated" women's histories in the photographs through the use of technology,⁴⁶ following on Ameri's statement: "By means of using computer technology I excavated and revealed what time had erased from these images"⁴⁷ that Schweiller states "unfold in front of the viewer like a history book."⁴⁸

Although other artists had tried to reuse or recreate Qajar photography (see above), Yassaman Ameri's work did not feel as deliberately jarring or surprising as those photographs did. For instance, LACMA M.2010.35.6 shows a picture said to be a woman named Robabeh Khanoom. Robabeh is shown in Western clothes, standing facing the camera. In the reimagined photograph, she is shown leaning her hand on a chair, which is depicted in color. On the side is a black frame showing a vase of flowers. Both chairs and flower vases are popular props in Qajar photography. The use of the bright colors in her work and the different motifs all worked within a rubric of a remixing and reinterpretation of the pictures, even before I knew the context behind them. This is not to say that one approach is better than another, rather it was that her work made sense to me in the context of the future exhibition. I immediately thought that I wanted to include her work in the future exhibition's contemporary section, which at that point was still being developed. Ultimately, her work became the focus of the future exhibition's contemporary section.

While the purpose of the OI's future exhibition is to challenge one's preconceptions and notions about Qajar photography and to use different approaches to better understand Antoin Sevruguin and Qajar photography in general, it is also to place it within a context and see how it fits between what came before and what now exists. Hence the name, *Antoin Sevruguin: Past and Present*, a title which evokes Abraham Valentine Williams Jackson's 1906 book, *Persia: Past and Present* (see Vorderstrasse, this volume, chapter four). While Jackson might have deplored the hybridity of Tehran in the early twentieth century, the OI celebrates the different visions of Iran present in Sevruguin's and Ameri's work, which both use photography in very different ways, though separated by over one hundred years. Therefore, the titles, while similar, have a completely different meaning as we look at them through an early twenty-first-century lens rather than an early twentieth-century one.

The context of Yassaman Ameri's work adds another layer of interpretation to her art once one knows the story behind the photographs that she uses. Yassaman received a number of Qajar photographs as a gift from her mother, but little other information about them other than that her mother had inherited them from her own mother-in-law, and that she thought they were of prostitutes (see below). Thirty-six small photographs of women, many of whom were identified by name thanks to an inscription on the photographs, were affixed to a pink card.⁴⁹ The act of storing and saving these photographs brings our attention back to the Iranian participation in the collecting of Qajar photography. The OI collection, for example, was assembled by an American woman, and many other collections throughout the world have been assembled by non-Iranians. Behdad has noted that Iranian collections have been neglected in the past,⁵⁰ and Scheiwiller has discussed Iranian captions on Qajar photographers,⁵¹ drawing attention to the importance of Iranian collectors and interpreters of Qajar photography. Behdad himself tells the story of his mother giving him his grandfather's glass plates and photographs once she knew that he was interested in photography. Behdad had never been told that his grandfather had been a photographer, and he also discovered that the photography collected had been altered, pruned, and destroyed through time.⁵² Another early photographer, this time an Armenian photographer based in Tabriz, and his descendants, are the focus of a documentary film from 2006. The protagonist, a seventy-five-year-old photographer named Vartan, is faced with the question of what to do with his family's photograph collection.⁵³ Iranian collectors and their collections are also highlighted on the Women's Worlds of Qajar Iran website, although this is not made explicit. Therefore, the importance that Yassaman Ameri gives to discussing the gift given to her underscores the participation of Iranians in collecting, interpreting, and reinterpreting Qajar history and photography.⁵⁴

Indeed, the next question is the identity of the people in the photographs. Behdad was able to identify the people in his pictures as family members,⁵⁵ but it is evident that something different is happening in Yassaman Ameri's mother's pictures. The question of identity is an obvious question and not always one that we can answer. Many of us have old photographs that we know nothing about and cannot identify the subjects, and in looking through museum collections, one is frequently confronted with this difficulty. And even if there are captions that identify individuals in the pictures, there is nothing to say that these captions are correct. Captions may be written at the time a photograph was taken, are added later, and can represent someone's "best guess" of who is present in the pictures or may reflect a particular agenda (fig. 9.5).⁵⁶



Figure 9.5. “Young female prostitute” (Institute for Iranian Contemporary Historical Studies Collection, Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran website, Record No. 1261A100).

In the case of photographs that she was given, they were identified “prostitutes,” but there is nothing to indicate that the women were in fact sex workers. The identification of women who were photographed as “prostitutes” can be echoed in other Qajar-era photograph collections, and indeed her photographs and different photographs of the same women appear in other collections as well.⁵⁷ Further, these types of photographs⁵⁸ include pictures of women who are dressed in a way that would not suggest any sort of erotic connotations, as well as in more provocative poses, dressed as men or holding a cigarette.⁵⁹ Women who cross-dress in Qajar photographs have been identified as prostitutes (fig. 9.6a–b),⁶⁰ but other women also cross-dressed in Qajar-era photographs who were demonstrably not sex workers, such as members of the royal family, although one photograph is of royalty who allegedly acted in an “unchaste” way and who might not be a member of the royal family at all.⁶¹ More clear, however, are the Armenian-Iranian sisters Hirach and Rose Amirkhaniyan who are photographed cross-dressing by Russi Khan.⁶² According to the Women’s Worlds of Qajar Iran website, Hirach studied electrical engineering in Moscow and devoted her life to doing charitable work and teaching at an Armenian school in India, dying in India at age eighty.⁶³ Therefore, cross-dressing does not have to equal a dissolute life and may have had a variety of different meanings at the time. The traditional identification of these women, regardless of their dress and behavior as sex workers, serves to marginalize them as somehow beyond the scope of “normal” society.

But these women are not nameless and simply reduced to their supposed profession in life. In the case of Ameri’s pictures, their names are clearly written on the front of the photograph. This immediately humanizes the women. We start thinking of them as people rather than simply as “types.” The fact that their names are written in easily legible Persian, and transliterated in English on LACMA’s website, for example, and in articles written on Yassaman Ameri’s work, further adds to their accessibility.





But at the same time, the names complicate the narrative surrounding who these women are. Although they are not specifically identified as prostitutes, the names could suggest that they were. Indeed, one woman can be identified with a photograph taken by Nasir al-Din Shah of one of his concubines.⁶⁴ And while giving the women a name may help us to view them as people rather than simply images, it does not help us understand the history of who these women actually were at the time. We do not even know if these were their real names. That is where Ameri's work comes in: she provides the history and the context for the women, creating spaces for them to inhabit even though they have been forgotten by history.⁶⁵ And Ameri posits not only about the women themselves, but also the photographer, whom she suggests may have been a woman based on the subjects' poses.⁶⁶ It is interesting to see the contrast between this collage and one by Sevruguin's teacher, Dimitri Ermakov. This collage, like the one owned by Yassaman Ameri, is solely of women, but these women are posed far differently and in a much more artificial manner (fig. 9.7). Scheiwiller has pointed out that there were female photographers in Qajar Iran,⁶⁷ and indeed Sevruguin's own wife and their daughter Mary, along with his brothers, apparently assisted him in his photography, and Mary also took her own photographs, including one of her father, and he transferred the studio to her.⁶⁸

OPPOSITE AND LEFT: Figure 9.6a-b. Photograph said to be of two female "prostitutes" (Institute for Iranian Contemporary Historical Studies Collection, Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran website, Record No. 1261A93); Photograph of Rose and Hirach (dressed as a man) Amrikhaniyan, photographed by Russi Khan in 1900 (Nina Avakiyan Collection, Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran website, Record No. 1260A20).



Figure 9.7. Photograph collage of women, by Dimitri Ermakov (National Parliamentary Library of Georgia, digital library “Ivereli”).



As Yassaman Ameri notes in this volume, her work gives the women in these photographs a space for their voice and story that they did not have before. Sevruguin, on the other hand, makes the women he photographs anonymous and unknowable. It is through her work that we can start to think about not only who these women were who inhabit Sevruguin’s pictures but also who may have been the photographer.

CONCLUSION

Mixing contemporary art together with pre-modern art can be challenging. In the case of photography, it is perhaps less so due to the fact that photography itself is a relatively modern invention. Yet as the technology has changed through time, so has what we can do with the photographs. Still, as Yassaman Ameri has shown, using technology allows us to open up new ways of seeing nineteenth-century photography. So often nineteenth-century photography seems to primarily exist in an anonymous zone that is composed of shades of sepia, but seeing how it is remixed, reinterpreted, and reimagined allows us to open up new horizons in understanding it.

Endnotes

- ¹ Pérez González 2012, 36.
- ² Keller 2019, 39.
- ³ Sheikh 1999, 57.
- ⁴ Wild and Lloyd 2017, 2.
- ⁵ Romer and Delamoir 1989; White 1992; Henisch and Henisch 1996; Lehmann 2015.
- ⁶ Wild and Lloyd 2017, 2.
- ⁷ Lehmann 2015, 83.
- ⁸ Henisch and Henisch 1996, 4, 189.
- ⁹ www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/serobe-brothers/, accessed June 10, 2020.
- ¹⁰ Henisch and Henisch 1996, 103, 119–31; Yates 2019.
- ¹¹ www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/aristakova-ashkhen-ivani/, accessed June 15, 2020.
- ¹² Ekhtiar and Sardar 2011.
- ¹³ Marzolph 2001; Marzolph 2011, 125–26.
- ¹⁴ Tahmaspour 2006; Pérez González 2012, 30–31, 167 figs. 96 and 156; Amiri 2015, 62.
- ¹⁵ Pérez González 2012, 171 fig. 173.
- ¹⁶ Vuurman 2013, 47, no. 45.
- ¹⁷ Schwerda 2017, 92.
- ¹⁸ Schwerda 2017, 89, 92, 142, cat. no. 31.
- ¹⁹ Allshouse 1980; Adamson and Zinkham 2002; Leich 2017.
- ²⁰ Exhibition 2001.
- ²¹ Exhibition 2001.
- ²² Henisch and Henisch 1996, 1.
- ²³ Diba 2013, 98 fig. 12.
- ²⁴ Stein 2013, 26–27. For a color image of this picture, see Auction Catalogue 2011.
- ²⁵ Marzolph 2011.
- ²⁶ de Boose 2017.
- ²⁷ Rameder 2016, 50, no. 224. See also Silberman 2005, 12–13.
- ²⁸ Issa 2008, 18–27.
- ²⁹ Weiss 2008, 4–5; Schiewiller 2011: 101–3, 111–13, 123–26; Stamps 2013, 31; Behdad 2016, 159–63; Rameder 2016, 24, 36, 114; Scheiwiller 2017b, 83–86; Rameder 2019, 15–16.
- ³⁰ Silberman 2005, 22, 28–29; Scheiwiller 2011, 45–50, 61–68; Stamps 2013, 30; Behdad 2016, 155–59 fig. 6.3–4; www.silkroadartgallery.com/bahman-jalali/.
- ³¹ Chi 2015, 195–96, cat. nos. 204–14.
- ³² Guerrero-Hernández 2020, 32, 36–38, 40 fig. 4.
- ³³ Issa 2008, 10.
- ³⁴ Scheiwiller 2011, 111.
- ³⁵ Issa 2008, 10.

- ³⁶ Diba 2017, 37.
- ³⁷ Behdad 2016, 167. For a discussion of Neo-Orientalism in Iranian art in general see Scheiwiller 2018b.
- ³⁸ Phillips 2013. See also Rameder 2019, 15.
- ³⁹ Rameder 2016, 116, 119 fig. 1. See also Rameder 2017.
- ⁴⁰ Rameder 2016, 43 fig. 56. It is unclear if this photograph is by Antoin Sevruguin. It appears to be a privately commissioned studio photograph rather than one of his commercial photographs.
- ⁴¹ Shabbin n.d.; Silberman 2005, 16–19; Rameder 2016, 43 figs. 53 and 56; Scheiwiller 2017b, 90–92; Rameder 2019, 15.
- ⁴² Ehsaei 2015b. This is also clear in his artist’s statement, sent to the editor on August 9, 2020: “The photographic series Afro-Iran by German-Iranian photographer Mahdi Ehsaei (*1989) shows a side of Iran, which is widely unknown even to Iranians: a minority of people who influenced the culture of a whole region by continuing their African heritage with their clothing style, their music, their dance and their oral traditions and rituals. Ehsaei set out to the Hormozgan Province in the Persian Gulf to shed some light on this part of Iran, which is home to the descendants of enslaved people and traders from Africa. The traditional and historical region with one of Iran’s most ethnically diverse populations is framed with unique landscapes. In his book Ehsaei shows portraits which are not typical for the common picture of Iran. Afro-Iran reveals details documenting a centuries-long history of a community, which represents a neglected chapter of the African diaspora and is often overlooked in Iran’s history, but which has even shaped the culture in Southern Iran.”
- ⁴³ Ehsaei 2015a.
- ⁴⁴ Scheiwiller 2018c; Khosronejad 2017; Khosronejad 2020.
- ⁴⁵ “Curator Notes” on Yassaman Ameri’s work at LACMA. See <https://collections.lacma.org/node/221318>, accessed June 15, 2020.
- ⁴⁶ Scheiwiller 2011, 74–75; Scheiwiller 2016, 140, 151.
- ⁴⁷ Scheiwiller 2016, 142–43, quoting an artist statement emailed by Yassaman Ameri to her.
- ⁴⁸ Scheiwiller 2011, 1.
- ⁴⁹ Ameri 2001, 54–57; Procter 2004, 33; Scheiwiller 2011, 73–74 fig. 27; Scheiwiller 2016, 142; Ameri, this volume, chapter ten.
- ⁵⁰ Behdad 2008.
- ⁵¹ Scheiwiller 2016b.
- ⁵² Behdad 2016, 102–5.
- ⁵³ Tabriz: Image from the Forgotten World. 2006.
- ⁵⁴ See also Behdad 2016, 104–5.
- ⁵⁵ Behdad 2016, 103–5.
- ⁵⁶ Scheiwiller 2017a.
- ⁵⁷ Scheiwiller 2017a. For a discussion of prostitution in Iran in general see Dezhmkooy and Papoli-Yazdi 2020.
- ⁵⁸ See Gordon 2014; Scheiwiller 2017a.
- ⁵⁹ Scheiwiller 2016, 140, 143–44, 146, 150–51.
- ⁶⁰ Gordon 2014.
- ⁶¹ Scheiwiller 2017a; Scheiwiller 2018a.
- ⁶² The Amrikhaniyan family seem to have been fond of dressing up in costumes and photographing themselves. Rose and Hirach’s sister Ninish was photographed by Russi Khan in a theatrical costume that appears to be Indian, and her husband, Armin Istipaniyan, appears as a priest in a picture by an unknown photographer.
- ⁶³ www.qajarwomen.org/en/people/2071.html, accessed June 15, 2020.
- ⁶⁴ Scheiwiller 2011, 76; Scheiwiller 2016, 143–45.

- ⁶⁵ Ameri 2001, 54; Procter 2004, 33; Scheiwiller 2011, 72; Scheiwiller 2016, 145–46.
- ⁶⁶ Procter 2004, 33; Scheiwiller 2011, 75; Ameri, this volume, chapter ten.
- ⁶⁷ Scheiwiller 2011, 75.
- ⁶⁸ Nameghi and Pérez González 2013, 70–71; Williams 2020, 39–40; Tajarian n.d., 14. In the Russian empire, several female Armenian photographers are known (www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/aristakova-ashkhen-ivani/, www.lusarvest.org/practitioners/musheghyan-yelizaveta-gavrili/, accessed June 15, 2020).

CHAPTER TEN

SEVRUGUIN AND I

Yassaman Ameri

Antoine Sevruguin was born in Iran exactly one hundred years before me. Although he grew up outside of Iran, he returned to the country as a young man. He then spent the rest of his life documenting every facet of the country and culture that he loved. His vast body of work, which survived many turbulent events, is a testimony to his role as a critically important witness to a defining period in the history of Iran, the lead-up to the Constitutional Revolution of 1905–1911.

As a young woman, I was also defined by a revolution in Iran, in 1979. I left my homeland over forty years ago and never returned. My work, although anchored in the history of my country, has been entirely created in exile. It relies on the interplay between my imagination, my memories, my research, and documents that have traveled far to reach me. The subject of my work is not what is before me, but what I remember and wish not to forget.

I was introduced to Sevruguin's work while researching for a series of images I created titled *The Inheritance*. Sevruguin was active in Iran during the same period that the women featured in my work were photographed. Given this historical overlap, I was curious to know more about him. On the occasion of the joint exhibition of our work at the Oriental Institute in Chicago, I revisited Sevruguin's multiple biographies and various collections of his work. This led me to think further about the relationship between our respective experiences and artistic expressions across one hundred years of history and an ocean.

In retracing his legacy, I found myself particularly drawn to his portraits of women. Sevruguin and I both deal with images of women from a specific time in Iran when historical records of their lives were sparse, leaving their truths open to interpretation. In many ways, our individual styles seek to achieve the same goal in reverse. Where I take these women's anonymity and attempt to imbue it with historical context, Sevruguin takes those same women out of their historical context and imbues them with anonymity.

THE INHERITANCE

Many years ago, a gift was brought for me from Iran. My mother, Mina Ardeshir Rokni, told me she found it in a stash of objects left behind by her mother-in-law, Mahtalat VazirNezam. She told me her mother-in-law had aspirations of becoming a journalist and a performer. Mahtalat also wrote poetry under a pen name. She was a collector of unique objects, and she left behind seven chests full of all sorts of items when she died in 1986. In giving me a gift from this collection (fig. 10.1), my mother said, “You’re a photographer. You might want to do something with this.”

The gift was a document containing thirty-six small and faded portraits of mostly unveiled women, produced during the Qajar dynasty’s reign in Iran. These tiny portraits are carelessly cut and pasted next to each other, sometimes overlapping on the edges, and reproduced as a sort of oversized postcard. The pink background cardboard carries the wear and tear of years of daily life in a family home.



Figure 10.1. Document gifted to Yassaman Ameri by her mother.

There is a handwritten name in the corner of every portrait but one. Some of the names are common women’s names from that time, such as Tooba, Nimtaj, or Esmat. Others are nicknames, such as the Beloved of Hajimirzamehdi, Haji Qasem’s Daughter, or the Puny Princess. One woman has a man’s name: Hassan Agha. My mother did not know the identity of these women or the context for these pictures.

I copied the individual images on slides, projected each photo on the wall in a dark room, and sat in front of them. The pale and faded photographs contained a wealth of unexpected details when enlarged. The women were looking right back at me in silence. They are mostly unveiled or loosely veiled and appear relaxed and somewhat indifferent to being photographed. Some of the images are formal studio portraits; others are more casual snapshots. Some of the women seem to belong to upper classes or even royal families; others seem more common. Some imitate popular male poses from that era; others go so far as to be dressed as men carrying a female name (or vice versa). They appear assertive, and their presentation does not follow the erotic and exoticized style of the time.

Many of the photographs are produced in what seems to be the same home studio. Some were taken outdoors but never in a public place. I suspect that these portraits were reproduced together because they were the work

of a female photographer. This would explain the consistent handwriting on all the images and the absence of conventional sexualized poses.

In the early history of photography in Iran, there are references to a few women photographers. Mostly, they belonged to upper class families and learned photography from their male relatives. They would use equipment that was already in their homes to take pictures of other women. These photographs were taken, developed, and printed at home. They would then be put away immediately, in order to hide them from the view of strangers and preserve the honor of the women involved.

I found myself compelled to find out more about the women portrayed in the postcard my mother had gifted me. Who took the pictures of these women? What connected their images together? I wanted to know about these women's identities and their lives. To find answers to these questions, I looked towards the history of photography in Iran and the art of the Qajar era in general.

Through my research, I came upon hundreds of images from the early history of photography in my country, including Sevruguin's photographs and drawings. Mostly, I found photographs of men. They were alone or grouped together, in public places or private spaces. They were predominantly religious authorities, politicians, members of the royal family, revolutionaries, and artisans. I found very few women. The rare images that included women mostly fit into two categories: women of the upper classes—including royal wives and concubines—presented in erotic poses, or women of the lower classes who were mostly dancers and entertainers. I did not come across any images that matched the style of the photographs of the women in my document. I did, however, come across a wealth of images, paintings, biographies, travel logs, and recorded stories about men that were produced around the same time that the photographs of the women in my document were taken.

Eventually I lost hope that I would find substantial information about these women and the circumstances of their lives. I realized that these women's lives were unrecorded, and conventional research would not reveal the information I was seeking. In the absence of documented historic information, all I had was the evidence the women themselves had left behind by posing in front of the camera. I started to imagine, and gradually construct, my own context for the lives of the women in the document.

The Inheritance is a work dedicated to, and inspired by, my futile efforts to identify the historical significance of these images. It is a testament to the missing records of women's lives, the inconsistencies in the way that history—both public and personal—is documented, and the voids created by the absence of evidence. In *The Inheritance*, I explore two notable bodies of work from the Qajar period in parallel: (1) the collection of paintings from that era, mostly of male dignitaries identified by name and rank, presented in their elaborate outfits, surrounded by objects and spaces defined by wealth and power, and (2) the collection of faded photographs of women from that period that contains virtually no information about their subjects' identities, social status, or environment.

In my images, I create for the viewer an opportunity to experience these two bodies of Qajar art simultaneously. The women in the photographs are allowed, for a moment, to coexist in the same frame as the men in the paintings (fig. 10.2a–c). I do not seek to imply that these women shared the power, position, or wealth of their contemporary men. Rather, my images refer to a shared time and space between them—a joint history, and all that comes with that.



The women leave their flat and mostly-empty backgrounds and enter the space of the men's paintings, invoking how real life may have happened. After all, while the women didn't share the men's power and wealth, they did share the same physical spaces. The women occupied those spaces, living alongside the men and sharing the joy and pain that came with that coexistence.

Figure 10.2a-c.
From the series *The Inheritance*.
FROM LEFT TO
RIGHT: nos. 16,
30, and 36.

SEVRUGUIN'S WOMEN

Given what *The Inheritance* seeks to address, the presentation of my work alongside that of Antoin Sevruguin is particularly meaningful. Sevruguin left behind an abundant archive of visual information rarely found elsewhere. He had a profound affection for, and understanding of, the Iranian people, their culture, and their land. His images carry this legacy. Sevruguin was also an intellectual and was trained as a painter. Drawing from his admiration for artists such as Rembrandt, he developed a painterly aesthetic for photographing women. His approach to these portraits invoked fantasy and desire. As a businessman, he also created a market for these images (fig. 10.3).

Figure 10.3.
Possibly Antoin
Sevruguin.
Studio Shot of a
Reclining Lady
Reading a Book,
late nineteenth
century.
Albumen silver
photograph,
6 3/16 x 8 1/8
in. (15.7 x 20.6
cm) (Brooklyn
Museum,
purchase gift of
Leona Soudavar
in memory
of Ahmad
Soudavar,
1997.3.6).



Within the rich collection that Sevruguin left behind, the body of photographs of women he produced stands apart. Although there already existed a tradition of erotic paintings of women distributed for public consumption in Iran, “Sevruguin was the first photographer to have women pose in his commercial studio.”¹ These images were then publicly sold to a variety of buyers.

Women in these photographs do not appear in their daily environment, whatever that may have been. They are placed in an arranged setup created by the photographer. The aesthetic borrows from a mix of European and Middle Eastern female nude traditions. Their composition is not intended to convey the photographer’s knowledge of the circumstances of the subject’s life. They do not follow his style of documentary photography. Instead, the backdrops and the romantic poses make the women appear submissive, idle, and seductive all at the same time.

My reading of these portraits, from where I stand in history a hundred years later, is that in addition to Sevruguin’s own influences and intentions, I believe the women in these images also had some agency in how they were portrayed. They seem to be aware of the active trade in specific types of images of women, they were likely compensated for being photographed, and they may even have had a role to play in setting the scene for their portraits. It is also possible that they were aware of the images that Sevruguin drew from. None of these theories, however, can be verified—again, because women’s lives at that time were simply not deemed worthy of recording.

Sevruguin and I create images in the absence of information about women’s lives during a specific era in our country. In that void, each of us has chosen to carve our own narrative about who those women may have been. Without recorded documents, we can only imagine their lives using random images and bits and pieces of records such as those that Mahtalat collected throughout her life and left for me to put back together and decipher.

Endnote

¹ Scheiwiller 2017a, 97.

CATALOG

Notes in photograph captions, including spelling and punctuation, appear as originally written on the back of each photograph. Additionally, the ink notes by Mary Clarke are given in regular typeface, with the pencil notes in italics, and the type written notes underlined. Where the individual has crossed out the pencil notes, these are also crossed out in the captions. These are described in greater detail in the Catalog Introduction.

CATALOG INTRODUCTION

Tasha Vorderstrasse

Nowhere are the pictures identified as being by Sevruguin in the photographs collected by Mary Clarke in the 19th Century Photographs Collection of the OI Museum. They can be identified as by Sevruguin on the basis of parallels, the presence of his negative numbers, or both.¹ The Sevruguin photographs present here are generally of photographs that are well known and have been published elsewhere. In the catalog, the photographer is only noted if they are known to be someone other than Sevruguin or unknown. Otherwise, the photographs are assumed to be by Sevruguin or probably by Sevruguin. Comparable collections of Sevruguin photographs are in both public and private collections throughout the world. There is a large number of photographs and glass slides in the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. Other notable collections include albums in the Harvard Sackler Museum, Getty Research Institute Special Collections, Victoria and Albert Museum, Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, Rijksmuseum of Amsterdam, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Leiden University Library and Museum of Ethnology, Museum Rietberg in Switzerland, Finnish Museum of Photography in Finland, Kunstkamera in St. Petersburg, Golestan Museum in Tehran, and the private collection of Azita Bina and Elmar Seibel in Boston.

The physical photographs were pasted onto cardboard, themselves individual tactile pieces, altogether something that was meant to be held and examined by the viewer. Different visualities were communicated between the Qajar, American, and European communities, and we continue to see these photographs in different ways today.² The photographs in the OI collection constitute a photographic survey of Iran as part of Sevruguin's efforts to document Iran at the end of the nineteenth century.³ Someone, presumably the collector Mary Clarke, wrote information on the backs of the photographs about the subject matter, some of which was later corrected. Captions in ink are also present on the back of the cards, the letters underlined; this too was likely done by Clarke's hand. Sometimes a lighter ink caption is also present, probably also written by Mary Clarke, since the handwriting is the same, and these are treated as part of the same caption. There are also pencil captions and corrections added later by at least one person, possibly Mary Clarke or some other later OI archivist, as indicated by dates in the 1930s. These captions generally consist of descriptions, as well as editorial comments about the society in which the photograph was taken. Research on each one of these aspects show how Mary Clarke viewed life in Qajar Iran, which would not have necessarily been evident to other viewers of these photographs. There are also some typewritten notes and other notes that seem to have been made at the time the photographs were lent out. In order to make the differences between the notes clear, the ink notes by Mary Clarke are given in regular typeface, with the pencil notes in italics, and the typewritten notes underlined. Where the individual has crossed out the pencil notes, these are also crossed out in the captions. It should also be noted that some of these captions are Orientalist in the way in which they describe life in Qajar Iran.⁴

The photographs entered into the OI collection and were arranged by subject matter and numbered. The act of organizing the photographs according to taxonomic categories was not a neutral act; the organization constituted decisions on the way

in which people wanted the photographs to be viewed. As individual images rather than images in an album, the photographs could be grouped in different ways. It also contributed to the degradation of the collection: certain photographs are now missing, having been lent out and not returned. It also impacts the way in which they are now viewed. The labels are on the backs of the cardboard mounts, and to see them it is necessary to flip the mount so that photograph and the label cannot be viewed concurrently together. The data is therefore presented as part of the photograph, but at the same time separate from it, perhaps so as not to distract the viewer from the photograph itself.⁵ The photographs are on light brown-grey thick card and have been affixed very firmly. There is no sign of the photographs detaching from the card. The way that the photographs were treated is very similar to the Willem Lodewijk Bosschart collection of 179 Sevruguin photographs in Leiden, which were collected in 1895–1899. These photographs were also stuck on the backs of cards,⁶ and the subjects depicted are very similar to the Clarke photographs.

It was common for museums to affix photographs onto card in this way.⁷ The photographs in the OI collection were organized by subject matter and systemized:

1. Persian dignitaries
2. Views in and about Tehran
3. Street scenes
4. Bazaar scenes
5. Industries
6. Types - men
7. Types - women
8. Family groups and wedding scenes
9. Scenes through Persia
10. Dervishes
11. Miscellaneous

Many of the photographs in the OI collection exist in collections elsewhere, but they exist in different contexts, meaning that they can be read in different ways.⁸ In other cases, the photographs were assembled in albums. While sometimes the collectors are known, that is not always the case. The Getty Research Institute Special Collections, for instance, acquired photographs that were apparently bound together in one album, but the Getty collection is apparently not the entire album. Further, because they are now detached, it is unclear if they were ever assembled together in a particular order.⁹ In another case, the photographs of Sevruguin were collected by the Russian Aleksanteri Ijas and then used in a 1917 book by the Finnish scholar Ivar Lassy to illustrate his book, *Hunnun ja ristikon takana (Behind the Lattice and the Veil)*. Lassy added lengthy captions to the photographs, presumably for didactic reasons and include judgmental comments that are similar to those of Mary Clarke.¹⁰

The comparison here will focus on published collections that were assembled at about the same time. The comparison with the Holsscher collection has already been noted above. A largely unpublished album that Schwerda speculates was collected by missionaries around 1896 may form the closest parallel to the Mary Clarke collection, but only a few photographs from this album have been published. The pictures that have appeared, however, do not appear to be the same as those in the Clarke collection.¹¹ Another missionary album assembled in 1911–15 by Thomas LeRoy Kirkpatrick, an American Presbyterian missionary, does contain two identical photographs by Sevruguin that are the same as those in the Clarke collection¹² and also appear in photographs collected by Shedd family, who were American Presbyterian missionaries in Iran from 1892 to 1918.¹³ Other largely unpublished albums that might form a point of comparison include those in the Leiden University library¹⁴ and the Alpiger albums in the Museum Rietberg, Zurich, which have been discussed by Scheiwiler.¹⁵

One of these collections was assembled by Albertus Hotz (1855–1930), a businessman whose father had begun a company called the Persian Trading Association. After his father died, Hotz set up a number of offices in Iran, but eventually the firm ran into financial difficulties. He suspended trading first in 1895, and then finally in 1903 after there had been a brief flurry of renewed activity. There are albums that contain pictures taken by Hotz himself, as well as those purchased from other photographers such as Sevruguin. One album (album 13) contains photographs purchased from Sevruguin, which contains photographs of landscapes. The other album (album 15) has ethnography photographs by Sevruguin, and album 16 has city views by Sevruguin. There are also some Sevruguin photographs mixed in with others in album 17. What has been published shows again short captions.¹⁶ There are three photograph collections that can be associated with Hotz and his firm in Iran: Albertus Hotz himself, Hendrik Dunlop, and Charles Smith.

Hendrik Dunlop had a photo album of sixty-two photographs largely from Persia, which is now in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. This album, which was put together in 1890–95, is different from many of the other photograph albums of Sevruguin assembled in the 1890s/1900s in that it largely contains photographs of landscapes and architecture rather than ethnographic portraits, which were quite popular with other collectors. None of the pictures in the Clarke collection are found in this album. The captions present with the photographs were very short.¹⁷ Charles Smith, who also worked for Hotz, but this time in Sultanabad rather than Shiraz, put together an album that is also composed of fifty-eight pictures (forty-eight of which can be identified as being by Sevruguin) and twenty-six loose photographs, which seem to have been Smith's own pictures. The pictures in the album are very similar in subject matter to the Clarke album and contain some of the same pictures as the Clarke collection, although others were previously not published. The main difference with the Clarke collection is that Smith did not collect that many pictures of Qajar royalty and officials, nor was he that interested in ancient and medieval monuments in Iran. The photographs also include more obviously erotic photographs of Qajar women, even if they are all fully clothed. The captions accompanying the photographs were very short and not necessarily accurate. It is possible that Smith, who was traveling with his sister, deliberately choose to buy certain images based on the individuals that they met while in Iran.¹⁸ These albums are definitely different from the mostly complete disassembled album in the Getty, with their short captions in French. In contrast to the other albums, pictures of the women in this album included nude women,

although Emil Alpiger also collected pictures of nude women. The Alpiger albums, however, were altered through time by Alpiger's sister, who removed or covered up pictures she found objectionable.¹⁹

The Arpee album (FSA A2011.03), named for its collector, Stephen Arpee, is now in the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. This album contains pictures pasted into the album as well as loose pictures, many of which are duplicates. Some of these pictures are Sevruguin's photographs and have signatures in Cyrillic. The pictures also had captions, but they were very short. This was in contrast to some long, explanatory captions in the Clarke collection. Some of the pictures are in the Clarke collection as well, but there were several graphic images of executions and more erotic pictures of women included in the Arpee album. Similar to the Smith album, the women are fully clothed, but were definitely erotic. The Ronald Graham album at Harvard Sackler Museum (TL22141.1) is only partially published, but it is different from many of the other albums in that it includes pictures by Graham combined with photographs he bought from Sevruguin during his visit to Iran in 1897–99. The captions are once again very short.²⁰ Again, one can see some of the same photographs in the OI collection.

These albums are also different than the Firouz Firouz album, which has been digitized on the Women's Worlds of Qajar Iran website. The Firouz Firouz album is a Persian album rather than a Western album and is very different in composition. The photograph album consists of different women, and only one of these photographs is by Antoin Sevruguin. It is similar to an album that is in the Azita Bina and Elmar W. Seibel collection.²¹ Although not as well published, it is evident that Sevruguin sold his photographs to foreigners as well as local Iranians, and one can see many of the same photographs in both.²²

PUBLICATION OF PHOTOGRAPHS

The majority of the pictures in this catalog are well-known pictures and have been reproduced on a number of occasions in exhibition catalogs on Sevruguin and Qajar photography. While the future exhibition, like other exhibitions of Qajar pictures, represents a selection of photographs to be viewed by the public, this catalog shows a *complete* collection of Sevruguin's and others' photographs in print form, which allows the viewer to see the entire collection together. In order to further emphasize the fact that this is a collection, it replicates the original order of the pictures as arranged in the OI archive; unfortunately lacking are several photographs that were lent from the archive after it was assembled in 1928, which were never returned. Then another photograph vanished, although this one still exists in a copy. All of the images from this collection were already available on the OI's online collections search, for audiences worldwide. One must make the distinction between the physical photographs and the print and digital images of the photographs.²³ The advent of digital technology has meant that large numbers of photographs of Antoin Sevruguin and other photographers are now available for researchers and the interested public, but such digitization projects represent a challenge to researchers in the way the images are transferred and represented to the viewers on the computer screen.²⁴ Viewing the physical photographs is a very different experience

from seeing the photographs either in print or digital form, the latter opening up new possibilities. This is not to say that the digital or print copy is inferior to the original, but rather that it opens up whole new ways of viewing these works of art.²⁵ Nevertheless, other collections have been fully digitized, but as has been noted for the nearly contemporary Ottoman Abdul Hamid II albums at the Library of Congress, digital pictures are detached from their original context and any narrative sequence that might have existed, allowing the pictures to be understood in new ways.²⁶

Endnotes

- ¹ See for example, Vuurman 1999, 171–70.
- ² See Nolan 2019 for a discussion of this in the Ottoman empire.
- ³ For a similar phenomenon, see Edwards 2009, 130–31.
- ⁴ It is perhaps interesting in this context to note a lengthy caption written in Persian, presumably by a local Persian collector, describing an anonymous photograph, which is also highly judgmental, indicating that such descriptions are not entirely the opinions of Western travelers to the country. See Damandan 2004, 19 fig. 18.
- ⁵ Edwards 2009, 144, 146, 148–49.
- ⁶ Rosema 1999, 166. While the majority of the pictures appear in the volume of his photographs, it does not appear to be all of the pictures. The number of photographs and glass negatives said to be in the collection is 179, and fewer photographs than that appear in the volume. Further, there are other Sevruguin photographs in the National Ethnology Museum that are not published here that appear to be part of the collection. See van Doorn and Vogelsang-Eastwood 1999.
- ⁷ Edwards 2002, 71.
- ⁸ See Edwards 2002, 73.
- ⁹ Williams 2020, 29–30, 44. no. 6.
- ¹⁰ Gourgieva 2020, 21–28.
- ¹¹ Chi 2015, 107, 192; Schwerda 2017, 88–89 figs. 5–6.
- ¹² ARCHIVES 12-1222, SPP 111; Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA; <https://digital.history.pcusa.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A138869> and <https://digital.history.pcusa.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A138832>, accessed July 30, 2020. This album also contains an unusually large number of pictures of executions, apparently reflecting the interests of the collector.
- ¹³ ARCHIVES 16-0623, box 2, folder 3; Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA, accessed July 30, 2020.
- ¹⁴ This includes albums of photographs of Sevruguin assembled not only by Albertus Hotz, who is discussed here in more detail, but also by the banker Rudolph Said-Ruete (1869–1946), which includes an album containing Sevruguin photographs and the courier Barend Constantijn Dorus Leeuwenburgh with an album and box of Sevruguin photographs. See Vuurman 2013, 40–43.
- ¹⁵ Scheiwiller 2017a.
- ¹⁶ Vuurman and Martens 1995, 24–31, 41–42; Witkam 1998, 276, 280–81; Vuurman et al. 2008, 4–5, 12, 30–32, 38–43, 50–56, 62–63, 68–69; Vuurman 2013, 33. I have not seen Vuurman 2011.
- ¹⁷ Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-F-F01048. Available at www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/zoeken/objecten?set=RP-F-F01048&p=1&ps=12&st=Objects&ii=0#/RP-F-F01048,0, accessed July 25, 2020.

¹⁸ Victoria and Albert Museum, E.339:1-2010. See Venes and Wearden 2006; Harris and Miller 2011.

¹⁹ Scheiwiller 2017a.

²⁰ Spurr 2002; Spurr 2006.

²¹ Schwerda 2017, 89.

²² Scheiwiller 2017a.

²³ Conway 2010, 427–28.

²⁴ See for example Conway 2009; Conway 2010; Gooding 2013; Terras 2015.

²⁵ See Cameron 2007 for a discussion of digital copies of photographs.

²⁶ Nolan 2019.

1. Photographer: Mirza Ahmad Khan (1848–after 1906).
The late Shah, who was assassinated May 1, 1896.
Reigned fifty years. *Nasr ad' Din Shah reigned 1845–1896*
(P. 1100 / N. 23687)



2. Sevruguin Negative
number: 353
The late Shah, on a
hunting expedition
(P. 1101 / N. 23688)



3. The assassin of Nasir-
i-Din, the late Shah *Mirza*
Reza Kermani
(P. 1102 / N. 23689)



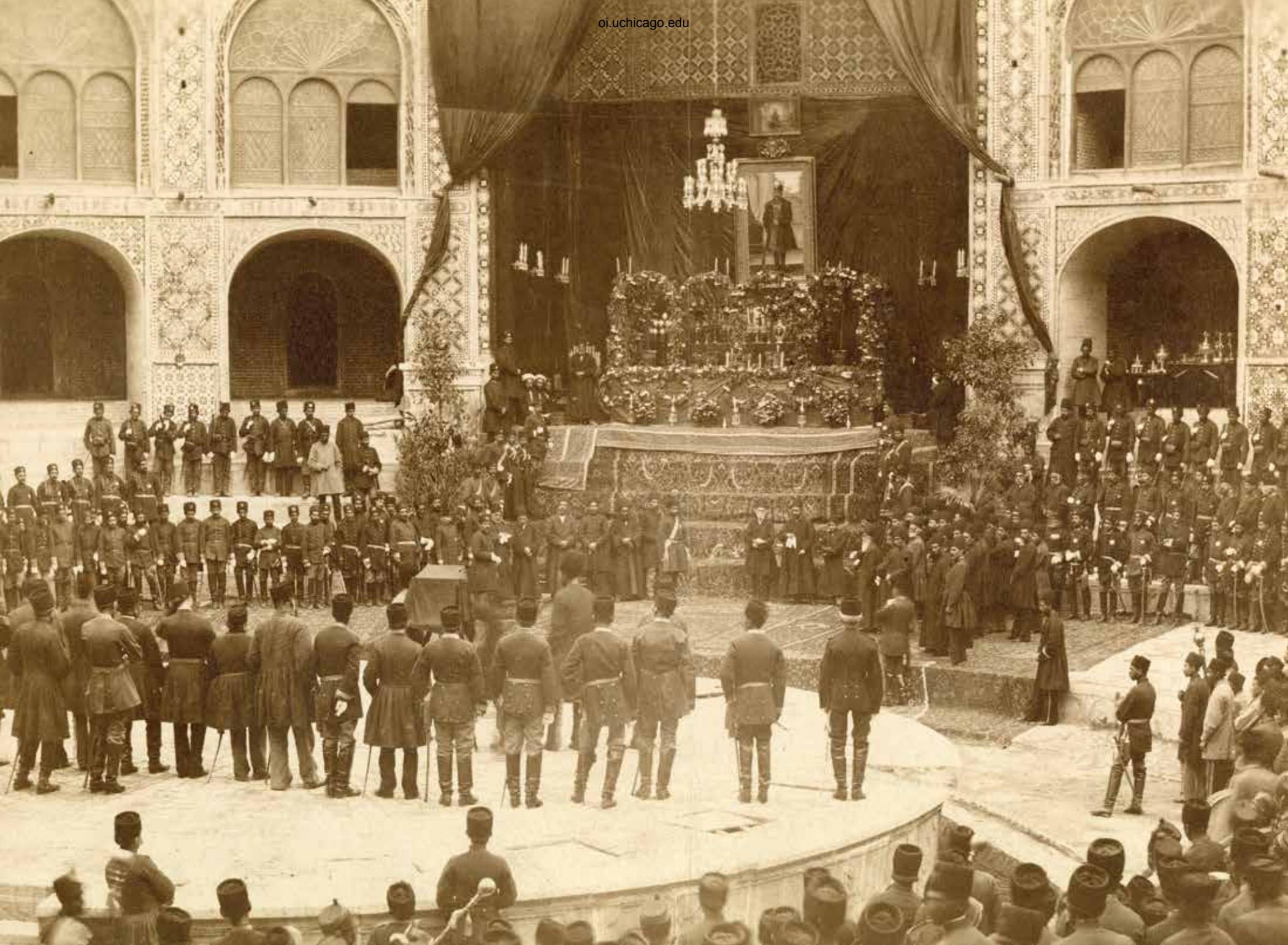


4. Photographer: Abdullah Mirza Qajar (1850-1909)
The assassin of the late Shah with his guard. He was kept in confinement until the arrival of the new Shah who had him executed (P. 1103 / N. 23690)

RIGHT: 5. Sevruguin
Negative number: 766
Catafalque of the late
Shah, when his remains
were placed in the
mausoleum erected
in the mosque where
he was assassinated.
Anything more tawdry
than the canopy of
this catafalque with
its feather-duster
ornaments cannot be
imagined.
(P. 1104 / N. 23691)

OPPOSITE: 6. The
funeral obsequies of the
late Shah in the royal
theater.¹ *Iran*
(P. 1105 / N. 23698)







OPPOSITE LEFT: 7.
Photographer: Unknown
The present shah, taken
when he was crown
prince. 1896-
(P. 1107 / N. 23692)

OPPOSITE RIGHT: 8.
Sevruguin Negative
number: 558
Zil-i-Sultan, the oldest
son of the late Shah, who
could not succeed his
father because his mother
was not of royal blood.
(P. 1108 / N. 23693)

RIGHT: 9.
Photographer: Unknown
The minster of war, a son of
the late Shah. He does not
enjoy military drill because
the dust blows in his eyes!
(P. 1109 / N. 23694)



10. Photographer: Unknown
An adopted son of the late Shah. His majesty was a man of whims, and his treatment of this boy was one of his many strange deeds.

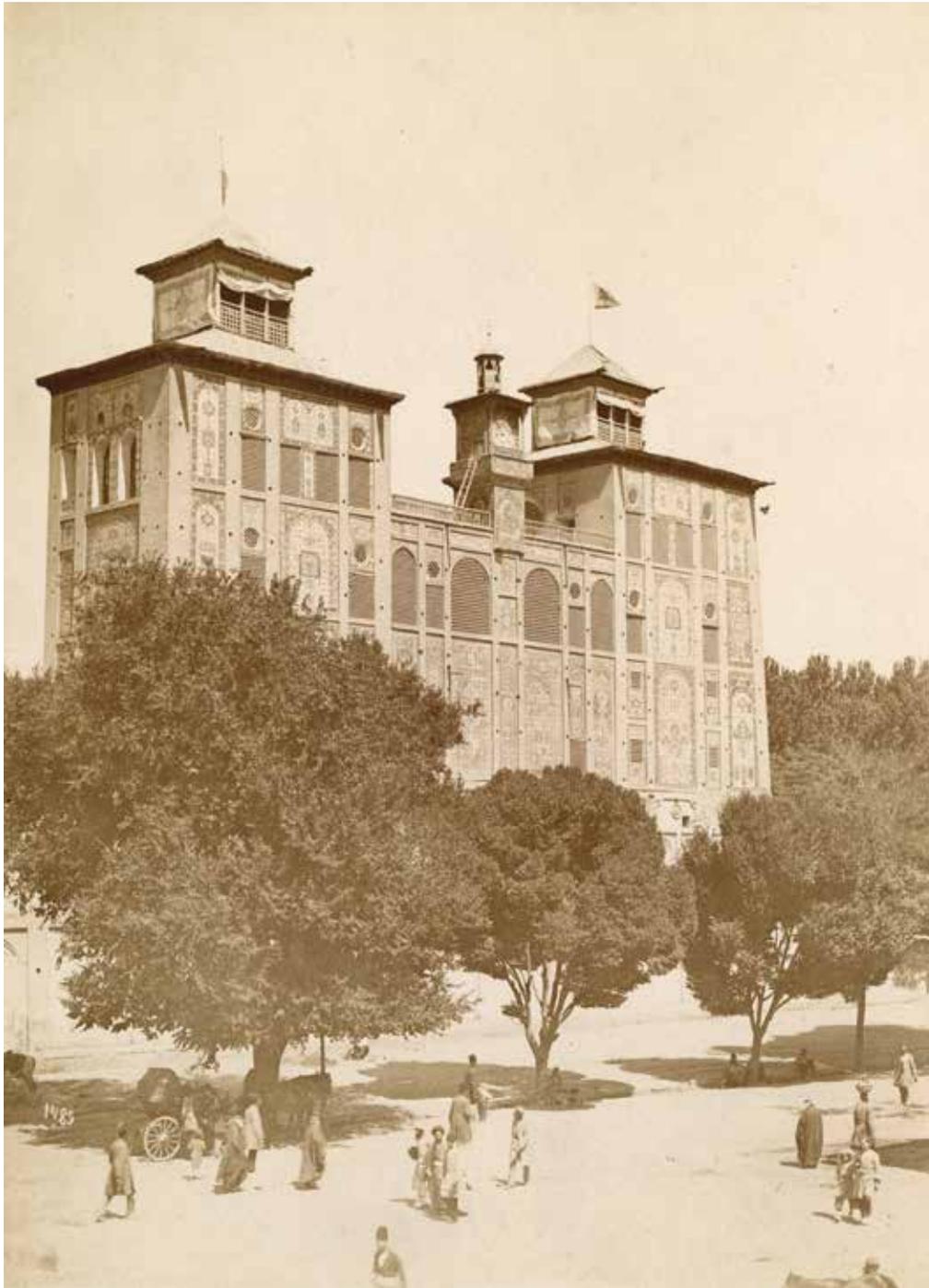
After the Shah's assassination the prime minister telegraphed the new Shah, then in Tabriz, asking, "What shall be done with the Aziz-i-Sultan?" (The beloved of the king). The reply was, "He was the 'beloved' of the late king, he is not mine;" and so the boy who had been first a street gamin and then the spoiled favorite of a capricious monarch was turned out upon the world. *Aziz-i-Sultan* (*Beloved of the king*).
(P. 1110 / N. 23695)



OPPOSITE LEFT: 11,
Sevruquin Negative
number: 572. The master
of ceremonies
(P. 1111 / N. 23696)

OPPOSITE RIGHT: 12.
The prime minister who
at the time of the Shah's
assassination did so much
to save Persia from riot
(P. 1112 / N. 23697)



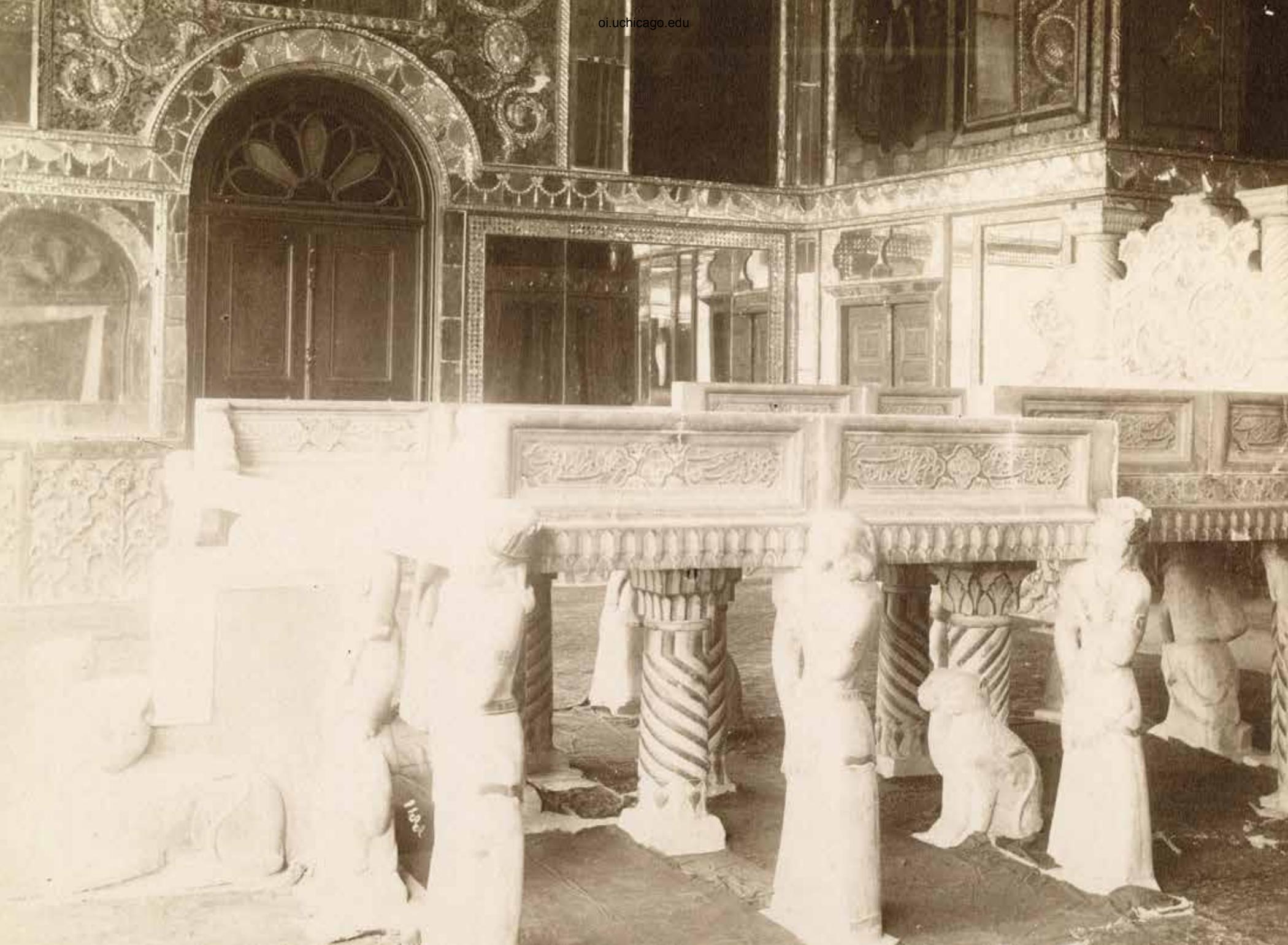


13. Sevruguin Negative
number: 1489
The clock-tower, a part of the
royal residence in Teheran
Shams-i Maret Palace.
(P. 1114 / N. 23650)

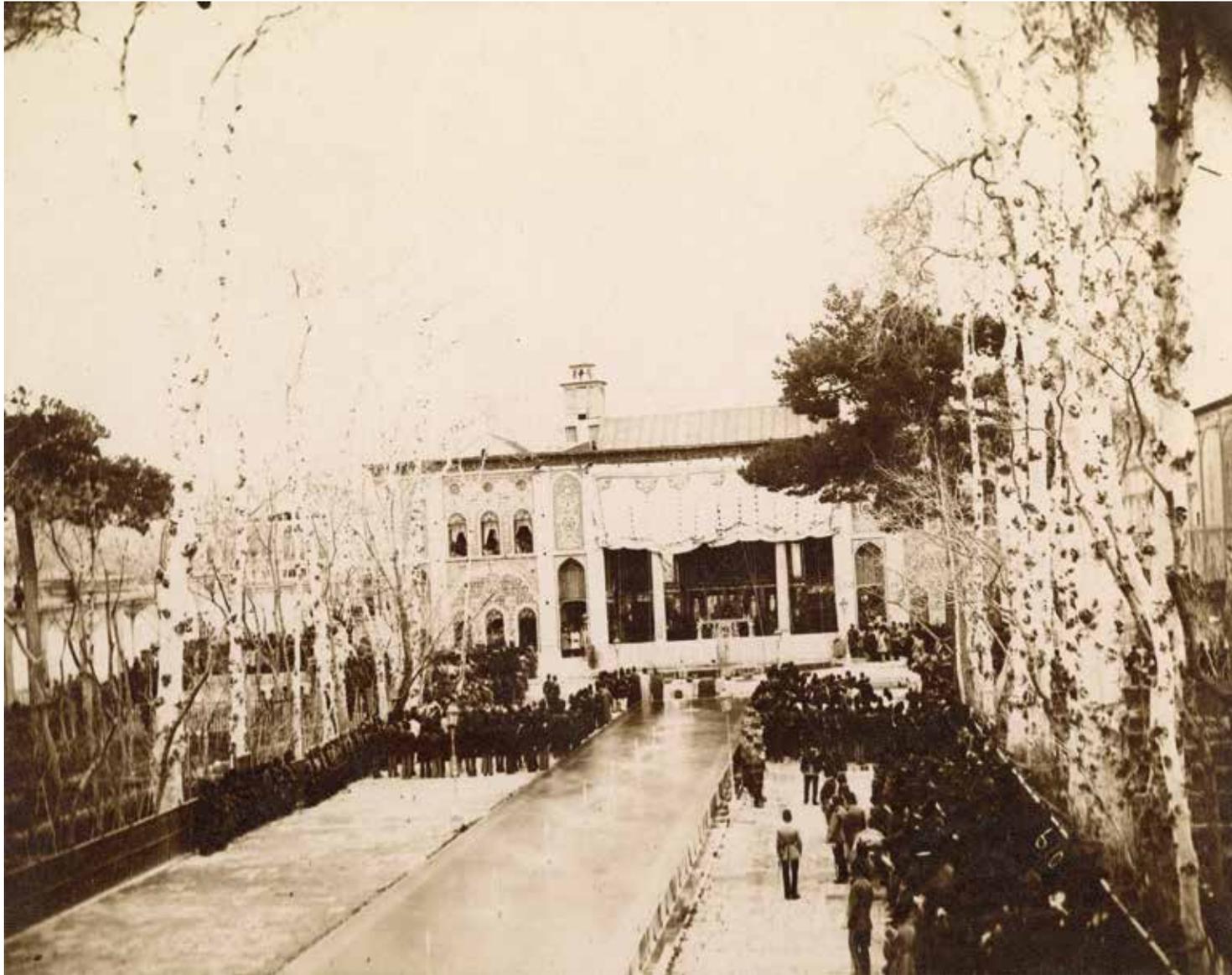
14. Sevruguin Negative
number: 863
The *Royal Theater*, in which
once every year the Persian
passion play is acted. *Tehran*
(P. 1115 / N. 23651)



15. Sevruguin Negative number: 1155
The marble throne upon which the Shah
seats himself on New Year's Day to
receive the congratulations of the people
*Brought to Tehran from the Čihil Sutun
Palace, Isfahan*
(P. 1116 / N. 23652)





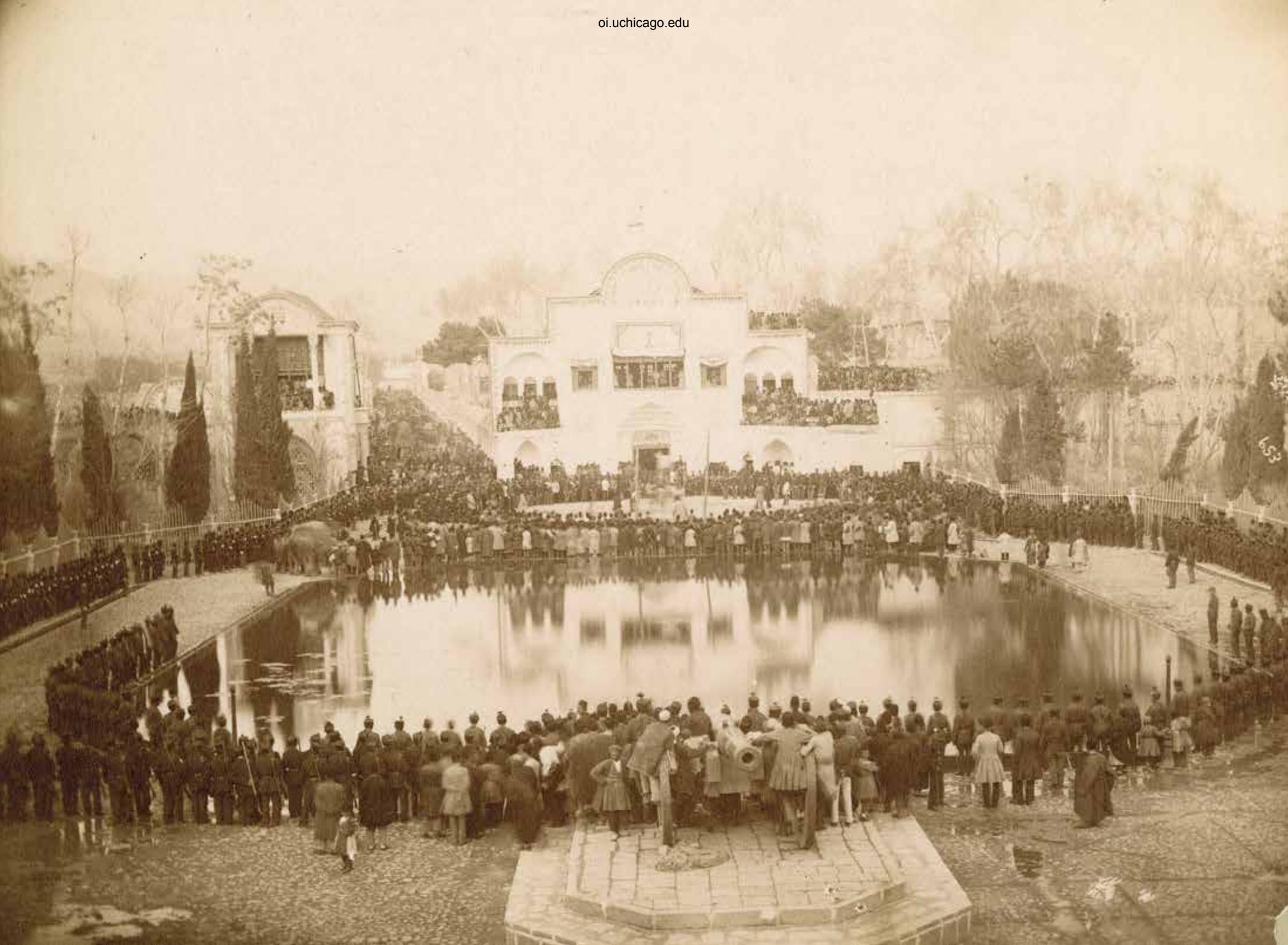


OPPOSITE LEFT: 16.
Sevruguin Negative
number: 637
Peacock-throne of
mosaicwork. It was made
in Shiraz, but probably
contains portions of the
famous peacock throne
from Delhi, brought to
Persia by Nadir Shah.
This throne stands at one
end of the magnificent
museum built by the
late Shah in connection
with the palace after his
return from his first visit
to Europe.²
(P. 1117 / N. 23653)

OPPOSITE RIGHT: 17.
Sevruguin Negative
number: 609
The Shah's crown. The
crown contains which
contains the largest ruby
in the world and the
second diamond in size.
(P. 1118 / N. 23654)

LEFT: 18. Sevruguin
Negative number: 610
The Shah seated
upon the marble
throne, receiving a
congratulatory address
upon New Year's Day.
Gulistan Palace, Tehran
(P. 1119 / N. 23655)

19. Sevruguin Negative number: 653
Crowd gathering at the Shah's palace on
New Year's day *March 21. Tehran*
(P. 1120 / N. 23656)





20. Sevrugin
Negative number: 1117
Cannon square. Cannons
at the four corners
brought from India by
Nadir Shah, 1739.
(P. 1121 / N. 23657)



21. Sevruguin Negative number: 1347
The cannon-square in Teheran. Snow-covered mountains in the distance.
(P. 1122 / N. 23658)

22. The drill-square — the second
largest in the world *Tehran*
(P. 1123 / N. 23659)





23. Sevruguin
Negative
number: 644
The Imperial
bank of Persia
(English) in
Army Square
(1892) Tehran.
(P. 1124 / N.
23660)



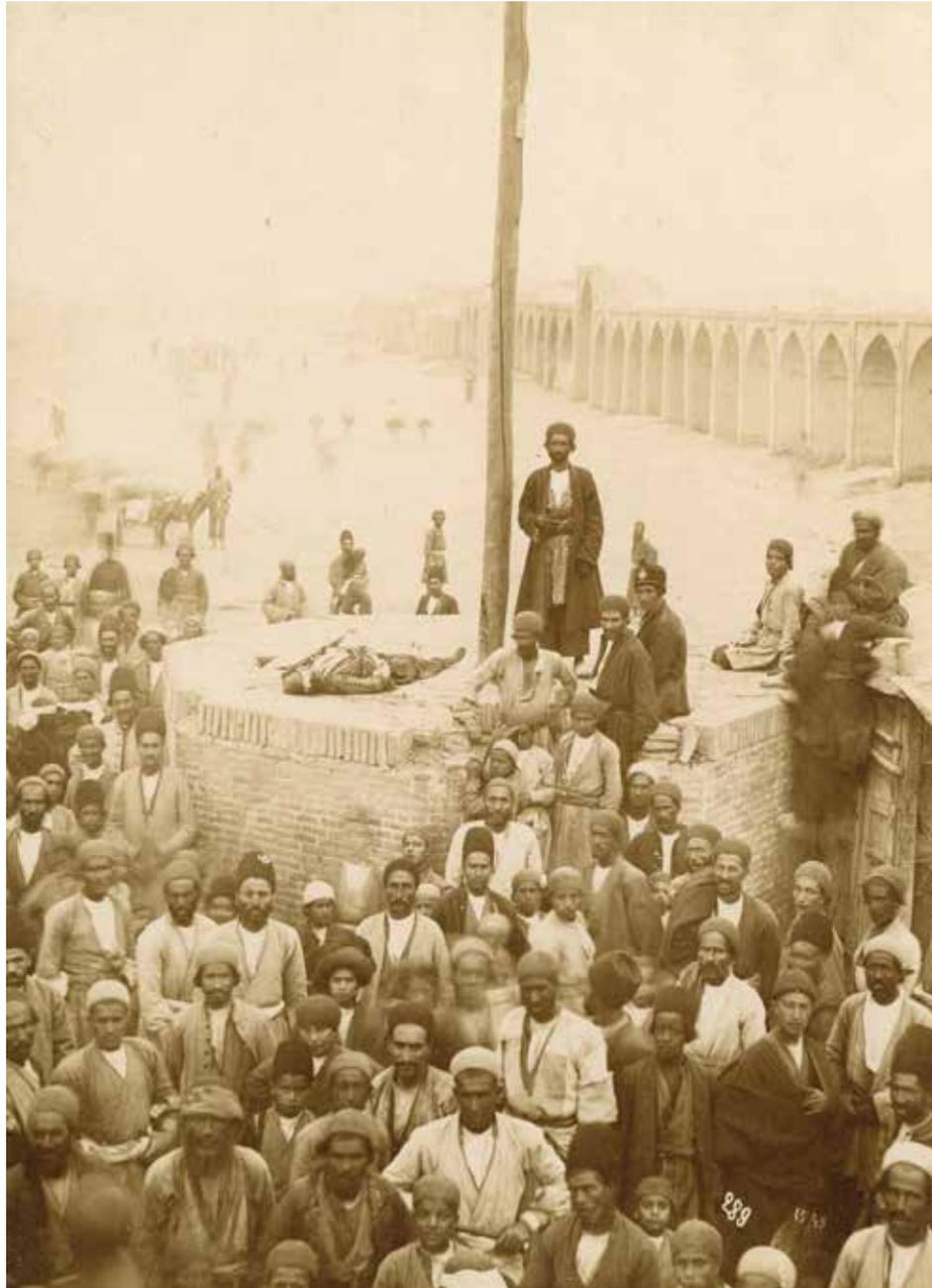
24. Sevruguin
Negative
number: 1426
The Shah's
elephants.
Soldiers
waiting for the
Shah. *Tehran*
(P. 1125 /
N. 23661)



25. Sevruguin
Negative
number: 624
A Street in
Tehran showing
with the
tramway
(P. 1126 / N.
23662)

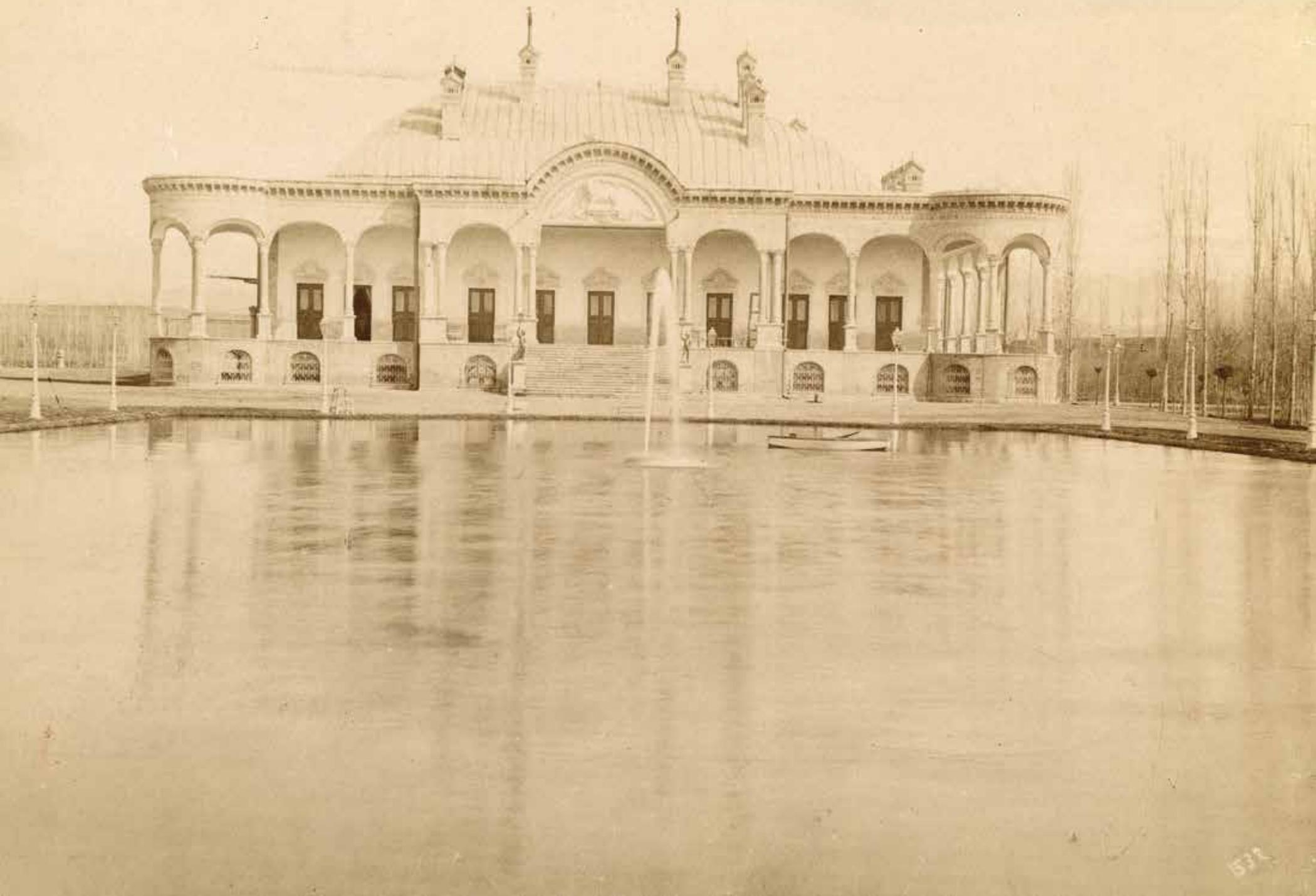


26. Sevruguin
Negative
number: 1415
A caravanserai
for cotton —
corresponding
to a wholesale
house
*Wholesale
cotton market*
(P. 1127 / N.
23663)



LEFT: 27. Sevruguin Negative numbers: 289, 1543
Execution block in Teheran
(P. 1128 / N. 23664)

OPPOSITE: 28. Sevruguin Negative number: 1532
Palace where the prime minister holds receptions
modern house
(P. 1129 / N. 23665)



29. Sevruguin Negative

number: 1365

A bronze statue of the late Shah in one of the gardens of Teheran. It was cast in Persia! The Koran forbids pictures or images of living people. This is the only thing of the kind in Persia, and its erection caused much comment among the Mohammedans. (P. 1130 / N. 23666)







OPPOSITE: 30. Sevruguin
Negative number: 618
A view of the wall and
moat around Teheran — a
favorite promenade.
(P. 1131 / N. 23667)

LEFT: 31. Sevruguin
Negative number: 1362
One of the twelve gates
of Teheran. Gate was
razed ca. 1936.
(P. 1132 / N. 23668)



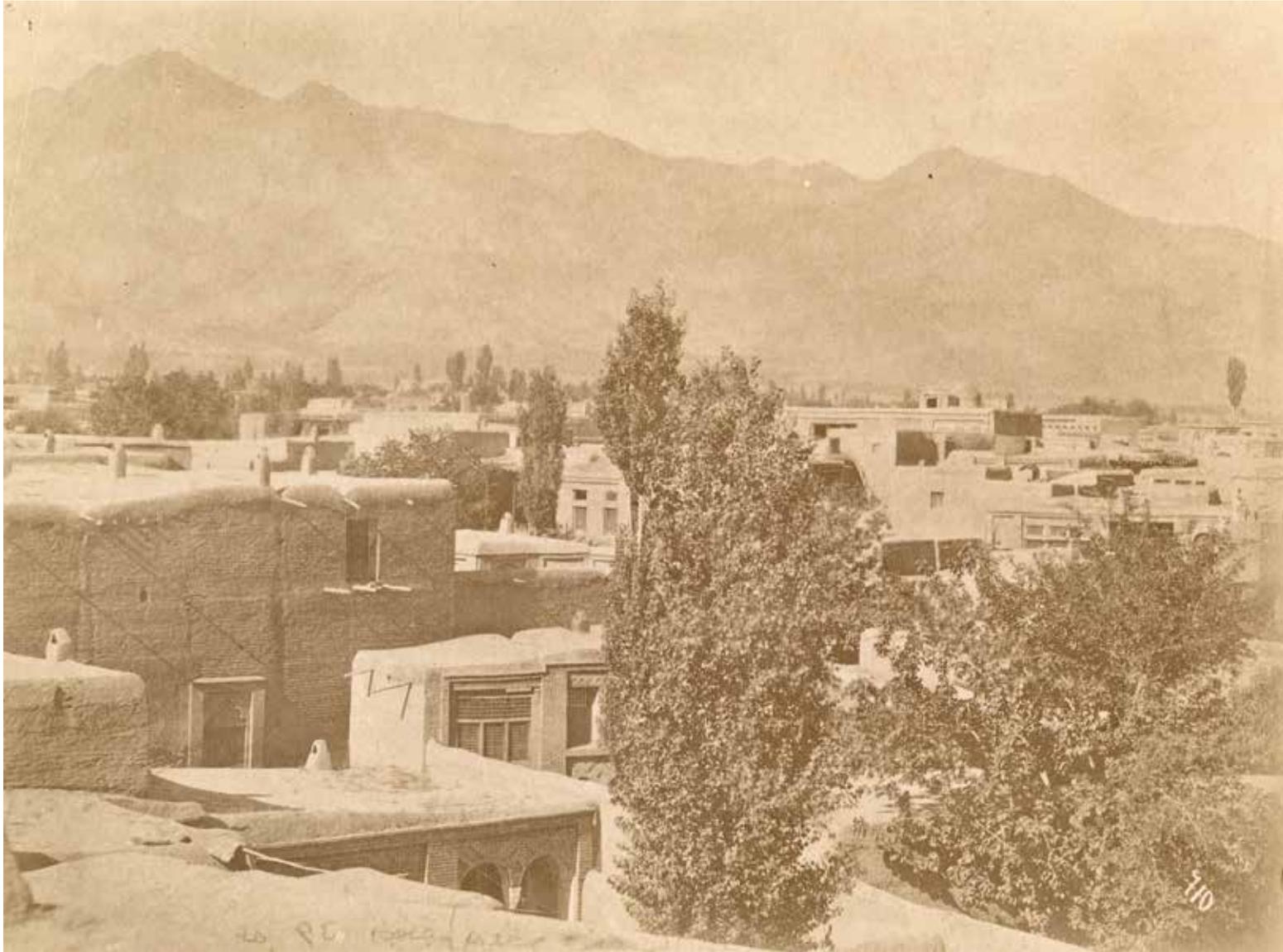
LEFT: 32. Sevruguin Negative number: 1588
The Shah returning to the city *Tehran*
(P. 1133 / N. 23669)

OPPOSITE: 33. Sevruguin Negative number: 1115
A street in Teheran. The gate opens into the drill square.—
This is next to the largest drill square in the world.
Gate taken down ca. 1935, square built over, 1935.
(P. 1134 / N. 23670)



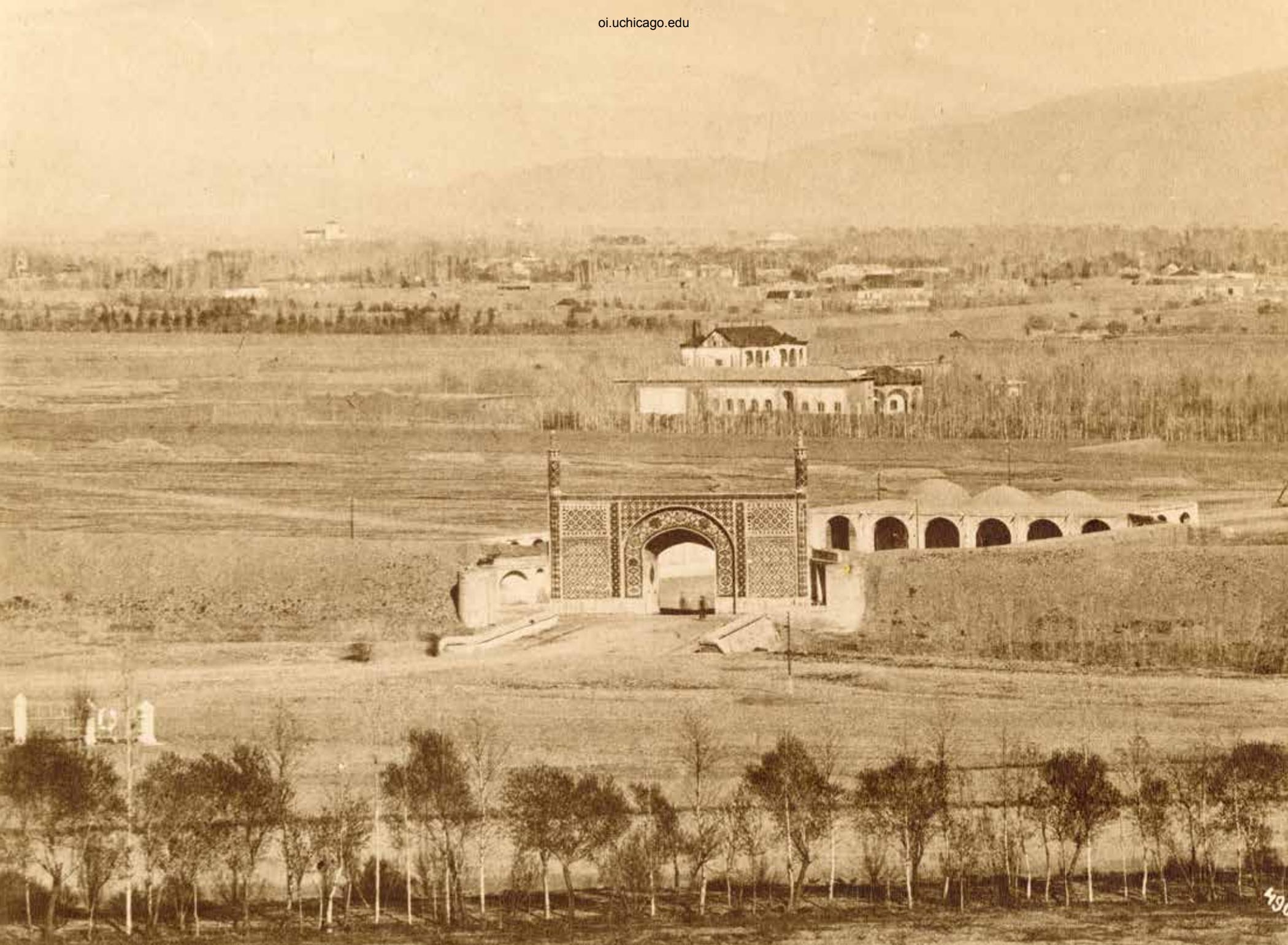


34. Sevruguin
Negative number: 1139
Soldier's barracks
surrounding the
common-square. View
of Teheran and the
mountains north of it.
(P. 1135 / N. 23671)



35. Sevruguin
Negative number: 710
A view of Teheran
and the mountains
north of it when
snow is gone.
(P. 1136 / N. 23672)

36. Sevruguin
Negative number: 490
A view of Teheran
(P. 1137 / N. 23673)



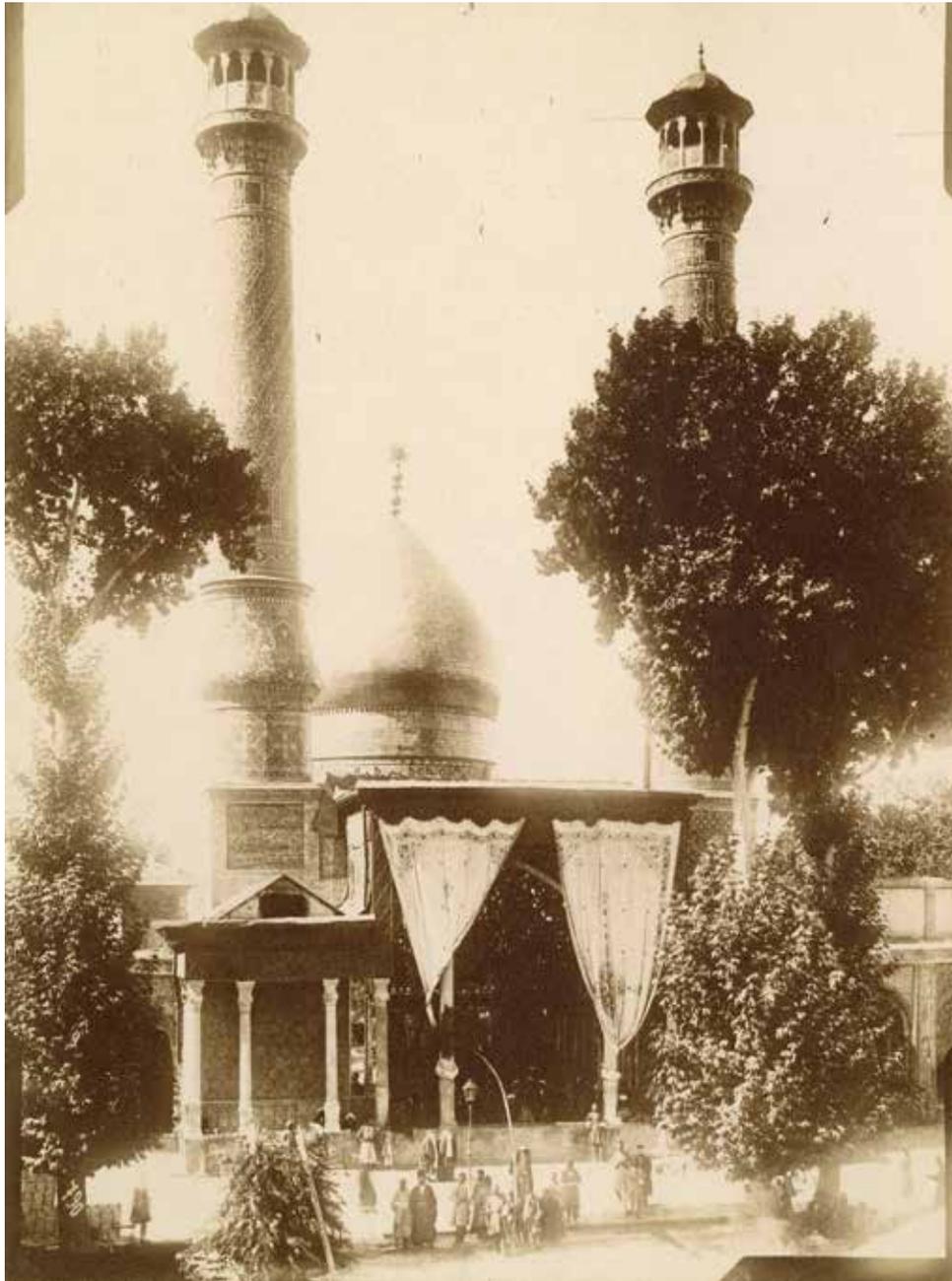


LEFT: 37. Sevruguin
Negative number: 485
A view of Teheran (?) A
village in Adharbaidjan
[Azerbaijan] or
Kurdistan (?)
(P. 1138 / N. 23674)

OPPOSITE: 38. One of
the Shah's country
palaces near Teheran.
The Kings of the
present reigning
family always built on
elevated sites.
(P. 1139 / N. 23682)







OPPOSITE: 39. A summer palace of the Shah near Tehran. *Kasr-i Kadjar*, now the state prison (1937). (P. 1140 / N. 23683)

LEFT: 40. Sevruguin Negative number: 790
Mosque Shrine of the Shah Abdul Azim, five miles south of Tehran, where the late shah was assassinated. (P. 1141 / N. 23686)

41. Sevruguin Negative number: 505
Train on the one line of the railway
in Iran, which runs from Tehran to a
shrine *Shah Abdul Azim* five miles
distant. *Belgium built railroad — 2*
Belgians in front.
(P. 1142 / N. 23645)



42. Sevruguin Negative
number: 1107
Tower of silence. Ruins of
the walls of the ancient
city of Rhages in the
distance. *Zoroastrian.*
Deposit dead there until
bodies decompose.
(P. 1144 / N. 23675)





43. Sevruguin Negative number: 1388
Near the ruins of Rhages there are two rock sculptures, several hundred years old probably but altered by Fath Ali Shah in the 18th century to represent himself. *Česmh 'Ali, near Rayy Česmeħ 'Ali* (P. 1145 / N. 23676)



44. Sevruguin
Negative number: 731
Near view of Fath
Ali Shah sculpture.
The right hand panel
reminds us that once
the use of a parasol
was forbidden to any
but Kings. *Česmh 'Ali
Near Rayy*³
(P. 1146 / N. 23677)

45. Sevruguin
Negative number:
326
Detail from the rock
sculpture at Chesh-
Ali near the ruins
of Rhages. *Česmeh*
'Alī⁴ Fath 'Alī Shah.
Recarved Sassanian
relief
(P. 1147 / N. 23678)



46. Sevruguin Negative number: 1394
Selling ice-cream *sherbert* in the street.
This picture gives some idea of the great
size of the drill square *in Tehran*.
(P. 1148 / N. 23646)





OPPOSITE: 47. Sevruguin Negative number: 1359
Carriers. A good view, also, of the mud wall
surrounding a yard. *'Hummals.' The burden bearers.*
(P. 1149 / N. 24471)

RIGHT: 48. Sevruguin Negative number: 503
The Shah's runners. Several of these men run before
the Shah's carriage whenever he goes abroad. Their
costume is scarlet.
(P. 1150 / N. 24472)







OPPOSITE: 49. Sevruguin Negative
number: 461
Buffalo cart, loaded with thorn,
which is used for kindling wood
(P. 1151 / N. 24473)

LEFT: 50. Sevruguin Negative
number: 1484
A peddler
(P. 1152 / N. 24474)

51. Sevruguin Negative number: 1391
Breakable articles are always carried
on the head in this manner. The coat
sleeves are not torn, they always have
a triangular opening under the arm.
Porter with breakable articles
(P. 1153 / N. 24475)





52. Sevrugin
Negative number: 569
A seller of water
(P. 1154 / N. 24476)



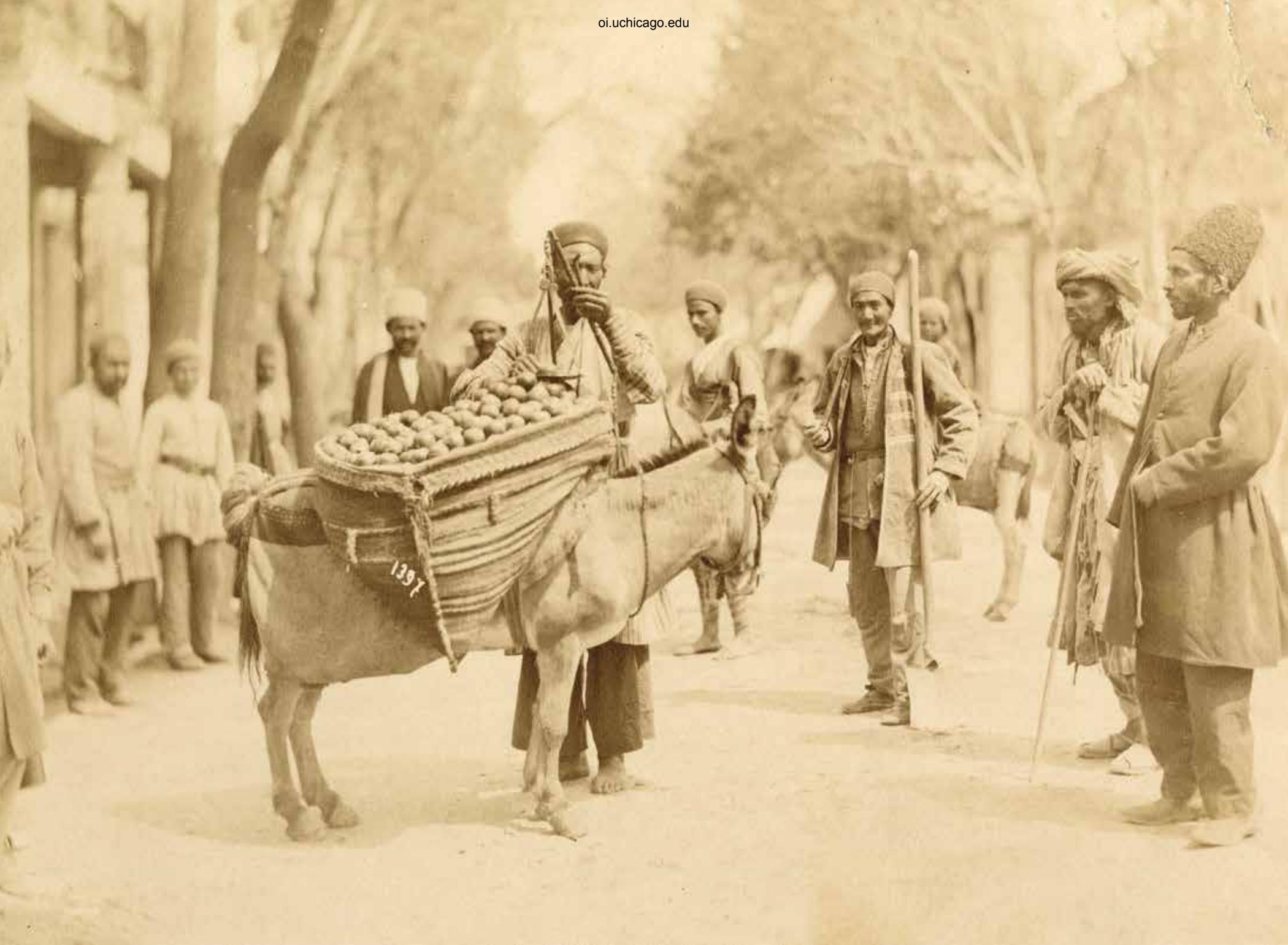
LEFT: 53. Sevruguin
Negative number: 1492
Water carrier. His bag
is the skin of an animal
*Water carrier — water is
skin of an animal*
(P. 1155 / N. 24477)

OPPOSITE: 54. Sevruguin
Negative number: 1328
Earthen water-jugs. The
jugs are porous, and
hence are excellent for
keeping water cool. *Girl
water carriers*
(P. 1156 / N. 24478)



1328

55. Sevruguin Negative
number: 1397
Selling a small quantity
of potatoes by weight
(P. 1157 / N. 24479)







OPPOSITE: 56. Sevrugin Negative number: 1397
A group of servants gathered under an awning for their afternoon tea. This tea urn, which is in common use in Persia, is a Russian invention. It is a most convenient thing. *Servants at tea* (P. 1158 / N. 24480)

LEFT: 57. Sevrugin Negative number: 183
One method of travel (P. 1159 / N. 24481)

58. Sevruguin Negative
number: 1368
Peddlers
(P. 1160 / N. 24482)



59. Sevruguin Negative
number: 1459

A mollah relating the
story of the death of
Hassan and Hosein — the
Persian martyrs — during
the month devoted to
mourning for them. With
the exception of two or
three other mollahs who
are probably awaiting
their turns to recite, the
audience is composed of
women in street dress.
(P. 1161 / N. 24483)





60. Sevruguin Negative number: 1405
A scene in the Bazaar.
Notice how the people carry things in a kerchief.
A bazaar in Tehran.
(P. 1162 / N. 23647)

61. Sevruguin Negative number: 1286
Scene in the bazaar. Women's shoes
hanging on the string. Notice the street
costume of the women.
(P. 1163 / N. 24484)



1286



62. Scene in
the bazaar.
(P. 1164 / N.
24485)



63. Sevruguin
Negative
number: 940
A scene in the
bazaar. Notice
the water pipe
(P. 1165 / N.
24486)

64. Sevruguin Negative number: 870
Weighing bread in the bazaar. This style
of bread is called sang-ak (little stones)
because it is baked on hot pebbles. Bread
is always carried over the shoulder just as
the boy has it.
(P. 1166 / N. 24487)







OPPOSITE: 65. A scene
in the bazaar.
(P. 1167 / N. 24488)

LEFT: 66. Sevruguin
Negative number: 1293
A seller of spices.
(P. 1168 / N. 24489)

RIGHT: 67.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 871
A scene in the
bazaar.
(P. 1169 / N. 24490)

OPPOSITE: 68.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 872
A scene in the
bazaar.
(P. 1170 / N. 24491)





69. Sevruguin Negative
number: 1358
A scene in the bazaar.
The men are cooking
meat over a charcoal
fire for customers
(P. 1171 / N. 24492)





70. Sevruguin Negative number: 241
Weaving carpets. This work is done almost entirely by the village women and in the rudest of looms.
(P. 1172 / N. 24493)

71. Sevruguin Negative number: 1958
Plowing. The plow is a crooked stick
with a bit of iron at the end. The double-
row of trees gives evidence that there is
an articial water course between them.
Plowing in Persia.
(P. 1173 / N. 24494)





LEFT: 72. Sevruguin Negative
number: 375
Beating cotton
(P. 1174 / N. 24495)

OPPOSITE: 73. Every important
city of Persia has its own art
or industry. "Rhest-work" (so
called because made in the city
of Rhest) is embroidery with silk
on broadcloth. It is done with a
crochet needle. It is the work of
men and boys!
(P. 1175 / N. 24496)



RIGHT: 74. Sevruguin
Negative number: 1183
Nomads churning butter. The
churn is a goat's skin.
(P. 1177 / N. 24497)

OPPOSITE: 75. Sevruguin
Negative number: 148
Nomad tent. Butter-making
is also going on here.
(P. 1178 / N. 24498)





76. Sevruguin Negative number: 1266

Armenian women making bread. This kind of bread is always made in the home. Sometimes enough is made at one time to last for six months. The sheets of bread are about three feet long and a foot and a half wide and the thickness of blotting paper. The bread is baked against the hot bricks that line a circular hole in the ground. (P. 1179 / N. 24499)







OPPOSITE: 77. Sevruguin
Negative number: 436
The bastinado in a school.
This is the favorite method
of punishment in Persia. The
boys are writing with a reed
pen, from right to left, on a
single sheet of paper, held in
the hand which rests upon the
knee. One boy at the left has
his pen-case on the floor in
front of him.
(P. 1180 / N. 24500)

LEFT: 78, Sevruguin Negative
number: 1308
(P. 1181 / N. 24501)



OPPOSITE: 79.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 1379
Koods.
(P. 1182 / N. 24502)

RIGHT: 80.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 1290
A priest of the fire-
worshippers, or
Parsees.⁵
(P. 1183 / N. 24503)



81. Sevruguin Negative number: 216
Persian. Parsees at a feast.
(P. 1184 / N. 24504)





82. Sevruguin Negative
number: 1401
Peddler.
(P. 1185 / N. 24505)



83. Sevrugin Negative
number: 706
(P. 1186 / N. 24506)





85. Sevruguin
Negative
number: 1383
Three noted
blind beggars
in Teheran
(P. 1189 / N.
23648)

OPPOSITE: 84. Sevruguin Negative number: 674
Mohammadan priests, as their white caps indicate. The dark blue or green turbans of the two men standing
in the centre indicate that they are "Sayids" or lineal descendants of Mohammed. *Mohammadan priests.*
(P. 1187 / N. 24507)



OPPOSITE: 86. Sevruguin
Negative number: 437
A Mohammedan girl.
(P. 1190 / N. 24508)

RIGHT: 87. Sevruguin
Negative number: 672
A Persian gentleman of
wealth, whose green turban
indicates that he is a Sayid
or lineal descendant of
Mohammed.
(P. 1191 / N. 24509)



88. Sevruguin Negative number: 314
The servants of a Nobleman.
(P. 1192 / N. 24510)





OPPOSITE LEFT: 89.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 388
Arab.
(P. 1193 / N. 24511)

OPPOSITE RIGHT: 90.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 400
Arabs.
(P. 1194 / N. 24512)

RIGHT: 91.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 1377
Persian peasant woman
and baby. Notice the
swaddling clothes.
*Peasant woman and
baby.*
(P. 1195 / N. 24413)





92. Sevruguin Negative
number: 1441
Village women.
Persians.
(P. 1196 / N. 24514)



93. Sevruguin Negative
number: 1209
IRAN. *Persia: native
life. Village girls.*
(P. 1197 / N. 24515)⁶



LEFT: 94.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 214
Chaldean woman.
(P. 1198 / N. 24516)

OPPOSITE LEFT: 95.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 344
Chaldean woman.
(P. 1199 / N. 24517)

OPPOSITE RIGHT: 96.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 255
Chaldean woman.
(P. 1200 / N. 24518)





97. Sevruguin Negative
number: 1230
Women of one of the
tribes of southern Persia.
(P. 1201 / N. 24519)



98. Sevruguin Negative
number: 799
(P. 1202 / N. 24520)



99. Sevrugin
Negative number:
362
(P. 1203 / N. 24251)

100. Sevruguin
Negative number:
1532
(P. 1204 / N.
24522)



RIGHT: 101.
Sevruguin Negative
number: 1436
Gueber woman.
“Gueber” is the
Mohammadan word for
“fire worshiper”
(P. 1205 / N. 24523)

OPPOSITE: 102.
Sevruguin Negative
number: 395
Dancing-girls
(P. 1206 / N. 24524)







OPPOSITE: 103.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 1270
Armenian women and girls
(P. 1207 / N. 24525)

RIGHT: 104.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 1250
Armenian girls
(P. 1208 / N. 24526)



105. Sevruguin
Negative number: 571
Persian girl
(P. 1209 / N. 24527)



106. Sevruguin
Negative number: 356
Persian woman.
House dress
(P. 1210 / N. 24528)





107. Persian
woman putting on
street costume
(P. 1211 / N. 24529)



108. Sevruguin Negative
number: 143
Persian woman in street
costume with veil raised
(P. 1212 / N. 24530)

109. Sevruguin
Negative number: 1478
A fortune-teller
(P. 1213 / N. 24531)



110. Sevruguin
Negative number: 1225
(P. 1214 / N. 24532)





111. Sevrugin
Negative number: 139
Koordish family
(P. 1215 / N. 24533)

112. Sevruguin Negative
number: 1236
Armenians. The cap
and kerchief is worn
by girls, the more
elaborate head-dress
by married women.
The thin veil of the
woman in the center is
the bridal veil.
(P. 1216 / N. 24534)



113. Sevruguin
Negative number:
190
Armenian
wedding-party.
Bride veiled. For
the wedding
procession.
(P. 1217 / N. 24535)





114. Sevruguin
Negative
number: 1319
Grueber family.
Fire worshippers.
(P. 1218 / N.
24536)



LEFT: 115.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 409
Euzelli (*now
Pahlavi*) — the
Principal harbor on
the Caspian Sea.
(P. 1219 / N. 23636)

OPPOSITE: 116.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 82
A mosque in Rhest,
the principal city
on the Caspian
Sea. Rain is so
abundant on the
Caspian coast that
tiled roofs are used
although in most
parts of the country
the roofs are flat
and made of mud.
(P. 1220 / N. 23644)



117. Sevruguin Negative number: 804
House with thatched roof in the Caspian region.
House in Caspian region.
(P. 1221 / N. 24537)



804

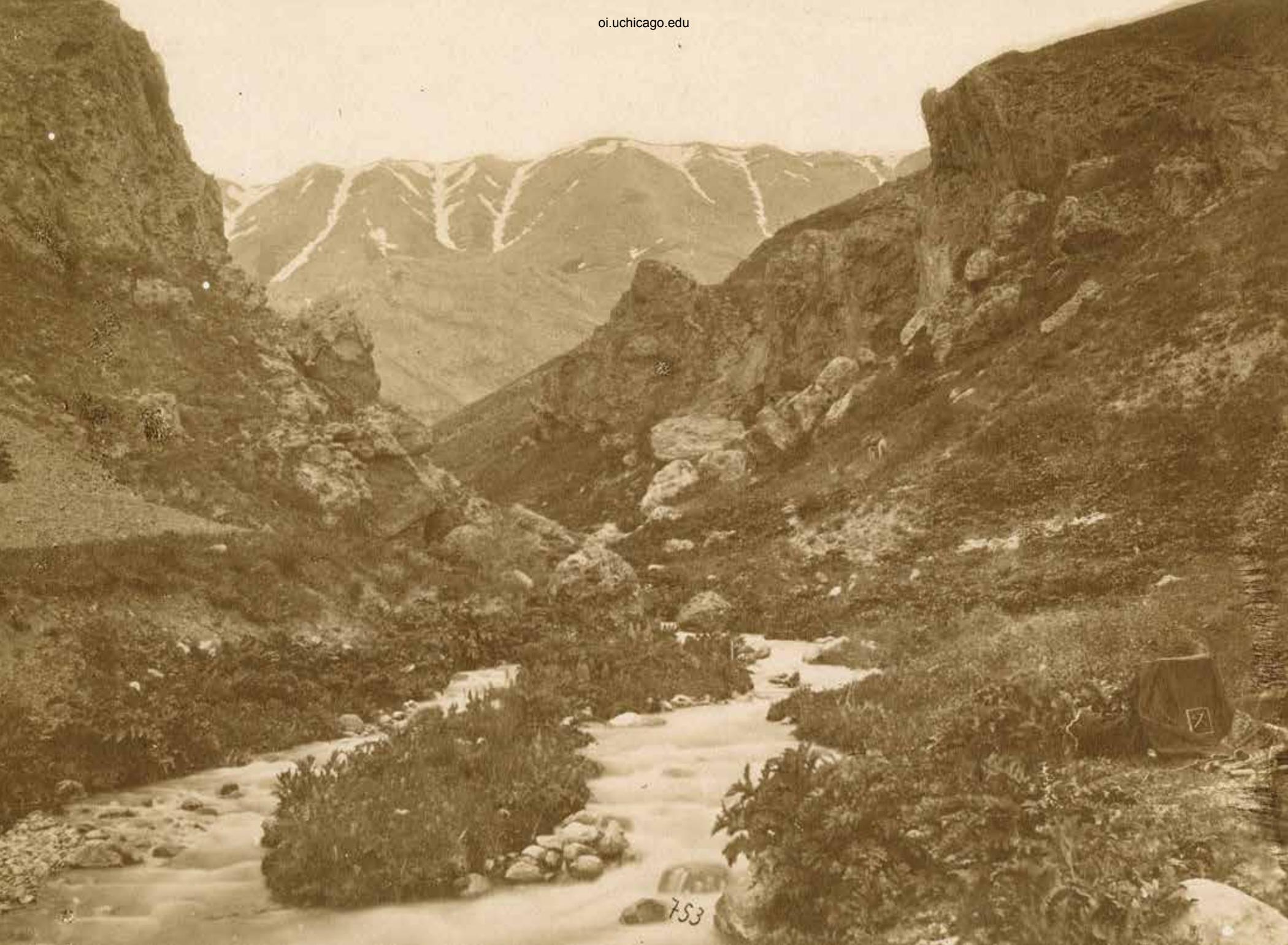
118. Sevruguin
Negative number: 232
Scene on the road
between Teheran and
the Caspian Sea
(P. 1222 / N. 23679)





119. Sevruguin
Negative number: 853
Scene in the mountains
between the Caspian
Sea and Teheran
Marzit (?) bridge.
(P. 1223 / N. 23680)

120. Sevruguin Negative number: 753
Scene in the mountains between Tehran
and the Caspian Sea
(P. 1224 / N. 23681)



753



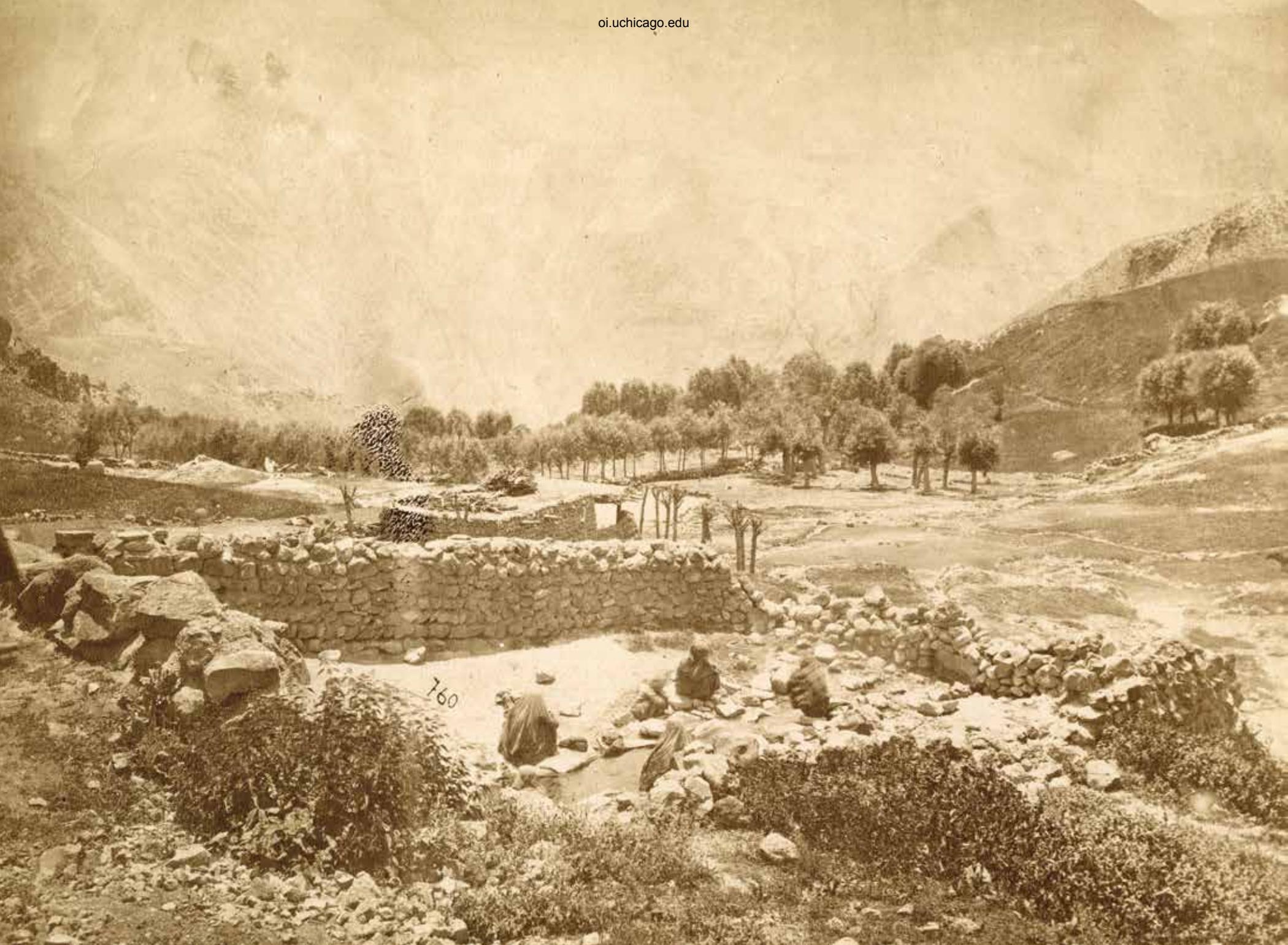
121. Sevruguin
Negative
number: 416
Scene on the
road from
Teheran to the
Caspian Sea.
The donkeys
are loaded with
camel-thorn,
which takes
the place of
kindling-wood.
*On the road
from Teheran to
Caspian Sea.*⁷
(P. 1225 / N.
23684)

122. Scene on
the road from
Teheran to the
Caspian Sea.
The donkeys
are loaded with
camel-thorn,
which takes
the place of
kindling-wood.
(P. 1226 / N.
23685)



123. Sevruguin Negative number: 342
Mt. Demavend, about 40 miles north-east of
Teheran. The highest peak in Persia (about
19000 feet) and always snow-crowned
(P. 1227 / N. 23638)





760



LEFT: 125.
Sevruguin
Negative
number: 759
Mt. Demavend
and a village
of Demavend
nearby.
(P. 1229 / N.
23634)

OPPOSITE: 124. Sevruguin Negative number: 760
Scene near Demavend.
(P. 1228 / N. 23635)

126. Sevruguin Negative number: 408

~~The Blue Mosque in Tabriz. So called from the prevailing color in the tiles. Probably the most magnificent ruin in Iran outside of Persepolis.~~
(P. 1230 / N. 23649)



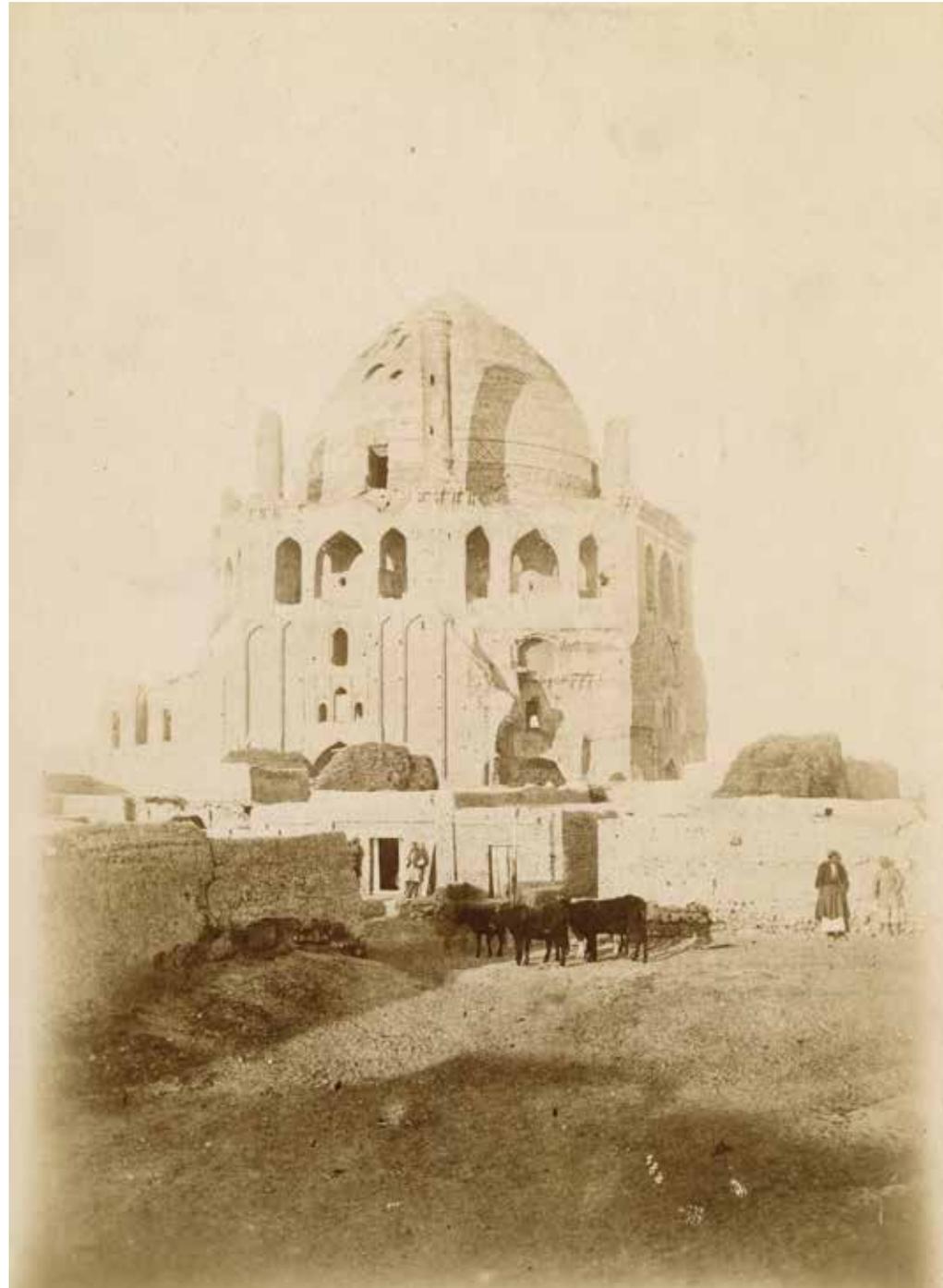


LEFT: 127.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 718
Ancient castle.
(P. 1231 / N. 24538)

OPPOSITE LEFT: 128.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 700
Tower in Isfahan.
Minaret in Damghan.
(P. 1232 / N. 23637)

OPPOSITE RIGHT: 129.
Sevruquin Negative
number: 702
(P. 1233 / N. 24539)





RIGHT: 130. Sevruguin
Negative number: 488
~~Mosque~~ *Tomb of Uldjaitu*
in Sultanieh, one of the
ancient Persian capitals.
(P. 1234 / N. 23643)

OPPOSITE: 131. Sevruguin
Negative number: 310
Grave of Hafiz in Shiraz.
(P. 1235 / N. 23642)





LEFT: 132. Sevruguin Negative number: 271
Behistun or rock sculptures of Darius on the road from Hamadan to Baghdad near Kiermanshah. The rock rises nearly perpendicular to a height of over 1700 feet. The sculptures and inscriptions are over 300 feet from the base. *Takht-I Bostan.* (P. 1236 / N. 23591)

OPPOSITE: 133. Sevruguin Negative number: 133
A detail from the "Behistun *Shapur*" (P. 1237 / N. 23692)



134. Sevruguin Negative
number: 349
One of the magnificent
staircases connecting
the different terraces
of the platform at
Persepolis on which the
group of royal buildings
erected by Darius and
Xerxes stood.
(P. 1238 / N. 23639)





135. Sevruguin Negative number: 350
Persepolis. Columns of the gateway which commanded the approach to the hall of Xerxes, the most magnificent of the pillared halls upon the Persepolis platform (P. 1239 / N. 23640)

136. Sevruguin Negative number: 655
Persepolis. Ruins of the Pillared Hall of Xerxes.
These pillars are sixty feet high in spite of their
present mutilated condition, are 60 ft. high.
(P. 1240 / N. 23641)



655



LEFT: 137.
Sevruguin Negative number: 1993
A dervish. Dervishes are religious mendicants who take a vow of poverty for a limited time or permanently. Most of them refrain from shaving or cutting the hair. Their haggard appearance is often the result of opium-eating. Their chief aim seems to be to secure a picturesque effect. The carved shell which they usually carry is to collect alms. The different classes of dervishes are distinguished by some peculiarity of dress:-the skin of a tiger or other animal, a huge knotted stick, an axe shaped like a battle-axe, etc.
(P. 1241 / N. 24540)

OPPOSITE LEFT: 138.
Sevruguin Negative numbers: 267, 1510
Dervish.
(P. 1242 / N. 24541)

OPPOSITE RIGHT: 139.
Sevruguin Negative numbers: 269, 1507
Dervish.
(P. 1243 / N. 24542)





140. Sevruguin
Negative
number: 277
Dervish.
(P. 1244 / N.
24543)



141. Sevruguin
Negative
number: 1453
Dervish.
(P. 1245 / N.
24544)

142. Sevruguin
Negative
number: 1372
Dervish.
(P. 1246 / N.
24545)





143. Sevruguin
Negative number: 359
Dervishes. The knotty
stick and panther skin
are characteristic.
Typical
(P. 1247 / N. 24546)

RIGHT: 144.
Sevruguin Negative
numbers: 281, 1570
Dervish. Notice the
steel axe.
(P. 1248 / N. 24547)

OPPOSITE LEFT: 145.
Sevruguin Negative
number: 639
Dervish.
(P. 1249 / N. 24548)

OPPOSITE RIGHT: 146.
Sevruguin Negative
number: 1452
Dervish.
(P. 1250 / N. 24549)



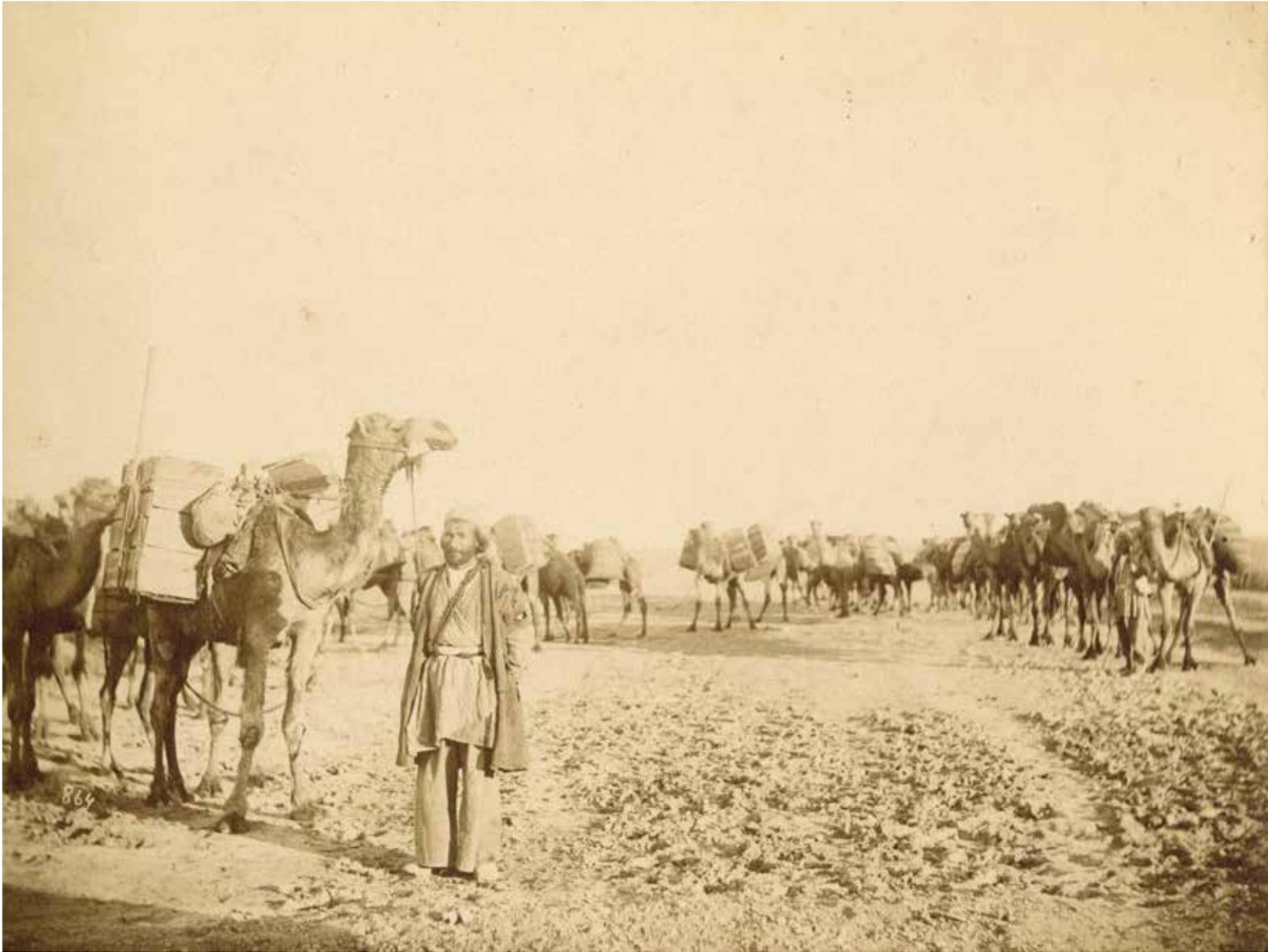


147. Sevruguin Negative numbers: 271, 1521, 1819
Boy dervishes. If dirt showed in a picture these
dervishes would not be so fine looking.
(P. 1251 / N. 24550)





729



OPPOSITE: 148.
Sevruguin Negative
number: 729
Mohammedans at
prayer.
(P. 1252 / N. 24551)

LEFT: 149.
Sevruguin Negative
number: 864
Caravan of camels
(P. 1253 / N. 24552)

150. Sevruguin
Negative number: 1275
Caravan of donkeys
(P. 1254 / N. 24553)



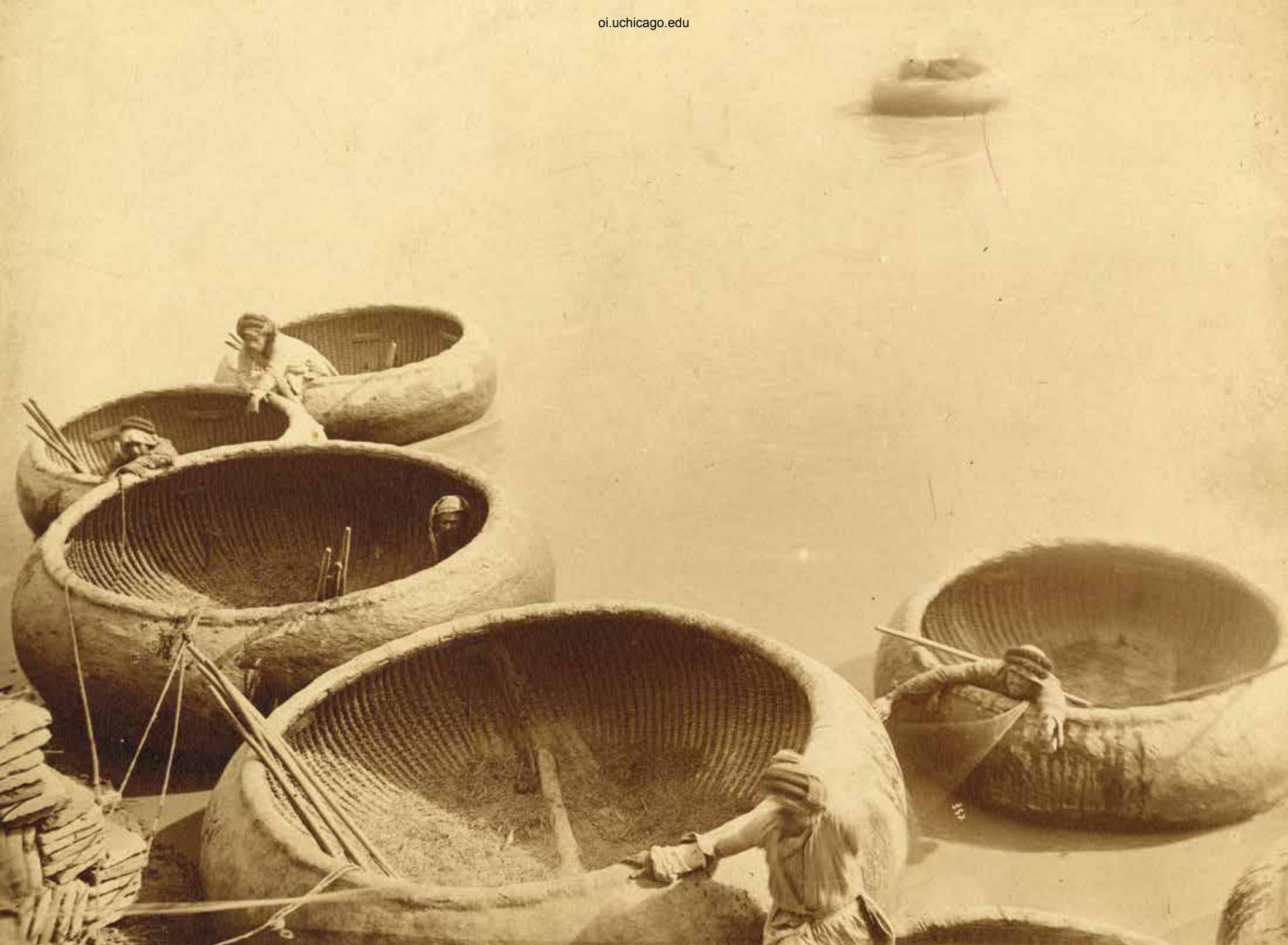
151.
Sevruguin
Negative
number: 1316
Opium
smokers
(P. 1255 / N.
24554)



OPPOSITE: 152. Sevruguin Negative number: 1163
The poor people heat their rooms by means of a charcoal fire in an earthen pan. Over this they place a wooden frame and over the frame a carpet or blanket. They sit, eat, and sleep around this.
(P. 1256 / N. 24555)



153. Sevruguin Negative number: 347
Basket boats on the Tigris.
(P. 1257 / N. 22765)



| 154. Colorized version of P. 1214
/ N. 24532, by Josh Tulisiak.



from the series
THE INHERITANCE
Yassaman Ameri

OPPOSITE: 155-57.
The Inheritance nos.
23, 19, 26.





158. *The Inheritance*
no. 16.

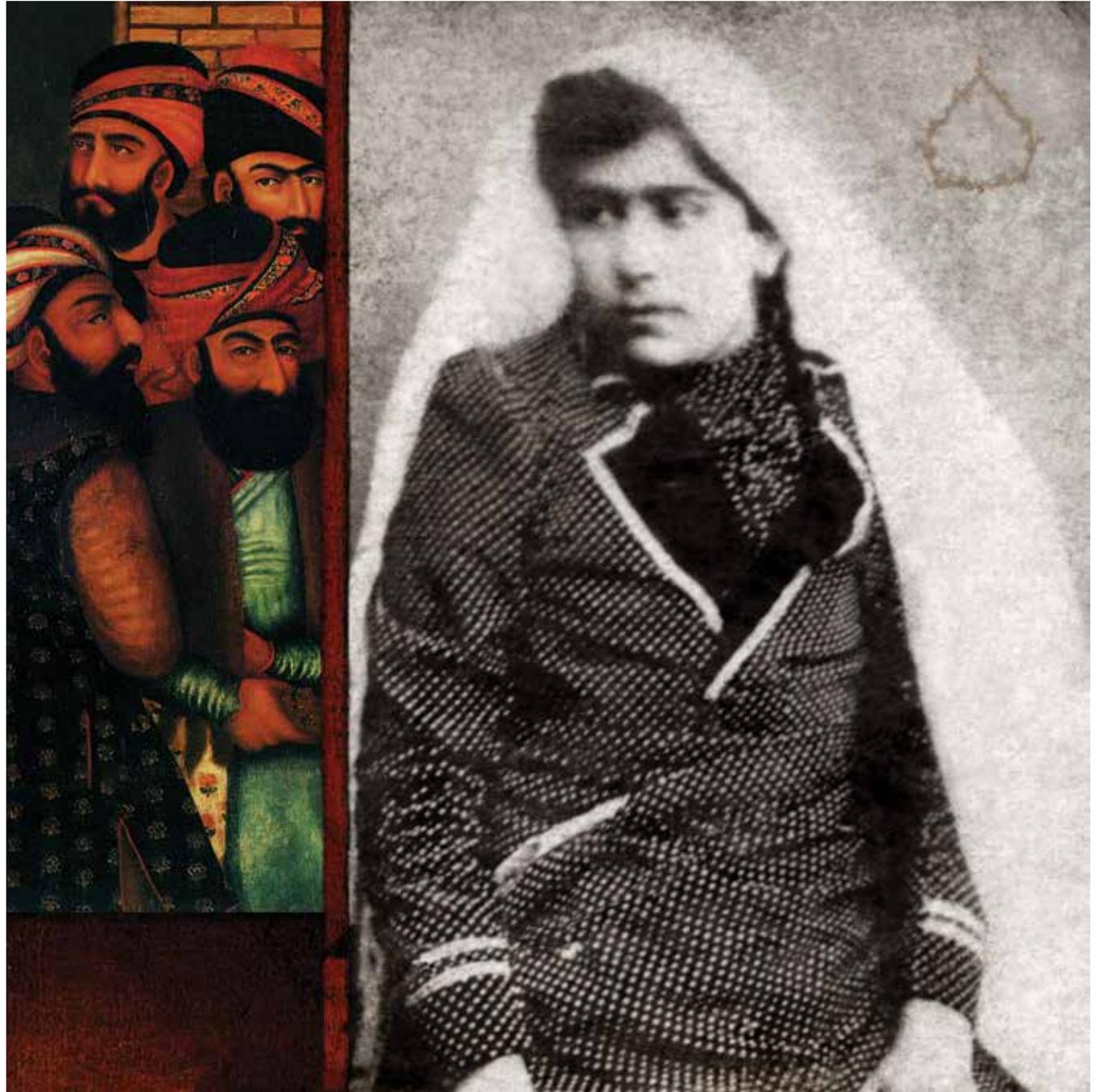


159. *The Inheritance*
no. 33.



160. *The Inheritance*
no. 30.

161. *The Inheritance*
no. 36.



Endnotes

- ¹ P. 160. The picture originally had another caption on it that was cut off and crossed out of which only the word “theatre” can be made out.
- ² P. 171. Glued to the card is a piece of paper with a blue typewritten caption: *This picture is valuable and must be kept clean and free from ink and finger marks and return to Hugh McDowell.*
- ³ P. 202. Drawing added under this (pencil, author unknown): square drawn with dimensions 14 across it and 578 in corner. The number “142/3” is written under this.
- ⁴ P. 203. Written in pencil: 579.
- ⁵ P. 245. The identification of this picture as a portrait of a Rabbi, per Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives FSA_A.4_2.12.GN.37.11 seems more likely.
- ⁶ P. 259. Black-and-white photograph, copy of original (now lost) in Records of Persepolis Expedition Box 38.
- ⁷ P. 290. Written in pencil: 4 1/2-4 1/8.

CHECKLIST OF THE UPCOMING EXHIBIT

Unless otherwise specified, the photographs are modern reproductions of the original albumen prints

Antoin Sevruguin: Past and Present

Portrait of woman in fashionable dress (P. 1203 / N. 24251)

The Royal Family

Nasir al-Din Shah on a hunting expedition with his favorite Malijak (P. 1101 / N. 23688)

The funeral of Nasir al-Din Shah in the Royal Theater (P. 1105 / N. 23698)

The Qajar imperial throne in the Golestan Palace (P. 1117 / N. 23653)
"Master of ceremonies" (P. 1111 / N. 23696)

Bronze statue of Nasir al-Din Shah on horseback (P. 1130 / N. 23666)

Photograph of Mirza Reza Kermani, Nasir al-Din's assassin with his guard by Abdullah Mirza Qajar (P. 1103 / N. 23690)

Photograph of Mirza Reza Kermani, Nasir al-Din's assassin by Antoin Sevruguin (P. 1102 / N. 23689)

Collection, Conservation, Innovation

Original albumen print, Nasir al-Din Shah on a hunting expedition with his favorite Malijak (P. 1101 / N. 23688)

Original albumen print, Photograph of Mirza Reza Kermani, Nasir al-Din's assassin by Antoin Sevruguin (P. 1102 / N. 23689)

Original albumen print. Funeral cortege of the late Shah (P. 1104 / N. 23691)

Original albumen print. Photograph of Mozaffar ad-Din Shah (P. 1107 / N. 23692)

Original albumen print. Nasir al-Din Shah receiving a congratulatory address on New Year's Day (P. 1119 / N. 23655)

Original albumen print. A street in Teheran opening onto Canon Square (P. 1134 / N. 23670)

Original albumen print. A view of Teheran (P1138 / N23674)

Original albumen print. Qajar relief of Fath Ali Shah located at Ches-meh-Ali in Rayy (P. 1145 / N. 23676)

Original albumen print. Water carrier (P. 1155 / N. 24477)

Original albumen print. A seller of spices (P. 1168 / N. 24489)

Original albumen print. A scene in the bazaar (P. 1169 / N. 24490)

Original albumen print. Beating cotton (P. 1174 / N. 24495)

Original albumen print. Nomads churning butter (P. 1177 / N. 24497)

Original albumen print. Nomad tent (P. 1178 / N. 24498)

Original albumen print. Jewish women or women of a southern Iranian tribe (P. 1201 / N. 24519)

Original albumen print. Armenian women and girls (P. 1207 / N. 24525)

Original albumen print. Persian girl (P. 1209 / N. 24527)

Original albumen print. Donkeys on the road from Teheran to the Caspian Sea (P. 1226 / N. 23685)

Original albumen print. Photograph of a train (P. 1142 / N. 23645)

Original albumen print. Dervish (P. 1244 / N. 24543)

Colorized version of Jewish or members of a southern tribe (P. 1214 / N. 24532)

Documenting a Changing Iran

Chogan gorge rock relief, Victory of Shapur I (P. 1237 / N. 23692)
Portrait of Nur Muhammad, Jewish doctor and friend of Sevruguin (P. 1181 / N. 24501)
Portrait of Zoroastrian family (P. 1218 / N. 24536)
Woman in fashionable dress (P. 1210 / N. 24528)
Woman putting on a street costume (P. 1211 / N. 24529)
Ice cream seller photographed in Canon's Square (P. 1148 / N. 23646)
Two girls from the Shahsavan tribe (P. 1204 / N. 24522)
Men sitting on the ramparts outside of Tehran (P. 1131 / N. 23667)
Street in Tehran with Tramway (P. 1126 / N. 23662)
Jewish women or women of a southern Iranian tribe (P. 1201 / N. 24519)
One of the monumental staircases at Persepolis (P. 1238 / N. 23639)
Mount Damavand near Tehran (P. 1227 / N. 23639)
Road between Tehran and the Caspian Sea (P. 1222 / N. 23679)

Clock tower of Golestan Palace in Tehran (P. 1114 / N. 23650)
A street in Teheran opening onto Canon Square (P. 1134 / N. 23670)
Remains of Blue Mosque in Tabriz (P. 1230 / N. 23649)
Qajar relief of Fath Ali Shah located at Chesmeh-Ali in Rayy (P. 1145 / N. 23676)
Armenian women and girls (P. 1207 / N. 24525)

Sevruguin and Contemporary Art

Yassaman Ameri, *The Inheritance*, nos. 19, 23, and 26
Yassaman Ameri, *The Inheritance*, nos. 16, 30, 33, and 36

Sevruguin and his Signatures

Photograph of a train (P. 1142 / N. 23645)

CONCORDANCE OF MUSEUM REGISTRATION NUMBERS

<i>Registration No.</i>	<i>Figure No.</i>	<i>Description</i>
Alamy		
Album / Alamy Stock Photo	7.11	<i>View of Pyatigorsk</i> , by Michael Lermontov
Art Collection 2 / Alamy Stock Photo	7.12	<i>View of Tiflis</i> , by Vasili Verschagin
Heritage Image Partnership Ltd. / Alamy Stock Photo	7.10	<i>View of Tibilisi</i> , by Nikanor Chernetsov
Painters / Alamy Stock Photo	7.9	<i>A Painting Trip to the Caucasus</i> , by Pyotr Kolchin
The Picture Art Collection / Alamy Stock Photo	7.13	<i>Woodsman</i> , by Ivan Kramskoi
The Picture Art Collection / Alamy Stock Photo	7.14	<i>Meditator</i> , by Ivan Kramskoi
Volgi archive / Alamy Stock Photo	7.17	<i>A Shy Peasant</i> , by Ilia Repin
Yassaman Ameri		
Document	10.1	Document gifted to Yassaman Ameri by her mother
<i>The Inheritance</i>	10.2	Nos. 36, 30, and 16.
<i>Autours du Monde: Aquarelles, souvenirs de voyages</i>		
Pl. CCCXIX	9.1a	Qajar relief of Fath Ali Shah located at Chesmeh-Ali in Rayy
Bibliothèque de l'Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art		
Collections Jacques Doucet	4.5a-b	Drawings of the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht by Flandin and Coste 1851
British Library		
Add. Ms. 14758, f. 57	4.9a	Watercolor of tomb of Cyrus at Pasargadae

Brooklyn Museum

1997.3.6	10.3	Possibly Antoin Sevruguin. Studio Shot of a Reclining Lady Reading a Book
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Collection Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen

Coll.no. RV-A6-121	8.7d	Nude model
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Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives

FSA A.4 2.12.GN.07.01	4.14	<i>Mina'i</i> bowl
FSA A.4 2.12.GN.27.09	7.1	Photograph of Sevruguin with family
FSA A.4 2.12. GN.38.04	4.4	Self portrait of Sevruguin with Ka'ba-ye Zardosht
FSA A.4 2.12.GN.38.05	5.2	Sasanian relief of Shapur I at Bishapur
FSA A.4 2.12.GN.40.07	4.13a	Great Ilkhanid Shahnama before dispersal
FSA A.4 2.12.Sm.19	4.8b	Photograph of the tomb of Cyrus the Great at Pasargadae
FSA A.4 2.12.Sm.20	4.8a	Photograph of the tomb of Cyrus the Great at Pasargadae
FSA A.4 2.12.Sm.24	3.2c	Photograph by Sevruguin of his camera at Persepolis
FSA A.6 04.GN.2799	5.6a	Rock relief of Shapur I at Naqsh-e Rostam photograph by Ernst Herzfeld
FSA A.6 04.27.056	5.3	Sasanian relief
FSA A.15	3.2b	Photograph of the execution of Nasir al-Din Shah's assassin

Getty Research Institute Special Collections

2017. R.25-80	8.7a	Nude model
2017. R.25-81	8.8c	Partly clothed model
2017.R.25-82	8.7b	Nude model

2017.R.25-83	7.7c	Nude model
Pierre de Gigord collection of photographs of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey. Series III. Loose and mounted photographs	7.8	<i>View of Tiflis</i> , by Roinov

Harvard University Art Museums

1957.193	4.13b	Illustrated folio from the Greack Ilkhanid Shahnama
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Jackson 1906

Plate	4.9a	Photograph of Pasargadae
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Library of Congress

LC-M33-4661	5.5	Palace of Ctesiphon
LOT 13419, no. 002	7.5	Military road
2018688983	7.3a–b	<i>Deputies of Caucasian tribes who attended the coronation of Emperor Alexander II in 1856 and Georgian Women</i>

Livius.org website

Digital Photograph	5.6c	Rock relief of Shapur I at Naqsh-e Rostam, photograph by Marco Prins
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Mahdi Ehsaei

Image 1	9.4a	Ghasem—Gurband, Minab County
Image 2	9.4b	Ameneh—Gurband, Minab County

Metropolitan Museum of Art

67.606.18	4.10	Luigi Pesce, Tomb of Cyrus at Pasargadae
1977.683.43	4.11a	Luigi Pesce, Blue Mosque of Tabriz

1998.6.3	4.4b	Lutf 'Ali Khan, Investiture scene of Ardashir I at Naqsh-e Rostam
2005.100.1313	4.2b	William James Stillman, stele from Kerameikos Cemetery, Athens
2019.116	4.4a	Ahmad Naqqash, drawing of Sasanian relief of Bishapur II of Shapur

National Parliamentary Library of Georgia

Digital library "Iverieli"	7.7a-c	Photograph Mount and Backstamps of Ermakov and Kolchin and Ermakov
Digital library "Iverieli"	9.7	Photograph collage of women, by Dimitri Ermakov

New York Public Library

George Kennan album	7.16	Dmitri Ermakov. Voенно-Gruzinskaia doroga. Skala mezhd u Pasaуaуom i Meltom. (Georgian Military Road)
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Oriental Institute Museum Archives

P. 1101 / N. 23688	3.16, 8.1	Nasir al-Din on a hunting trip with Malijak
P. 1102 / N. 23689	3.6	Prisoner Mirza Reza Kirmani, photographed by Sevruguin
P. 1103 / N. 23690	3.7	Prisoner Mirza Reza Kirmani, photographed by Abudullah Mirza Qajar
P. 1108 / N. 23693	3.13a	Portrait of Zell-e Soltan
P. 1110 / N. 23695	8.2	Portrait of Malijak by an unknown
P. 1121 / N. 23657	3.11a-b	Exterior ramparts of Tehran
P. 1122 / N. 23658	3.11c-d	Canon Square in Tehran
P. 1123 / N. 23659	3.15b	Donkey riders

P. 1126 / N. 23662	4.1	Street in Tehran with tramway
P. 1133 / N. 23669	3.5	City gate in Tehran
P. 1131 / N. 23667	3.8, 3.10, 3.14a	Men sitting on the ramparts outside of Tehran
P. 1145 / N. 23676	9.1b	Qajar relief of Fath Ali Shah located at Chesmeh-Ali in Rayy
P. 1148 / N. 23646	3.3a, 3.17	Ice cream seller photographed in Canon's Square
P. 1154 / N. 24476	3.13b	Portrait of a water seller
P. 1156 / N. 24478	3.18b	Water carriers
P. 1160 / N. 24482	3.3b, 3.15a	Peddlers
P. 1172 / N. 24493	9.2	Women weaving a carpet
P. 1174 / N. 24495	3.19a	Beating cotton
P. 1181 / N. 24501	3.19b	Portrait of Nur Muhammad, Jewish doctor and friend of Sevruguin
P. 1191 / N. 24509	3.4a–b, 3.19c	Portrait of Persian gentleman
P. 1199 / N. 24517	3.4c–d	Portrait of a woman, Chaldean or Kurdish
P. 1201 / N. 24519	3.20a	Jewish women or women of a southern Iranian tribe
P. 1203 / N. 24251	8.10a	Woman in fashionable dress
P. 1207 / N. 24525	3.18	Armenian women and girls
P. 1210 / N. 24528	3.20d, 8.9	Woman in fashionable dress
P. 1211 / N. 24529	3.20g	Portrait of a woman putting on street costume
P. 1212 / N. 24530	3.20e	Portrait of a woman with veil raised
P. 1214 / N. 24532	9.3	Colorized version of Jewish individuals or members of a southern tribe
P. 1215 / N. 24533	3.20f	Kurdish family

P. 1223 / N. 23680	3.14b	Bridge in mountains between Caspian Sea and Tehran
P. 1229 / N. 23634	3.14d	Mount Demavand
P. 1230 / N. 23649	4.11b	Remains of Blue Mosque in Tabriz
P. 1233 / N. 24539	3.12, 3.14c	Mil-i Sharq Radkan tower tomb
P. 1236 / N. 23591	5.4	Taq-e Bostan
P. 1237 / N. 23692	5.1	Sasanian rock relief of Shapur I at Bishapur
P. 1241 / N. 24540	3.20b	Portrait of a dervish
P. 1243 / N. 24542	7.18b	Portrait of a dervish
P. 1247 / N. 24546	3.19e, 9.4a	Afro-Iranian dervishes
P. 1248 / N. 24547	3.13c, 3.19d	Portrait of a dervish
P. 1249 / N. 24548	3.20c, 7.18a	Portrait of a dervish
P. 1251 / N. 24550	3.19f	Young dervishes
P. 58796	5.6b	Rock relief of Shapur I at Naqsh-e Rostam, photograph by Erich Schmidt

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

RP- F-F01048-BD	4.12	Photograph of Pasargadae
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Russian Museum of Ethnography

5339-8	7.6	Rudnev Brothers album, Aul (village) in Ossetia
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Smithsonian Art Museum

1999.81	4.2a	William James Stillman, painting of Mount Chocoru
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Sphinx Fine Art, London

Picture	7.15	<i>Noble Intentions</i> , by Pyotr Kilchin
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University of Chicago, Regenstein Library, Special Collections

Map Collection	7.2	Close-up of map “Asie occidentale,” by Colonel Niox
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Victoria and Albert Museum

PH.2857-1903	4.7	Photograph of Ka’ba-ye Zardosht with reliefs in the background
PH.2860-1903	4a	Photograph of Tomb of Darius I with Sasanian rock reliefs
E.339:19-2010	8.8a–b	Partially clothed or fully clothed models

Weissbach 1911a

Fig. 3	4b	Photograph of inscription from Tomb of Darius I
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Wikimedia Commons

Globus M-40, Globus M_03	3.1c	Photos by CEPhoto, Uwe Aranas
Tbsyouthpalace	7.4	Tbilisi Youth Palace, photo by Alsandro

Women’s Worlds in Qajar Iran website

<i>Nina Avakyan Collection</i>		
Record No. 1260A20	9.6b	Photograph of Rose and Hirach (dressed as a man) Amrikhaniyan
Record No. 1260A51	1, 3.1, 6.1a	Backstamp of Sevruguin’s photograph
<i>Shahin and Arsineh Basil Collection</i>		
Record No. 1144A46	8.5	Postmortem photograph
Record No. 114A55	8.4	Heripsima’s visiting card
Record No. 1144A100	8.3	Heripsima Abrahamian
Record No. 1144A108	8.6	Postmortem photograph

<i>Firouz Firouz Collection</i>		
Record No. 1275	8.10b	Photograph of Kurdish woman
<i>Parvin Gharibshahi (Sadaqat Yazdi) Collection</i>		
Record No. 14132A37	6.2	Photograph with Persian inscription
<i>Armine Ghazariyan Collection</i>		
Record No. 1264A3	6.4	Backstamp of photograph of Russi Khan
<i>Institute for Iranian Contemporary Historical Studies Collection</i>		
Record No. 1261A93	9.6a	“Two female prostitutes”
Record No. 1261A100	9.5	“Young female prostitute”
<i>Joel Montague Collection</i>		
Record No. 908A1	6.3a	Photograph of a child, Joseph Papazian
Record No. 908A3	2	<i>Photograph of School Girls</i>
Record No. 908A7	1, 6.1b	Backstamp of Sevruquin’s photograph

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