

The Indigenous Lens: Frühe Fotografie in islamischen Ländern

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ABSTRACTS UND LITERATURHINWEISE

6.10. Wendy SHAW

Photography and Visuality in 19th-Century Ottoman Turkey

In the late nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire, photography emerged as one of numerous technologies which transformed the perception of the world. Unlike many, however, it was not necessarily already coded as promoting Western culture. Different from other technologies of modernization, it held the apparent promise of offering an objective gaze at the modern world untainted by cultural change. Yet, as elsewhere, the very fact of photographing the world offered a new understanding to users and viewers of photography. This paper will use early Ottoman writings and documentation on photography to explore how photography affected perceptions in relation to public space and visibility.

Bibliography: William Allen, 'The Abdul Hamid Collection', *History of Photography* 8:2 (1984), 119–45. — Wendy Shaw, "Ottoman Photography of the Late Nineteenth Century: An 'Innocent' Modernism", *History of Photography* 33.1/2009: 80-93. — Michelle Woodward, „Between Orientalist Cliche's and Images of Modernization: Photographic Practice in the Late Ottoman Era“ *History of Photography* 27.4/2003: 363–74.

20.10. Nancy MICKLEWRIGHT

Photography in the late Ottoman World: A Story of Two Collections

This talk will examine the history of photography in the late Ottoman Empire as we now understand it through the lens of two collections, both in the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles, California. Assembled at roughly the same time (within the past few decades), the two collections provide a platform from which we can examine a range of issues around photography in the Ottoman Empire. While these issues could take us in a variety of directions, the primary goal of my talk will be to interrogate photographic production and the consumption of photography in the Ottoman context in order to situate the Ottoman engagement with photography in a larger context of late nineteenth century photo history. It is my contention that by the last decades of the nineteenth century, the Ottomans were fully conversant with the new medium of photography and active participants in creating their own photographic record. Additionally, focusing our attention on the contents of two collections will highlight the extent to which our knowledge of photo history is dependent on the

photographs to which we have access and the role of individual collectors in shaping our view of the photographic record.

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3.11. Layla S. DIBA

The power of Images: Qajar Photography and Its Influence on Iranian Art

Photography found immediate acceptance in Qajar Iran during the long reign of Nasir al Din Shah (1848-96). Iran's long-established tradition of visual culture was arguably one of the principal reasons that led to its rapid adoption. A veritable passion for photography gripped the Qajar court and, soon thereafter, spread throughout the Persian domains.

Photography functioned as a political tool for recording information as well as a short-cut to illusionistic painting and portraiture. In the late 19th century, Iranians believed that the camera would give them the ultimate and most modern means to finally achieve a perfect and modern realism which they had sought for so long. In spite of the generally decorative, stylized and abstract quality of Persian painting, Persian painting had aspired to a form of realism since at least the Timurid period. The Persian understanding of realism, very different from the European one, was constantly changing, reinvented in the works of the celebrated artists of each new generation, be it Bihzad, Riza Abbasi, Muhammad Zaman, or Abu'l Hasan Ghaffari.

Beginning in the 1980s, photographs of Persia began to excite scholarly interest, in the wake of an international boomlet in the study of the history of photography. Western scholars focused on the contribution of European photographers and on issues of Orientalism. Iranian scholars, eager to document indigenous contributions, published evidence based on the rich Persian contemporary sources and on the vast collection of photographic albums of the Qajar court housed in the Gulestan Palace in Tehran, both resources either untapped or unavailable to non-Iranian scholars.

Building on this pioneering research, this lecture will begin with a review of the rise of photography at the Nasserli court and reconsider its relationship to Academic painting of the period, focusing on the work of Muhammad Qaffari, Kamal al Mulk. The presentation will then examine the influence of Qajar photography on the art of the 20th century, particularly in the works of Ardeshir Mohasses and Qassem Hadjizadeh; and will end with a discussion of the creative appropriation of powerful Qajar photographic imagery in the work of contemporary photographers and artists such as Bahman Jalali, Shirin Neshat and Sadegh Tirafkan.

Bibliography: Chahryar Adle and Yahya Zoka, Notes et Documents sur la photographie Iranienne et son Histoire, *Studio Iranica*, 12-2/1983: 249-280. — Frederick N. Bohrer, *Sevruguin and the Persian Image: Photographs of Iran, 1870-1930*, Smithsonian Institution 1999. — Staci G. Scheiwiller, *Mirrors with Memories: Nineteenth-Century and Qajar Imagery in Contemporary Iranian Photography*, Saarbrücken 2011. — Mohammad Reza Tahmasbpour, *Of Silver and Light*, Tehran 1389/2010.

Online References: Album of photographs by Ali Khan Vali, Harvard University Library, <http://pds.lib.harvard.edu/pds/view/6665026?n=1&jp2Res=0.125&imagesize=1200&rotatio=>

17.11. Carmen PÉREZ GONZÁLEZ

Porträts durch die Linse iranischer Fotografen des 19. Jahrhunderts

Die Kamera ist kein kulturfreier neutraler technischer Apparat, kein von Kultur unbeeinflusstes Medium. Kultur, oder präziser, der kulturelle Hintergrund des Fotografen spielt bei der Aufnahme eine bedeutende Rolle. Fotografie ist eine Auslegung des realen Lebens und Fotografien sind kulturelle Produkte. Sie sind daher nicht ein Spiegel des alltäglichen Lebens. Dass Bilder gestellt und arrangiert werden, wird bei Porträtfotos des 19. Jahrhunderts besonders offenkundig.

Ziel dieses Vortrags ist es, die kulturellen Zusammenhänge der Fotogestaltung deutlich zu machen. Ich erörtere die Werke verschiedener iranischer Fotografen, die im 19. Jahrhundert tätig waren – darunter Abdollah Mirza Qajar (1849-1908), Mohammad Abd ol-Qasem Nuri (aktiv ab den 1870ern) und Mirza Hassan Akkasbashi (1854-1916) – um darzulegen, wie einheimische Fotografen im Unterschied zu europäischen die iranische Wirklichkeit darstellten. Auf der Grundlage einer vergleichenden visuellen Analyse von Porträtfotografien und gemalten Porträts wird gezeigt, wie ästhetische Vorlieben mit sozio-kulturellen Gewohnheiten und Schreib-, Lese- und Sichtweisen in Verbindung stehen.

Zu kulturgebundenen Aspekten iranischer Fotografie des 19. Jahrhunderts lassen sich anführen: die Schreibrichtung, die dazu führte, dass iranische Fotografen im Vergleich zu ihren westlichen Kollegen gespiegelte Bilder produzierten; der Gebrauch von Text auf dem Foto (meist Dichtung); traditionelle iranische Bildposen, z. B. kniend statt sitzend oder stehend; die Verwendung bestimmter Objekte beim Posieren

Literatur: Iraj Afshar, “Some remarks on the early history of photography in Iran”, in *Qajar Iran: Political, Social and Cultural Change, 1800–1925*, eds. Edmund Bosworth and Carole Hillenbrand, Edinburg University Press 1992: 261–292. — Layla Diba, *Royal Persian Paintings: The Qajar Epoch 1785-1925*, New York 1998. — Yahya Zoka, *The History of Photography and Pioneer Photographers in Iran*, Tehran 1997 (in Persian).

1.12. Claude W. SUI

Frühe Porträtfotografie in Arabien und die Pilgerfahrt zu den Heiligen Stätten

Europas Faszination mit dem „Orient“ erlebte im 19. Jahrhundert einen Höhepunkt, der eine unersättliche Reiselust hervorrief. Pilger, Abenteurer und betuchte Großbürger bereisten den Vorderen Orient. Dank des zunehmenden Tourismus konnten professionelle Atelierfotografen dort ein florierendes Geschäft betreiben. Die Bilder von den heiligen Stätten wurden als Albumabzüge und später als kolorierte Postkarten an Pilger und Touristen verkauft; den einen waren sie Reliquie, den anderen schöne Reiseerinnerung.

Ein Pionier und Wegweiser der einheimischen „Orientfotografie“ war Mohammed Sadiq Bey (1832–1902), der um 1881 die ersten Fotos überhaupt von den heiligen Pilgerstätten in Mekka und Medina anfertigte. Weltweit sind nur noch drei Konvolute seiner Bilder erhalten. Die Aufnahmen sind einzigartige Zeugnisse der Anfänge der arabischen Fotografie und zeugen nicht zuletzt auch von dem Mut und dem Können arabischen Künstler. Lange Zeit waren diese Aufnahmen nahezu in Vergessenheit geraten. Zu den wichtigsten frühen Fotografen zählt auch der mekkanische Arzt al-Sayyid Abd al-Ghaffar (Lebensdaten unbekannt), der inmitten der Wallfahrtsorte die Züge der Pilger im Bild festhielt und damit

faszinierende und ethnologisch bedeutsame Dokumente schuf. Die ersten Porträts von Pilgern aus den verschiedenen Kontinenten wurden jedoch vom niederländischen Arabisten Christiaan Snouck-Hurgronje (1857–1936) aufgenommen. Er war der erste Europäer, der mit seinem Team die unterschiedlichen sozialen Stände in Aufnahmen dokumentierte. Zu den Dargestellten zählen Scheichs, Scherifen, Paschas und Gelehrte aus Mekka.

Die Fotografien und ihre Entstehung dokumentieren die Verflechtung und wechselseitige Faszination von Ost und West im 19. Jahrhundert. Mohammed Sadiq Bey studierte in Paris und lernte dort die fotografischen Techniken kennen. Snouck-Hurgronje und Abd al-Ghaffar waren befreundet und arbeiteten zeitweise zusammen. Im Zusammenhang der Darstellung dieser Fotopioniere in Arabien geht der Vortrag der Frage nach, wie weit in ihren Arbeiten unterschiedliche formale und ikonografische Merkmale verfolgt werden können.

Literatur: Nissan Perez, *Focus East: Early Photography in the Near East*, New York 1988. — Alfred Wiczorek und Claude W. Sui (Hgg.), *Ins Heilige Land: Pilgerstätten von Jerusalem bis Mekka und Medina; Photographien aus dem 19. Jahrhundert aus der Sammlung des Forum Internationale Photographie der Reiss-Engelhorn-Museen Mannheim*, Heidelberg 2006.

15.12. Staci G. SCHEIWILLER

Entangled Legacies: 19th-Century Imagery in Contemporary Iranian Photography

After the success of the Revolution in 1979 and the transformation of Iran into a theocratic democracy in the 1980s, imagery from the nineteenth century began to appear in Iranian visual culture, from theatre and film to painting and photography. These appropriations include 19th-century indigenous photographs taken by Iranians, fashions and symbols of the Iranian Empire, such as the Lion and the Sun. The reconstructions of the Qajar dynastic past in many of these photographs contest the constructions of memory and “official” history. The act of remembering becomes one of protest and helps to reintegrate the perspectives of previously excluded segments of society, since the settings that figure predominately in these photographs are the harem and the photography studio. Photography has played a special role in this radical act of remembrance, as the rulers of the Pahlavi dynasty (1925–79) had suppressed the ingenious photographs of the Qajar dynasty (1786-1925) from being exhibited in mainstream Iranian society until 1978, when the Revolution was gaining momentum (Atabai, 1978; Jalali, 2007).

I will focus on three photographers, each of whom has a photographic series that incorporates altered, nineteenth-century Iranian photographs. These photographers are Bahman Jalali (b. 1944), who has spent most of his career in Iran; Yassaman Ameri (b. 1951), who left in fear of her life after the Revolution and now lives in exile in Canada; and Shadi Ghadirian (b. 1974), a woman who came of age in a post-Revolutionary society. Their differences and unfixed positions frame the political and social implications of nineteenth-century motifs in contemporary Iranian photography, and more broadly, in the constructions of contemporary Iranian identities.

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