Finding Aid for Album fotografico della Persia, 1860 2012.R.18

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Special Collections

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Table of Contents

Summary Information 3
Biographical/Historical Note 3
Scope and Content of Collection 4
Arrangement 5
Administrative Information 6
Related Materials 6
Controlled Access Headings 6
Collection Inventory 7
Album fotografico della Persia, 1860 7
Portrait of Sir Henry Rawlinson 11

Summary Information

Repository: Special Collections

Creator: Pesce, Luigi, 1827-1864

Title: Album fotografico della Persia

ID: 2012.R.18

Dates: 1860

Extent: 2 Linear Feet (2 boxes)

Request Materials: Request access to the physical materials described in this inventory through the catalog record for this collection. Click here for the access policy.

Language: Collection material is in Italian.

Abstract: The album of photographs taken by Luigi Pesce contains 21 views of Tehran and environs, followed by 21 views of ancient Persian sites including the Achaemenid ruins of Persepolis, the Achaemenid tombs and Sasanian reliefs at Naqsh-i Rustam near Persepolis, and the Sasanian reliefs at T#q-e Bost#n. Pesce took the earliest documented photographs of Persepolis and some of the earliest photographs of Tehran.

Preferred Citation

Luigi Pesce Album fotografico della Persia, 1860, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, Accession no. 2012.R.18.

http://hdl.handle.net/10020/cifa2012r18

^ Return to Table of Contents

Biographical/Historical Note

Beginning in 1848, Luigi Pesce (1827-1864) a Neapolitan lieutenant colonel and amateur photographer, was employed by N##ir al-D#n Sh#h, beginning in 1848, to modernize the Persian army, and eventually became commander-in-chief of its infantry. Pesce took the earliest documented photographs of

Persepolis (and some of the earliest photographs of Tehran), for which he was awarded an Honorable Mention at the 1862 International Exhibition in London.

Photography was introduced into Persia (modern Iran) in 1844 by the Frenchman Jules Richard, whom the Shah had charged with the task of recording the ancient Achaemenid site of Persepolis. When Richard failed to carry out the task, Pesce took the initiative, and, as he recorded in the album that he presented to the Shah in 1858 (now in the Golestan Palace collection, Tehran), "There has yet been no one from the West who has captured the images of the ruins by photography. Therefore, it is for the first time that your servant took photographs of the reliefs and ruined edifices of Takht-e-Jamshid and presented them to His Majesty."

Luigi Pesce also presented an album of his photographs to Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson (1810-1895) at the conclusion of Rawlinson's brief tenure as British ambassador to the Qajar court (1859-1860). Rawlinson was a British East India Company army officer, diplomat, Orientalist, and philologist who has been called the "father of Assyriology." Beginning in 1835, he was posted first in India and then to the Persian court. There he transcribed and translated the trilingual cuneiform texts that Darius the Great caused to be inscribed on the rock of Behistun at T#q-e Bost#n. Rawlinson's "Memoir on the Babylonian and Assyrian Inscriptions," published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, volume 14 (1851), which comprises a copy of the Babylonian inscriptions at Behistun in the original characters along with an interlined transliteration and a Latin translation, is considered to be his most significant contribution to the field of Assyriology.

Sources consulted:

Pazargadi, Leila Moayeri and Frances Terpak. "Picturing Q#j#r Persia: A Gift to Major-General Henry Creswicke Rawlinson," *Getty Research Journal*, no. 6 (2014).

^ Return to Table of Contents

Scope and Content of Collection

The album of salted paper and albumen photographic prints contains 21 views of Tehran and environs, followed by 21 views of ancient Persian sites, all of which Pesce made for his employer, N##ir al-D#n Sh#h. Although Pesce first presented his photographs to the Shah, in this album he has "repurposed" a set of prints as a personal gift to Sir Henry Rawlinson. Just as the monuments, edifices, and subjects of the bas-reliefs Pesce depicted for the Shah can be seen to relate to the Qajar court, so can specific images included in the present album be seen to allude to Rawlinson's own achievements. Thus, the inclusion of a cuneiform inscription acknowledges Rawlinson's scholarly interests and contributions, while bas-reliefs of soldiers and of Darius's army flanking the great staircase at Persepolis can be seen as allusions to his vital military role in Persia, including his mustering and training of the Guran, a Kurdish mountain tribe.

The views of Tehran and environs include historic monuments such as the Mogul mausoleum of Ilkahan Ulj#yt# Khud#bandah, known as the Dome of Soltaniyeh; views of the city's gates; and Qajar buildings such as Golestan Palace and the military school, headquarters, and residence. Many of these structures have either been radically altered or no longer exist, such as the three city gates documented in the

album. Several views of the Golestan Palace record buildings and architectural and decorative details that were destroyed or modified in the course of subsequent restorations. Other photographs, such as the view of the military school, appear to be the only visual documentations of Qajar buildings that are no longer extant.

Ancient Persian sites depicted in the album include the Achaemenid ruins of Persepolis, the Achaemenid tombs and Sasanian reliefs at Naqsh-i Rustam near Persepolis, and the Sasanian reliefs at T#q-e Bost#n in Kirm#nsh#h#n province. These photographs are not only the earliest photographs of these sites, but the specific subjects of the reliefs chosen for inclusion can be seen as illustrating the symbolic relationship between the mid-nineteenth century Qajar court and the ancient Persian Empire.

Included with the album is a brief handwritten note regarding H. C. Rawlinson written on the letterhead of the Commander-in-Chief in India and signed: Cin in C India 1921 (i.e. General Henry Seymour Rawlinson, 1st Baron Rawlinson, and son of H. C. Rawlinson).

The album is quarter-bound in leather with floral Qajar-style lacquer covers. The front and back paste-downs, also in the Qajar style, have central cartouches depicting a bird among flowers.

The free front endpaper contains a handwritten title: Album Fotografico / della / Persia / Compilato dal Sig.r Luigi Pesce, Tenente Colonnello / Instruttore d'Infanteria al servizio dello Shah / Teheran.

The dedication on the flyleaf reads: A Sua Eccellenza / Il Signor Generale Enrico Rawlinson / Ministro Plenipotenziario di Sua Maestà la Regina / d'Inghilterra / et. et. et. / presso / La corte dello Shah di Persia / Teheran 12 Maggio 1860 / In omaggio.

Captions are handwritten on the mounts in Italian. The photographs are signed in the negative: L. Pesce.

Also included in the collection is a lithograph portrait of Rawlinson by an unidentified artist.

^ Return to Table of Contents

Arrangement

Arranged in two series: Series I. Album fotografico della Persia, 1860; Series II. Portrait of Sir Henry Rawlinson.

^ Return to Table of Contents

Administrative Information

Access

Open for use by qualified researchers.

Publication Rights

Contact Library Reproductions and Permissions.

Acquisition Information

Acquired in 2012. Rawlinson portrait gift of Manoutchehr Eskandari-Qajar in 2014.

Processing History

The collection was cataloged by Beth Ann Guynn in 2012. Additional material integrated in 2016.

^ Return to Table of Contents

Related Materials

Digitized Material

The collection was digitized by the repository and the images can be viewed online:

http://hdl.handle.net/10020/2012r18

^ Return to Table of Contents

Controlled Access Headings

Subjects - People

- Rawlinson, Henry Creswicke, Sir (Portraits) (1810-1895)

Subjects - Corporate Bodies

- K#kh-i Gulist#n (Tehran, Iran)

Subjects - Topics

- Achaemenian inscriptions
- Art, Sassanid
- Cuneiform inscriptions
- Relief (Sculpture), Ancient -- Iran -- Naqsh-i Rustam
- Relief (Sculpture), Ancient -- Iran -- Persepolis
- Sculpture, Achaemenid -- Iran -- Persepolis

Subjects - Places

- Bisutun Site (Iran) -- Antiquities
- Iran -- Antiquities
- Naqsh-i Rustam (Iran)
- Persepolis (Iran) -- Antiquities
- Sul##n#yah (Zanj#n, Iran)
- Tehran (Iran) -- Buildings, structures, etc.
- T#q-e Bost#n site (Iran) -- Antiquities

Genres and Forms of Materials

- Albumen prints -- Iran -- 19th century
- Photograph albums -- Iran -- 19th century
- Photographs, Original
- Salted paper prints -- Iran -- 19th century

Collection Inventory

Series I. Album fotografico della Persia, 1860

Luigi Pesce Album fotografico della Persia,: 1860

Arrangement: In original order.

Title/Description	Containers	
2012.R.18-fp: Front paste-down *Scope and Contents*: Decorated in Persian style, with a central floral cartouche.	Box 1	Page Front paste-down
2012.R.18-ffe: Title page *Scope and Contents*: Handwritten title: Album fotografico della Persia : / Compilato dal Sig.r Luigi Pesce, Tenente Colonnello / Instruttore d'Infanteria al servizio dello Shah / Teheran.	Box 1	Page Free front endpaper
2012.R.18-fl: Dedication		

Scope and Contents: The handwritten dedication reads: A Sua Eccellenza / Il Signor Generale Enrico Rawlinson / Ministro Plenipotenziario di Sua Maest# la Regina / d'Inghilterra / et. et. et. / presso / La corte dello Shah di Persia / Teheran 12 Maggio 1860 / In omaggio.	Box 1	Page Fly leaf
2012.R.18-1r: Porta del governo a Teheran	Box 1	Page 1 recto
2012.R.18-2r: Entrata del Palazzo Reale a Teheran	Box 1	Page 2 recto
2012.R.18-3r: Trono d'alabastro a Teheran	Box 1	Page 3 recto
2012.R.18-4r: Prima corte del Palazzo Reale a Teheran	Box 1	Page 4 recto
2012.R.18-5r: 2da corte, e Salone d'Inverno dello Shah	Box 1	Page 5 recto
2012.R.18-6r: Trono detto de Pavone a Teheran	Box 1	Page 6 recto
2012.R.18-7r: 3a corte del Palazzo Reale a Teheran	Box 1	Page 7 recto
2012.R.18-8r: Gran salone di ricezione nella 3a corte a Teheran	Box 1	Page 8 recto
2012.R.18-9r: Grande cerimonia del salam al 10 dell'Anno	Box 1	Page 9 recto
Scope and Contents: A view into the royal Qajar palace complex during the Nowruz or New Year's celebrations shows the Shah seated on a throne with crowds of officials and two elephants in attendance.		
2012.R.18-10r: Porta della cittadella a Teheran	Box 1	Page 10 recto
2012.R.18-11r: Bazar Emyr a Teheran	Box 1	Page 11 recto
2012.R.18-12r: Tomba del Kan di Kiva a Teheran	Box 1	Page 12 recto
2012.R.18-13r: Scuola militare a Teheran	Box 1	Page 13 recto
2012.R.18-14r: Nizamia presso Teheran	Box 1	Page 14 recto
2012.R.18-15r: Davuddie presso Teheran	Box 1	Page 15 recto
2012.R.18-16r: Quartiere delle donne a Davuddie	Box 1	Page 16 recto
2012.R.18-17r: Montagne Alburz prese dal villaggio di Gulack, Teheran	Box 1	Page 17 recto
2012.R.18-18r: Casa di campagna dell' ambasciata russa a Teheran	Box 1	Page 18 recto
2012.R.18-19r: Porta nuova a Teheran	Box 1	Page 19 recto
2012.R.18-20r: Grande moschea in ruina a Sultanie	Box 1	Page 20 recto
2012.R.18-21r: Piccola moschea in ruina a Sultanie	Box 1	Page 21 recto
2012.R.18-22r: Bassi-relievi a Persepolis	Box 1	Page 22 recto
Scope and Contents: Depicts a relief of a lion attacking a gazelle.		
2012.R.18-23r: Bassi-relievi a Persepolis	Box 1	Page 23 recto
Scope and Contents: Shows a bas-relief on an inner wall depicting two Achaemenid soldiers holding lances.		

2012.R.18-24r: Inscrizione cuneiforme a Persepolis	Box 1	Page 24 recto
2012.R.18-25r: Ruine a Persepolis *Scope and Contents*: View of walls, one with bas-reliefs.	Box 1	Page 25 recto
2012.R.18-26r: Ruine a Persepolis *Scope and Contents*: Ruins with four columns.	Box 1	Page 26 recto
2012.R.18-27r: Tomba sulla rocca a Persepolis	Box 1	Page 27 recto
2012.R.18-28r: Bassi-relievi a Persepolis *Scope and Contents*: Two registers of processions (and part of a third showing legs only) moving from left to right: a tree; men bearing gifts; and men with horses and donkeys.	Box 1	Page 28 recto
2012.R.18-29r: Bassi-relievi a Persepolis *Scope and Contents*: One and a half registers of processions moving from left to right.	Box 1	Page 29 recto
2012.R.18-30r: Bassi-relievi a Persepolis *Scope and Contents*: Two registers of processions (and part of a third showing legs only) moving from right to left: trees; men bearing gifts; and men with rams.	Box 1	Page 30 recto
2012.R.18-31r: Bassi-relievi a Persepolis *Scope and Contents*: Two registers of processions (and part of a third showing legs only) carved along a stairway and moving from right to left with trees and men bearing gifts.	Box 1	Page 31 recto
2012.R.18-32r: Ruine a Persepolis *Scope and Contents*: Shows the pair of Lamassus sporting human heads on the western entrance of the Gate of All Nations with two columns and the back side of the western entrance in the background.	Box 1	Page 32 recto
2012.R.18-33r: Bassi-relievi a Persepolis *Scope and Contents*: Bas-relief on a column depicting a man killing a rampant griffin.	Box 1	Page 33 recto
2012.R.18-34r: Entrata principale a Persepolis *Scope and Contents*: Shows the pair of Lamassus sporting wings and Persian beards on the eastern entrance of the Gate of All Nations.	Box 1	Page 34 recto
2012.R.18-35r: Bassi-relievi a Persepolis *Scope and Contents*: Two registers of processions (and part of a third showing legs only) moving from right to left with trees; men bearing gifts; and men with pony carts and with oxen.	Box 1	Page 35 recto
2012.R.18-36r: Bassi-relievi a Persepolis		

Scope and Contents: Two registers of processions (and part of a third showing legs only) moving from right to left: trees; men bearing gifts; and men with camels and oxen.	Box 1	Page 36 recto
2012.R.18-37r: Bassi-relievi a Naksu-Rustem, Persepolis *Scope and Contents*: View of the equestrian combat bas-relief at Naqsh-i Rustam probably from the time of Shapur II.	Box 1	Page 37 recto
2012.R.18-38r: Tomba di Darius a Naksu-Rustem, Persepolis *Scope and Contents*: Rock-cut tomb of Darius I (Darius the Great) at Naqsh-i Rustam.	Box 1	Page 38 recto
2012.R.18-39r: Bassi-relievi a Naksu-Rustem, Persepolis *Scope and Contents*: Cliff relief near the tombs of Darius I and Xerxes depicting Ardashir I receiving a diadem, symbolizing sovereignty, from the god Hormzid. Both figures are on horseback.	Box 1	Page 39 recto
2012.R.18-40r: Bassi-relievi a Naksu-Rustem, Persepolis *Scope and Contents*: Pre-Achaemenid cliff relief depicting Bahram II and his court.	Box 1	Page 40 recto
2012.R.18-41r: Bassi-relievi a Takti-i-bustan, Kirmoskiah *Scope and Contents*: Rock relief at T#q-e Bost#n depicting Ardashir II receiving the beribboned ring, symbol of royal investiture, from his Ahura Mazda. Mithra stands to the left holding a barsom, a ritual bundle of stiff, straight rods, to sanctify the investiture, while the body of the defeated Roman Emperor, Justian II, lies beneath Ardashir II's feet.	Box 1	Page 41 recto
2012.R.18-42r: Bassi-relievi a Takti-i-bustan, Kirmoskiah *Scope and Contents*: Relief to the left of the central relief of the large iwan at T#q-e Bost#n depicting a hunt scene featuring King Khosrow II of Persia standing in a boat and shooting at two wild boars. The relief also suggests the span of Khosrow II's empire by moving from depictions of Indian elephants on its left side to the inclusion of the marshes and reeds of the Nile on the right.	Box 1	Page 42 recto
2012.R.18-bp: Back paste-down *Scope and Contents*: Decorated in Persian style, with a central floral cartouche.	Box 1	Page Back paste-down
2012.R.18-s1: Biographical note regarding Major General Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson, 1921 *Scope and Contents*: Brief handwritten note regarding H. C. Rawlinson written on the letterhead of the Commander-in-Chief in India and signed: Cin in C India 1921 (i.e. General Henry Seymour Rawlinson, 1st Baron Rawlinson, and son of H. C. Rawlinson).	Box 1	Folder 1

^ Return to Table of Contents

Series II. Portrait of Sir Henry Rawlinson

Title/Description	Containers
Portrait of Sir Henry Rawlinson, undated	Box 2
Scope and Contents: Lithograph of a portrait of Rawlinson by an unidentified artist.	

^ Return to Table of Contents