

PIONEERS OF WOMEN'S TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE CAUCASUS: JANE DIEULAFOY, CARLA SERENA AND BELLONIE CHANTRE

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In the history of photography, the contributions of women, particularly in less-studied regions such as the Caucasus, are often overshadowed by those of their male counterparts. However, a few names do emerge, offering fascinating insights into this early period of photographic art in the region.

Among these pioneers, the sisters Eugenie and Olga Orlay de Karwa stand out for their brief but notable presence in Tiflis' 19th-century photographic landscape. Their short-lived portrait studio, which existed from 1876 to 1881, made a lasting impression thanks to the quality of their images.¹

Another remarkable figure is that of Elizaveta Gavril Musheghyan, an Armenian photographer whose studio was opened in Alexandropol around 1890 and later moved to Tiflis (Galstyan 2016). According to inscriptions on the backs of photographs, she was awarded the Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolayevich Romanov Prize, as well as a large silver medal for her "magnificent photographic images". Prince Romanov's praise was most likely associated with the hundreds of portraits Musheghyan made of Russian soldiers stationed at the Imperial military base in Alexandropol (Galstyan 2016).

If we have little information about local women photographers, then no information is available about foreign women photographers who traveled to the Caucasus region in the 19th century. However, in the meanders of history, three figures emerge, each of whom traveled to different corners of the Caucasus with a camera in hand: Jane Dieulafoy (1851-1916), Carla Serena (1824-1884) and Bellonie Chantre (1866-1952). It's noteworthy that, despite their potential contributions to the visual history of the Caucasus, these three women remain in the shadows, their names absent from any list or work surveying nineteenth-century women photographers. Their absence underscores the continuing gaps in our understanding of the history of photography in the Caucasus. While Jane Dieulafoy and Bellonie Chantre are known as travelers who accompanied and assisted their husbands on scientific missions, the name of Carla Serena – a solo traveler – has only begun to emerge from oblivion in the last decade. The images that these three photographers took in turn in the Caucasus have met a strange fate: today they are either lost or misidentified.

The first European woman to document her visit to the Caucasus through the lens of her camera was French: Jane Dieulafoy (Jeanne Henriette Magre), archaeologist and journalist, wife of engineer and archaeologist Marcel Dieulafoy (1844-1920). The couple is best known for leading two expeditions to Persia in 1881 and 1884. After the second mission, which included excavations in the city of Susa, they handed nearly three hundred boxes of collections to the Louvre Museum (Dieulafoy 1989, 12), leading to the inauguration of two "Dieulafoy rooms" within the museum.

Their brief stay in the South Caucasus between February and April 1881 left an important mark in the history of Caucasian photography. Arriving at the port of Poti from Marseille, the Dieulafoy couple headed to Tiflis and then to Erivan to continue their journey to Persia. During this trip, Jane Dieulafoy was responsible for writing the travel diary and taking the photographs. On their journey, the Dieulafoys took several cameras and gelatin bromide plates (Dieulafoy 1887, 10, 37). Until recently, these photographs were known only from the engravings illustrating her travelogue, published in "Le Tour du Monde" in 1883 (Dieulafoy 1883). Thought to be lost, the photographs were rediscovered in 2015 in the library of the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art in Paris. It turns out that in October 1920, just a few months after Marcel Dieulafoy's death, the library acquired ten photo albums that had

belonged to the couple, most likely compiled by Jane. The photographs were quickly forgotten after their acquisition, before being rediscovered and catalogued in 2015 (Péron 2021). Of these ten albums, six are entitled “Perse”. Comparing the first album² with the engravings published by Jane Dieulafoy in “Le Tour du Monde”, we can see that several photographs were taken in the South Caucasus, on the way from Erivan to Persia. Although Jane Dieulafoy’s albums were lent for the exhibition “Who’s Afraid of Women Photographers? 1839-1945”,³ their contents have not yet been studied. Today we can see that almost forty of the photographs glued to the pages of the first album are rare shots taken by Jane Dieulafoy in Armenia, in the Erivan Governorate. The album also includes prints by other photographers and postcards. The photographs depict streets, villages and their inhabitants, as well as several shots of mosques encountered along the way. Based on this series of photographs, the year 1881 can be considered the beginning of women travelers’ photography in the Caucasus.

In 1881, after Jane Dieulafoy, another woman photographer traveled to the Caucasus: it was Carla Serena’s turn to visit Georgia and take photographs.

Carla Serena (Caroline Hartog Mergentheim) was one of the first European travelers to explore Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, the Holy Land, Greece, Persia, and the Ottoman and Russian Empires alone, between 1874 and 1880. Born in Antwerp, Belgium, she moved to Venice after marrying Leon Serena, an Italian merchant of Jewish descent (Pizzagalli 2023). In 1849, political events forced the couple to leave Italy and settle in London.

Serena left London on August 1, 1874, expecting to be home by the end of the year (Serena 1881b, 6). However, her journey lasted until 1880. In her writings, the purpose of her journey is not clearly defined. She only mentions that she went on this adventure to improve her health. It is truly amazing that a woman who had no specific reason for traveling, who was neither an explorer nor a photographer, would have devoted so much time to her travels and repeatedly postponed her return home. Perhaps it was this uncertainty that led Daniela Pizzagalli to suggest that Serena was a spy in the service of England (Pizzagalli 2023, 38-40). This hypothesis is plausible, but difficult to accept without archival evidence.

Carla Serena’s travels in the South Caucasus lasted from 1875 to 1877. When the Russo-Turkish war broke out, she continued her travels in the governorates of Tiflis, Erivan, and Baku, attracting further attention from the local authorities. Finally, forced to leave the Caucasus, she traveled to Persia for 8 months. From there she returned to Baku before going to Moscow via Derbent and then Astrakhan.

In 1881, Carla Serena returned to the Caucasus for a second short stay, this time equipped with a camera. By this time, Carla Serena had already begun to publish her travelogues in the newspaper “Le Tour du Monde” (Serena 1880. 1881a). However, the lack of photographs from Abkhazia delayed the publication of her articles. As Serena writes, Caucasian photographers refused to go to Abkhazia “for fear of risking their lives in this wild and rebellious province” (Serena 1882a, 353). Faced with this situation, Serena herself took the initiative to return to the South Caucasus to take the photographs. She left Vienna on October 16 for a two-month journey. She traveled all over Georgia, from Abkhazia to Kakheti, and returned to Vienna with nearly 150 gelatin silver bromide glass plates. In her articles, she published 54 of her photographs in the form of engravings, all of them of great importance for the architectural and other cultural heritage (Serena 1882a. 1882b. 1884). Since then, however, no photographs have come down to us. The only information we have about Carla Serena’s images is that they were shown in an exhibition at the Palais de l’Industrie in Paris in 1883 (Audouard 1883, 284). It is only through the published engravings made from her photographs that we can judge them today. Despite the loss of traces of her work, Carla Serena can still be considered one of the first female photographers in the Caucasus, along with Jane Dieulafoy.⁴

Unlike Jane Dieulafoy, Bellonie Chantre remained in the shadow of her naturalist and archaeologist husband, Ernest Chantre (1843-1924), deputy director of the Lyon Museum. The latter is famous for having led several anthropological and archaeological missions to the Caucasus and Asia Minor between 1879 and 1894, under the auspices of the French Ministry of Public Instruction. In 1886, Ernest Chantre married Bellonie Bourdaret, who became his collaborator in the scientific missions and contributed to their success. At the end of 1889, the Ministry entrusted the couple with

a mission “to the Caucasus and the adjacent provinces of Asian Turkey to continue their ethnological and anthropometric studies”.⁵ On April 2, 1890, the Chantres arrived in Batumi from Marseille and spent five months in the Southern Caucasus, conducting research in Georgia and Armenia (Chantre 1891. 1892. 1893). Bellonie was fluent in Russian, familiar with anthropological survey methods, and “had a great habit of taking photographs”.⁶ In addition to writing travelogues, she took skull measurements of women and took numerous photographs. Less is known about her fieldwork, all of which is attributed to Monsieur Chantre. In the texts she published after the missions, we read that although some of the photographs were taken by Ernest Chantre (Chantre 1893, 57), it was actually she who took the photographs during the trips (Chantre 1893, 22-3, 57, 79). She even wrote that she developed some pictures in the laboratory of a photographer in Choucha (Chantre 1893, 62). Bellonie Chantre’s extensive knowledge of photographic techniques is demonstrated by the fact that the couple took several cameras on their journey (Chantre 1893, 74), at least one of which was an instant camera (Chantre 1893, 69). Madame Chantre herself, as was customary at the time, places her husband’s scientific work in the foreground, and in the subtitle of her book she refers to her husband as the author of all the photographs published in the work (Chantre 1893). The text, however, says otherwise: it is indeed she who takes the photographs and even makes the prints.

At the end of the mission, the couple returned to France with over eight hundred photographs.⁷ It’s safe to assume that most, if not all, of these photographs were taken by Bellonie Chantre.

A photographic collection donated by Ernest Chantre to the Anthropology Laboratory of the Paris Natural History Museum in 1904 is now housed at the Quai Branly – Jacques Chirac Museum. The collection consists of 151 albumen prints mounted on cardboard and 106 glass plate negatives, some collodion and others gelatin silver bromide. The Quai Branly Museum identifies the collection as originating from missions to Russian Armenia in 1890 and 1893-94. It remains to be determined whether the photographs were also taken by other photographers, as Ernest Chantre was in the habit of bringing back pictures taken by local photographers from these missions. In order to identify the negatives and photographs taken by Bellonie Chantre, a comparison of the collection of the Quai Branly Museum with the photographs of the Chantre missions in the Musée des Confluences in Lyon remains to be done. Unfortunately, I didn’t have the opportunity to study this collection, as all my attempts to gain access to the Caucasian collections of the Musée des Confluences were rejected for unknown reasons.

It is interesting to recall the context in which these European women photographers had to do their work. During nineteenth-century scientific journeys, whether for photographers or anthropologists, fieldwork was always fraught with difficulties: photography was often viewed with suspicion by local populations. As the famous photographer Vladimir Barkanov (1826-1892) wrote in his letter to the French Society of Photography, the Caucasian population regarded the camera as a “work of witchcraft” (Bulletin 1870, 97-8). This is confirmed by the accounts of Carla Serena. She recounts the difficulties she had in getting people to pose for her because they were afraid of the camera (Serena 1882a, 370). Serena used gelatin-silver bromide photographic plates on glass, and every evening she changed the plates on the frames in order to take new photographs the next day, using a lantern with red glass. Serena humorously described how difficult it was to convince people that she was not “an ally of Beelzebub” (Serena 1882a, 378). Ten years later, people were still refusing to be photographed, but this time for a different reason: according to Bellonie Chantre, the men, most of whom were not inclined to serve in the military, interpreted attempts to photograph them as an attempt to enlist them, and ran away when they saw the cameras (Chantre 1893, 6).

According to numerous advertisements in the local press, there were several dozen photographic workshops in Tiflis in the 1880s. By the 1890s, the field of photography had developed to such an extent that even small Caucasian towns and villages had local photographic studios. As evidence, we can cite Bellonie Chantre, who often used the services of local photographers (Chantre 1893, 62), or the albums of Baron de Baye, who often photographed the signs of photographic workshops on his travels (Cheishvili 2023). So it’s strange to read about the difficulty in finding a photographer in Tiflis who knew how to work with gelatin dry-plate (Serena 1882a, 354). The development of

the gelatin-silver bromide process, which began in 1878, revolutionized the world of photography (Lavédrine 2016, 254). Whereas a collodion glass plate had to be exposed and processed within minutes of preparation, i.e., while it was wet, the gelatin-silver bromide glass plate was used dry and could be stored for several months before use or processing. This new technique made it easier to take photographs on long journeys and was also relatively easy for novice photographers like Carla Serena to learn (Serena 1882a, 353-4). Since we don't have exact information about the year in which Caucasian photographers began using gelatin dry plates, it's hard to say how accurate Serena's information is. It's possible that Serena is trying to emphasize that she was one of the first to bring gelatin dry plates to the Caucasus. We know that at that time there were many photographic studios in Tiflis, including the studio of the famous photographer Dimitri Ermakov (1845-1916), who worked with both wet collodion and dry gelatin techniques (Maes 2014, 42). We can assume that Serena developed her first negatives in Ermakov's studio (Serena 1882a, 354). Serena's familiarity with Ermakov's work is evidenced by the fact that she used engravings based on Ermakov's photographs to illustrate her articles.

We must also question the fact that there were no photographs of Abkhazia and that Caucasian photographers refused to go there (Serena 1882a, 353). This makes Serena appear to be the first to photograph Abkhazia. Unfortunately, despite the rich history of early photography, research in this field in the Caucasus remains limited, and the dating of most of the photographs taken by local photographers has yet to be established. We do know, however, that the photographer Vladimir Barkanov was particularly active in western Georgia during this period. Due to the lack of information at this stage of the research, we cannot state with certainty that Serena was indeed the first photographer in Abkhazia, although it is undeniable that she was the first woman photographer to take pictures there.

As mentioned above, Carla Serena's photographs have not survived. It is only through the published engravings made from her photographs that we can discuss her work today. The situation is similar for Bellonie Chantre's photographs. Until the collections of the Musée des Confluences are accessible to researchers for study, we'll have to rely on the engravings to judge. In the same way, the engravings published in "Le Tour du Monde" made it possible to identify the places where Jane Dieulafoy's photographs were taken. Clearly, engravings play an important role in preserving photographic memory.

With the advent of photography, many publishers wanted to publish illustrated articles and books, but due to the high cost of photographic reproduction, they often opted for engravings made from photographs to minimize expenses. Thus, in the latter half of the 19th century, numerous engravings published in newspapers and periodicals like "Le Tour du monde" and "L'Illustration" bore the inscription "from a photograph by...", indicating the name of the photographer. As we have seen, all three women published their stories in the famous French weekly "Le Tour du monde, nouveau journal des voyages". This lavishly illustrated magazine was aimed at a wide readership and focused on travel writing and exploration. It was founded in January 1860 by the journalist and politician Edouard Charton (1807-1890) under the auspices of *Librairie Hachette*. These women's travel stories certainly captivated readers, as evidenced by the republication of their articles in book form, notably for Jane Dieulafoy (Dieulafoy 1887) and Bellonie Chantre (Chantre 1893). As for Carla Serena, she also supplemented her articles in "Le Tour du Monde" with the publication of a book in 1881 (Serena 1881b). While her articles described the various regions of the Caucasus she had visited, her book offered a more personal and in-depth perspective of her experiences.

Although engravings have helped to preserve the photographic memory of the first women photographers to travel to the Caucasus, it is important to recognize that they can also introduce distortions into the representation of the original photographs. They often depend on the artistic interpretation of the draftsman, which can alter the fidelity of the original image. Therefore, although engravings can serve as valuable testimony, they must be treated with caution when used to reconstruct the historical past.

In a concrete example, the title of an illustration published in an article by Carla Serena

indicates that the engraving was drawn by the artist A. Siroy based on photographs by Serena and Ermakov (Serena 1882a, 357). The engraving shows a standing man holding a dagger, with the village store of Otsartse (Georgia) in the background and people gathered in front of it (Fig. 5). A photograph by Dimitri Ermakov of the same man is in the Russian Museum of Ethnography.⁸ Unlike the engraving, in the photograph the man is seated and is visible in the frame up to his waist (Fig. 6). In this particular case, the engraving can be said to be relatively faithful to the photograph. However, it is important to note that this is only one case. The fidelity of the other engravings to the original photographs will remain uncertain until the photographs are found and studied.

If we compare the photographs taken in the Caucasus by these three photographers, we can see that Jane Dieulafoy's pictures are different from those of Carla Serena and Bellonie Chantre. They seem to have been taken in a hurry. This is hardly surprising, since Dieulafoy crossed the Caucasus on her way to Persia, playing the role of an observer. She photographed the passersby, landscapes, and monuments she encountered along the way. Most of these photographs are slightly blurred because she did not ask people to pose for her, and the cameras of the time were not yet sophisticated enough to take moving pictures. Dieulafoy, as a visiting explorer, was primarily interested in documenting her impressions of the journey, and in offering a spontaneous and dynamic view of the Caucasus. On the other hand, Carla Serena and Bellonie Chantre, having spent more time in the region, were able to devote themselves to more thoughtful, posed compositions. Their photographs reflect a greater attention to architectural and ethnographic detail. This difference in style and approach underscores not only the contextual constraints each photographer faced, but also the different goals of their respective travels. Serena took on the role of ethnographer, documenting the life and monuments of the regions she visited. In her published texts, she often describes how she even asked local authorities to clean up abandoned churches and monasteries before taking photographs in order to obtain better images. She was also interested in taking portraits, especially group portraits, and sometimes gave the names of the people she photographed in her writings. As for Chantre, although she also photographed architectural monuments, she used photography more for her husband's anthropological research. This was a time when photography was increasingly used as an auxiliary discipline in anthropological studies. Longer stays in the Caucasus gave Serena and Chantre the opportunity to create more methodical and composed works, contributing to a more thorough documentation of the region.

These contrasts in photographic methods and outcomes enrich our understanding of these women's diverse contributions to the visual history of the Caucasus and highlight the richness and diversity of their perspectives. At this stage of the research, it is difficult to assess the extent to which the work of these three photographers differed from that of other photographers of their time. However, it is now possible to assert that they were fully engaged in the travel, anthropological, and architectural photography characteristic of their time.

It's certainly pertinent to ask why, despite the growing interest in women photographers in recent years, the photographic work of Jane Dieulafoy, Carla Serena, and Bellonie Chantre remains largely neglected in the field of research. However, an examination of the photographs (or rather engravings) produced by these three artists reveals that they are an important testimony: these images offer a fascinating view of architecture and ethnography, as well as of the authors' approach to the outside world during their travels. On the one hand, it could be argued that research into the work of women photographers is still relatively recent, which explains their relative lack of recognition. On the other hand, it is surprising that although Jane Dieulafoy's photographs taken in Persia were exhibited as part of the exhibition "Who's Afraid of Women Photographers? 1839-1945", Dieulafoy is still not recognized as a "real photographer" (Girardin 2015, 260).

Despite the lack of detailed information about their lives and work, these women photographers have undoubtedly left an indelible mark on the visual history of the Caucasus. Their contributions, though neglected, deserve to be rediscovered and celebrated as essential elements of the region's photographic heritage. In addition, they provide essential insights into the study of the Caucasian cultural heritage that disappeared during the 20th century, especially during the period of

Sovietization of the region. In the course of our research, numerous questions have arisen that we cannot answer in this article. And this will remain the case until the photographs become available. But at least we can say that we have tried to take the first step towards making the legacy of these three photographers known.

Notes

- ¹ From June 18 to 25, 2021, an exhibition dedicated to the work of Eugenie and Olga Orlay de Karwa was held at the Giorgi Leonidze State Museum of Literature in Tbilisi.
- ² NUM 4 PHOT 018 (1).
- ³ The exhibition "Qui a peur des femmes photographes ? 1839-1919" (Who's Afraid of Women Photographers? 1839-1945) was held at the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris from October 14, 2015 to January 25, 2016.
- ⁴ Dr. Daniele Artoni, Senior Assistant Professor at the University of Verona and interested in Carla Serena's biography, was able to locate and contact the traveler's descendants. Unfortunately, they also did not know the current location of the photographs.
- ⁵ ANF. F/17/2946/3.
- ⁶ ANF. F/17/2946/3. Armand de Quatrefages' letter of November 12, 1889, to the Minister of Public Instruction, recommending Bellonie Chantre.
- ⁷ ANF. F/17/2946/3. Ernest Chantre's letter to the Minister of Public Instruction, April 8, 1892.
- ⁸ P3M 5351-11. <https://collection.ethnomuseum.ru/>

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Illustrations



Figure 1. Jane Dieulafoy. The bridge in Erivan. March 1881. © Bibliothèque de l'Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, collections Jacques Doucet. NUM 4 PHOT 018 (1).

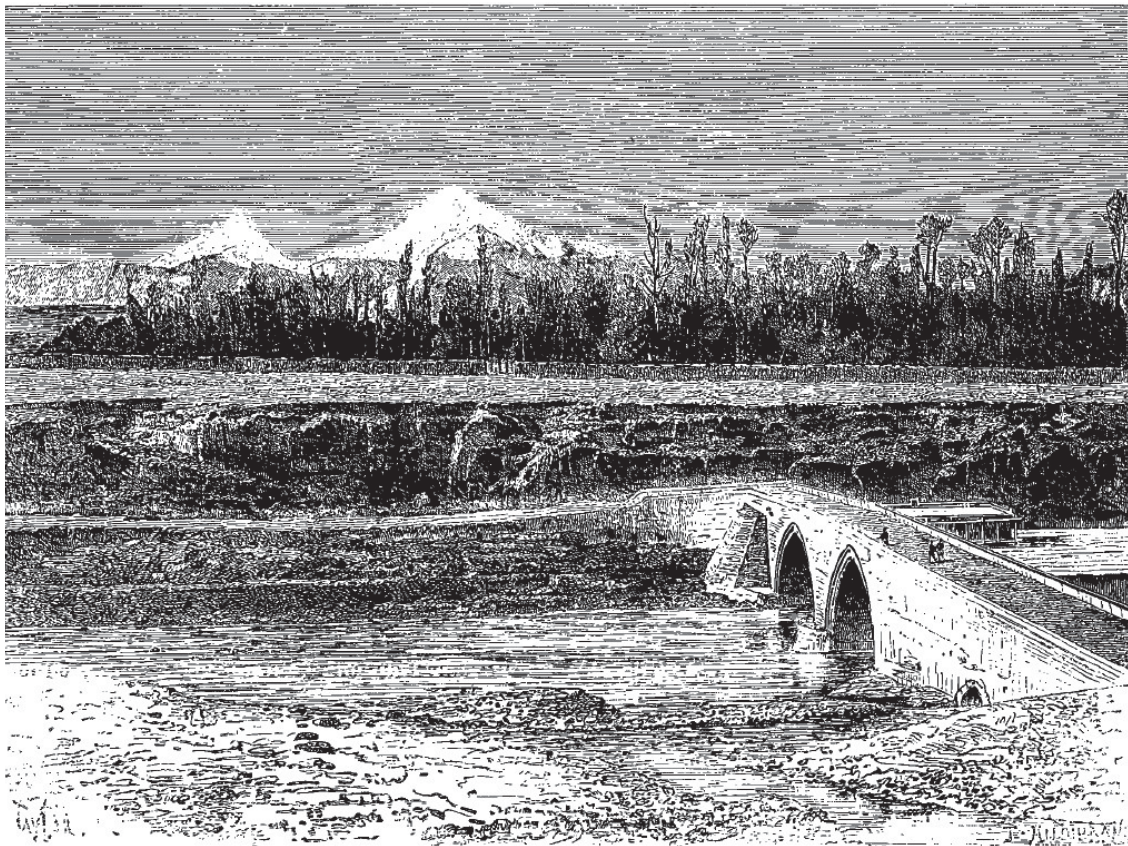


Figure 2. The bridge in Erivan. Engraving after a photograph by Jane Dieulafoy. Drawing by Taylor. "Le Tour du Monde," XLV, 1883.



Figure 3. Frescoes in the Cathedral of Bedia. Engraving after a photograph by Carla Serena. Drawing by D. Lancelot. "Le Tour du Monde," XLIII, 1882.



Figure 4. The Armenian church at Choucha. Engraving after a photograph by Bellonie Chantre. B. Chantre, "À travers l'Arménie russe," 1893.

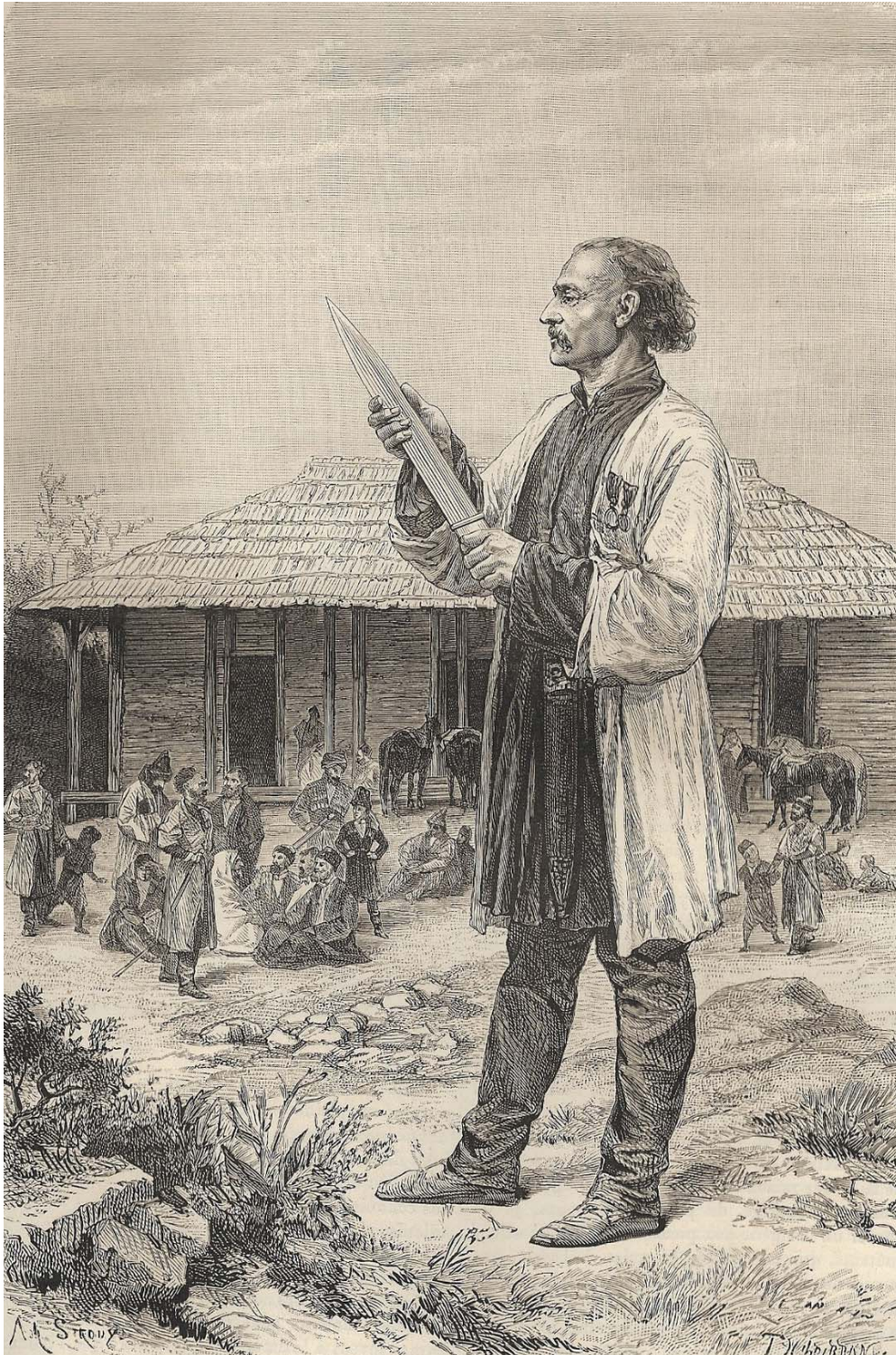


Figure 5. A nobleman from Samurzakano holding a dagger; in the background, the village store of Otsartse. Engraving after the photographs by Carla Serena and Dimitri Ermakov. "Le Tour du Monde," XLIII, 1882.



Figure 6. Dimitri Ermakov. A man from Imereti (Kutaisi). © Russian Museum of Ethnography in St. Petersburg, P3M 5351-11

პირველი მოგზაური ფოტოგრაფი ქალები კავკასიაში: ჟან დიოლაფუა, კარლა სერენა და ბელონი შანტრი

ანა ჭეიშვილი

რუსეთის, კავკასიის, აღმოსავლეთ ევროპის და ცენტრალური აზიის კვლევების ცენტრი,
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მეცხრამეტე საუკუნის ევროპელმა მოგზაურმა ქალებმა ჟან დიოლაფუამ (1851-1916), კარლა სერენამ (1824-1884) და ბელონი შანტრმა (1866-1952) კავკასიის ფოტოგრაფიის ისტორიაში მნიშვნელოვანი კვალი დატოვეს. სამწუხაროდ, მათი ფოტოგრაფიული მემკვიდრეობა დღესდღეობით უცნობი და შეუსწავლელია.

1881 წელს, მეუღლესთან ერთად სპარსეთისკენ სამეცნიერო მივლინებით მიმავალმა არქეოლოგმა და ჟურნალისტმა ჟან დიოლაფუამ სამხრეთ კავკასიაში ფოტოების სერია გადაიღო. დიდი ხნის მანძილზე ეს ფოტოები დაკარგული ეგონათ და მხოლოდ რამდენიმე წლის წინ აღმოაჩინეს პარიზის ხელოვნების ისტორიის ეროვნული ინტიტუტის ბიბლიოთეკაში. დიოლაფუას მუშაობის სტილი, მის მიერ ნაჩქარევად გადაღებული კადრები, საკმაოდ განსხვავდება სერენასა და შანტრის მიერ შექმნილი კარგად გააზრებული კომპოზიციებისგან. კარლა სერენა, რომელმაც ასევე 1881 წელს მარტომ იმოგზაურა საქართველოში, განსაკუთრებით დაინტერესდა ადგილობრივი ცხოვრების სცენებითა და არქიტექტურით. მიუხედავად იმისა, რომ მის ფოტოებს ჩვენამდე არ მოუღწევია, მათ შესახებ საუბარი შესაძლებელია იმ გრაფიურების მეშვეობით, რომლებიც ამ ფოტოების მიხედვით დაამზადეს. რაც შეეხება ბელონი შანტრს, რომელმაც 1890 წელს მეუღლესთან ერთად სამეცნიერო მივლინების ფარგლებში მოიარა საქართველო და სომხეთი, მან ყურადღება გაამახვილა ანთროპოლოგიურ და ეთნოგრაფიულ ფოტოგრაფიაზე. ბელონიმ სამოგზაურო ჩანაწერების გამოქვეყნებისას მიუთითა, რომ გრაფიურები შესრულებული იყო მისი მეუღლის, ცნობილი არქეოლოგის ერნესტ შანტრის მიერ გადაღებული ფოტოების მიხედვით; თუმცა ტექსტის შესწავლისას ჩანს, რომ სწორედ ბელონი იღებდა და ხშირად ადგილზევე ამჟღავნებდა ფოტოებს.

ის გამოწვევები, რის წინაშეც ეს ფოტოგრაფი ქალები აღმოჩნდნენ, ნათლად ასახავს XIX საუკუნის ფოტოგრაფიისათვის სავსელე სამუშაოების სირთულეებს. ადგილობრივი მოსახლეობა ხშირად ეჭვის თვალით უყურებდა ფოტოაპარატს და ეს გარკვეულწილად ართულებდა სურათების გადაღების პროცესს.

სამივე მოგზაურის მიერ გადაღებულმა ფოტოებმა ჩვენამდე მოაღწია ფრანგულ ჟურნალში „Le Tour du Monde“ გამოქვეყნებული გრაფიურების სახით. მიუხედავად იმისა, რომ გრაფიურებმა გადამწყვეტი როლი ითამაშა ამ პიონერი ქალი ფოტოგრაფების ვიზუალური მემკვიდრეობის შენარჩუნებაში, კვლევისას მაინც რთულია ამ გამოსახულებებზე დაყრდნობა: გრაფიურის დამზადებისას ნახატი ხშირად მხატვრის ინტერპრეტაციას უფრო წარმოადგენდა, ვიდრე ფოტოს რეპროდუქციას.

დიოლაფუას, სერენას და შანტრის ნამუშევრების ერთმანეთთან შედარებამ ცხადყო მუშაობის განსხვავებული სტილი და მიდგომები, რომლებიც ჩამოყალიბდა მათი განსხვავებული მიზნებითა და გარემოებებით. ქალი ფოტოგრაფების მიმართ მზარდი ინტერესის მიუხედავად, ამ სამი ფოტოგრაფის სახელი და მათ მიერ კავკასიაში მოგზაურობისას გადაღებული ნამუშევრები არ შესულა არცერთ ენციკლოპედიაში ან თუ ბეჭდურ ნაშრომში. მათი ნამუშევრების ხელახლა აღმოჩენა და შესწავლა მნიშვნელოვანია კავკასიის კულტურული მემკვიდრეობის შესასწავლად და იმ წვლილის დასაფასებლად, რაც ჟან დიოლაფუამ, კარლა სერენამ და ბელონი შანტრმა კავკასიის ვიზუალური ისტორიის დაფიქსირებაში შეიტანეს.