

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek

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**Blaž Otrin**

mag. zgodovine, arhivski svetovalec, Nadškofjski arhiv Ljubljana, Krekov trg 1, SI-1000 Ljubljana
E-pošta: blaz.otrin@rkc.si

Življenjepis popotnega fotografa Christiana Paierja (1839–1895)

IZVLEČEK

Christian Paier (1839–1895) velja za pionirja evropske popotne fotografije in enega prvih Evropejcev, ki je fotografije Svete dežele prinesel v Evropo. Leta 1864 je album podob Svete dežele podaril cesarju Francu Jožefu, s čimer si je ustvaril renome. Pričujoči članek podaja njegov življenjepis, ki je bil do sedaj precej pomanjkljiv. Predstavljeni so številni novi podatki o njegovem solanju, pestrem družinskem življenju ter njegovih pogostih potovanjih na Bližnji vzhod, najprej v vlogi laiškega misijonarja in nato kot popotnega fotografa. Paier je bil razpet med Bližnjim vzhodom in domovino, pogosto se je selil, zato je njegova fotografska zapuščina raztresena po celotnem Sredozemlju in Evropi, trenutno je evidentiranih osemindvetdeset fotografij.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

Christian Paier, zgodovina fotografije, popotna fotografija, slovenski fotografi

ABSTRACT

A BIOGRAPHY OF TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHER CHRISTIAN PAIER (1839–1895)

Christian Paier (1839–1895) is the pioneer of European travel photography and one of the first Europeans to have brought photographs of the Holy Land to Europe. In 1864, he bestowed an album with the photographs of the Holy Land to Emperor Franz Joseph, which earned him great renown. The paper at hand presents Paier's biography, which has until recently remained largely deficient. It brings to light multiple new data on his education, diversified family life, as well as his frequent travels to the Middle East, first in the role of a lay missionary and then as a travel photographer. Paier was torn between the Middle East and his homeland. Owing to his frequent travels, his photographic legacy is scattered across the entire Mediterranean and Europe, currently comprising ninety-eight documented photographs.

KEY WORDS

Christian Paier, history of photography, travel photography, Slovenian photographers

ZAL, LJU 488, Rokopisne knjige
 ZAL, LJU 489, Mesto Ljubljana, Splošna mestna
 registratura
 ZAL, LJU 500, Domovinski oddelek
 ZAL, LJU 504, Statistični popisi, Popis prebival-
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 ca, šk. I./12 in I./17

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S U M M A R Y

A biography of travel photographer Christian Paier (1839–1895)

Christian Paier was the pioneer of European travel photography. The paper presents his biography, which has until recently remained largely deficient. He was born on 14 December 1839 in Kranj. After the death of his father, Paier had to support himself at an early age and became a teacher, but soon abandoned his initial profession and set out to join a mission in Central Africa in 1860. However, his missionary work was cut short by illness, which compelled him to return home already in the early 1861, but only after visiting the Holy Land. Completely taken by the Middle East, Paier decided to come back and in the meantime also ventured into photography. Still a conscript, he embarked on his next journey illegally. He hid in a crate he had made especially for this purpose and voyaged from Trieste to Alexandria as a stowaway in the cargo hold. In Egypt and Palestine, he earned his livelihood by taking and selling photographs of local places. In 1864, he returned to his homeland, compiled an album with images of the Holy Land and bestowed it on Emperor Franz Joseph, who conferred on him a golden ring with sixteen diamonds, a gesture that won Paier great renown. The aforementioned album is now kept in the Albertina Museum, Vienna. In 1864, Paier made another journey to the Middle East, where he resumed his photographic pursuits, married and fathered two daughters, but soon parted with his wife. In 1875, he returned home and this time settled for four years. He took up teaching for a while and then opened a photographic studio in Ljubljana which was in ope-

ration from 1877 to 1879. During that period, Paier fathered two illegitimate sons. In 1879, he set out on a journey again, but was robbed of all his possessions in Alexandria in 1886 and forced him to return home. That particular episode proved a turning point, from which he never fully recovered. Upon his return, he frequently moved from one place to another and continued to engage in photography. However, owing to his scanty income, he led an impoverished life with his mother and two illegitimate sons. He

died on 20 August 1895 in Ljubljana. Paier's photographs of the Holy Land shine out as beacons of early European travel photography, by being among the earliest photographs of the Holy Land brought to Europe as well as owing to his truly outstanding opus, created at a time when photography was making its first strides in the world. Paier having been a travel photographer, his photographic legacy is scattered around the world, currently comprising ninety-eight documented photographs.