

Craftsmen and archaeology

Tunisian photographs in the missionary photo corpus of the Museum of Ethnography

GEBAUER, HANGA

museologist, Museum of Ethnography (Budapest)

Abstract | In 1896, for the request of the parish priest of Kispest, thousands of objects and more than 900 photographs were sent to Hungary by missionaries working in various parts of the world. The aim was to organise a large-scale exhibition, the proceeds of which contributed to the costs of building the local church. This is how the earliest Tunisian photographs of the Museum of Ethnography became part of its collection. Apart from a few exceptions, they focus was on two major themes and locations: artisan workshops overlooking the streets of Tunis, and the results of the archaeological excavations in Carthage. Except from a brief title in the early inventory books, no further information was available about the photographs. In this study, I examine the background and history of all 29 photographs, their authorship details, their photo-historical context, as well as their life within the collection of the museum.

Keywords | photo, mission, Tunisia, Carthage, craftsmen, archaeology, museum

The earliest Tunisian photographs held by the Museum of Ethnography, Budapest, arrived in Hungary in 1896 as part of a large-scale, global missionary collection project. In the first decades of the twentieth century additional photographs from Tunisia entered the museum, yet their number remained very small. In terms of period, subject matter, and authorship, only one series can be compared to the Tunisian images discussed in this study: a set of ten Tunis postcards from the inheritance of Sándor Makoldy, a secondary-school teacher known primarily as a historian of shorthand writing, who also conducted ethnographic research (Szűcs 2025). These postcards were published by Maison Garrigues, whose work will be discussed later. This mainly studio-based material – consisting of half-length and full-length female portraits, costume representations, staged street scenes, and a panoramic view of a characteristic Arab market – complements the nineteenth-century missionary selection.

The present study focuses on the museum's earliest Tunisian photographs: twenty-nine images that entered the collection as part of the missionary photo corpus. To understand this material, the first part of the paper briefly outlines the origins and main characteristics of the missionary photo corpus. This is followed by a detailed discussion of the photographs received from Tunisia, placing them within both a broader international history of photography and a narrower institutional collection context.

The origins and characteristics of the missionary photo corpus

In 1896, the Catholic world mobilised in support of a Hungarian church. Missionaries belonging to different religious orders and national backgrounds sent objects, books, and photographs to Hungary in response to an appeal issued by Antal Ribényi, parish priest of Kíspeszt. The aim was to organise a large-scale missionary exhibition, the proceeds of which were intended to finance the construction of a new parish church. The income of the exhibition was further increased when, after its closure, the Hungarian state purchased its entire collection of objects and images for the Ethnographic Department of the Hungarian National Museum – the predecessor of today's Museum of Ethnography. As a result of the multiphase acquisition, 910 images entered the museum through missionary mediation. Owing to later institutional reorganisations and deaccessioning processes, the Photography Collection currently registers 661 items from this material.

In October 1895 (Jankó 1896a: 7), Ribényi sent out Latin letters of invitation to addresses previously agreed upon with the Roman Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith¹. In these letters he not only outlined the purpose of the exhibition but also provided detailed instructions organised into four points, concerning the types of objects and photographs to be collected by missionaries working across different continents. First, he requested objects related to religious practice, education, and missionary activity within the missions: icons found on walls or in books, crosses, rosaries, liturgical garments worn by missionaries during ceremonies and in everyday life, Bibles and prayer books used in missionary work, school textbooks used in mission schools, and secular books written in the language of the local community. The second point of Ribényi's requests – most relevant for the photographic material examined in this study – focused almost exclusively on visual material, especially photographs. He requested exterior and interior photographs of churches, cathedrals, schools, and other mission institutions, as well as of local houses, villages, and towns. Beyond the built environment, he asked for photographs of events, highlighting school performances, Christian weddings and funerals, portraits of missionaries – especially those who had died as martyrs – and copies of newspapers published by the missions. After this he turned to the specific characteristics of individual countries and peoples: traditional costumes, household and work tools, weapons, and handicraft products made from natural materials, either as physical objects or in photographic form. The third and fourth points listed the ethnographically significant objects: household utensils; tools of various crafts (with examples of tailoring, shoemaking, and carpentry); local tobacco consumption practices and the instruments associated with them; and characteristic musical instruments from different regions. His interest extended to both utilitarian and decorative objects made of wood, stone, metal, glass, or marble, as well as products sold by traders in larger towns – such as bells, carved sticks, baskets, barrels, and other items of cottage industry. In a final sentence, the letter requested that missionaries label objects and photographs in Latin and, where possible, indicate their mode of use.

Although we are lacking detailed documentation of the drafting process of this letter, it appears likely that it was the result of collaboration between Ribényi and János Jankó, then director of the Ethnographic Department and curator of the Missionary Exhibition. The first two points reflect the parish priest's ecclesiastical interests, while the third and fourth clearly express the concerns of an ethnographic museum professional. It is therefore probable that Jankó participated in formulating the letter and sought to ensure that

ethnographic and anthropological considerations were strongly represented in the collecting process. A close analysis of the entire missionary photo corpus reveals how precisely the collectors of the photographic consignments followed Ribényi's instructions, and how clearly the thematic categories outlined in the letter are reflected in the material. The collectors of the Tunisian series – although not fulfilling every aspect of the criteria – attempted to respond to both religious and ethnographic–anthropological interests while emphasising the unique nature of their local activity as well. Alongside missionary work they engaged in archaeological research too. From this aspect the Tunisian material is exceptional within the missionary photo corpus.

In terms of their thematic content, the photographs in the missionary corpus can be classified into several groups, which differ significantly in quantity. The group of portraits, representations of individuals, and anthropological photographs is particularly rich; among them are numerous studio photographs originating from the popular or lesser-known photographic studios of the period. Within the works of professional photographers, another highly popular genre of the time becomes apparent: staged studio scenes. In these images, the same individuals often appear in entirely different roles, or the same backgrounds and setting are used to present different life situations and activities. There are series of photographs similar in character, even though they are not staged but captured in real-life scenarios, depicting the settings of everyday communal life, such as the bustle of fairs and markets, street scenes, and – most prominently in the North African and Middle Eastern images, including a significant portion of the Tunisian photographs – the workshops of craftsmen opening directly onto the street. Although present in only small numbers within the missionary photographic material, object photographs can also be found. Within this category, photographs of museum artefacts, object assemblages, and showcases are particularly notable. Despite their insignificant quantity within the corpus, the images of museum artifacts deserve special emphasis in this study, as after Algiers the second largest coherent group within this genre arrived from Tunisia.

Viewed from another classificatory perspective, it is possible to distinguish actual ethnographic photographs, which provide insight into the life, culture, and ritual practices of a given people, though not through staged genre scenes. Organised according to yet another set of criteria, the largest group within the material becomes apparent: missionary photographs in the narrow sense. These images offer insight into the life of the missions, the various works of the missionaries, and the results of their activities.

Owing to the geographical, thematic, and provenance-related diversity of the material, the question of authorship likewise presents a highly varied picture. The list of photographers ranges widely, from anonymous creators to well-known photographic studios of the period, and from amateurs to professional photographers. The material also includes better- and lesser-known examples from the broader history of photography, which circulated in the respective countries and across Europe at the end of the nineteenth century in the form of photographs, engravings, or postcards. Although the missionaries had a list of criteria to follow when they selected the images, as it has been described earlier, however, these sets of photographic positives are their personal or small-communal choice within the specified limits. As such, they provide insight into what the fathers and sisters working at different missionary stations considered important to show about the countries in which they served, and to communicate about the peoples among whom they carried out missionary and other humanitarian activities, in that specific historical context.

It is important to consider that at the time when the images of the missionary photo collection of the Museum of Ethnography were taken – between the 1860s and the 1890s – the history of missionary work and colonisation was closely intertwined. From

the 1820s and 1830s onwards, worldwide missionary activity gained renewed momentum (Nemeshegyi 2001: 10), to which the colonial expansion of the European great powers also contributed. The institutional systems of the missions formed part of this complex network of cultural relations, creating 'intercultural spaces' in which missionaries operated as mediators. The verbal and visual knowledge they conveyed to their home countries, through press organs, slide projection lectures, and missionary publications, shaped Europeans' perceptions of Others. In Hungary, Ribényi Antal's Ethnographic Mission exhibition and the surviving photographic material from it likewise contributed to this process. Regarding photography from a colonial perspective, it can be stated that the photographer determined the purpose and message of the image, thereby directing the viewer's mode of seeing and thinking. Richard Eves, analysing the photographs of Methodist ministers serving in the Pacific Islands, also points out that although the colonisers are in most cases not visible in the image itself, and while standing behind the camera often remain unidentifiable, unknown, and faceless to the viewer – unlike their photographic subjects – the photograph nevertheless primarily speaks about them. The framing, choice of subject, and compositional arrangements reflect their perspective, their interpretation, and their 'visual vocabulary'. The viewer sees only as much of colonial reality, and from such a perspective, as they choose to show and allow to be seen. Thus, "colonial photographs in fact tell us less about the colonised and their culture, than about those who produced that particular portrayal" (Eves 2006: 727). In case of the missionary photo corpus of the Museum of Ethnography this theory becomes even more complex. It is not only the photographer who determines "colonial reality" and the vision of the Other but also the missionaries through their choice and Antal Ribényi through his detailed criteria. In this way the final photo material is a result of this multi-layered visual and ethical filtering that was further refined by additional selections during its life in the museum based on other criteria.

Orientalist photography is likewise a product of the colonial period – a characteristic also observable in the Tunisian photographs examined in this study. Primarily as a successor to orientalist painting, it is fundamentally a matter of viewpoint: the vantage point from which the photograph itself is taken. This viewpoint invariably reflects a Western, Christian perspective (Jacobson 2007: 20). It defines the subject of the photograph as a counterpoint to its own identity. Orientalist photography – similarly to orientalist painting – cannot be regarded as a unified trend of style. Rather, these photographs are linked by an interest in the East, by the locations depicted (the Middle and Far East, as well as the northern regions of Africa), by the representation of sensuality, and by the display of natural and cultural richness (Jacobson 2007: 19–20). This curious, outsider European gaze can be observed in the Tunisian images of the photographic corpus too, both when observing the workspaces of urban craftsmen and the treasures of the ancient world.

Tunis – three men, one photograph

The photo assortment addressed in this study could serve as part of a visual anthropological and archaeological reader on North Africa: an originally 41-item selection arriving from Tunisia and focusing on two locations, Tunis (16+3 photographs) and Carthage (13+9 photographs), which was reduced to 29 items during museum deaccessioning procedures. From the inventory records of the Museum of Ethnography, the titles and inventory numbers of the discarded images have been identified; however, no further information is available regarding the reasons for or criteria behind the deaccessioning.

Inventory number	Old inventory number	Title	Photo location
F 2344	30432	The St Louis Chapel, Tunis	Tunis
F 2345	30433	The cathedral, Carthage	Carthage
F 2381	30469	Old inscriptions	Carthage
F 2836	30954	Seminar of White Fathers	Carthage
F 2902	31011	Victoria (Nike) statue from the 3 rd Century	Carthage, Tunis
F 2903	31012	The great seminar, Carthage	Carthage, Tunis
F 2904	31013	Interior of the cathedral	Carthage, Tunis
F 2905	31014	City view	Carthage, Tunis
F 2906	31015	Ruins of the catholic dome, Carthage	Carthage, Tunis
F 2910	31019	View of P. Delattre, archaeologist's museum	Carthage, Tunis
	27136	Gunsmiths	Tunis
	27141	Woodturner	Tunis

Table: List of discarded images

Based on entries in the inventory books, two major waves of deaccessioning can be outlined within the missionary photographic corpus, first in the 1930s and later in the 1960s, in addition to several individual instances of selection. No formal deaccessioning reports were produced; instead, only a stamp certifying the fact of removal from the register was added next to the relevant entries in the inventory books. In numerous cases, the semi-blank stamp was not completed with a date and signature, rendering the time of deaccessioning uncertain for some of the images. In the absence of documentation, it remains unknown whether their physical condition had deteriorated over time, or whether their subject matter did not align with the museum's collection profile. A comparison of the themes of the kept and removed positives suggests that the latter explanation is more probable, although the selection process appears non-consistent in either group. The inventory-book titles of the discarded images indicate that photographs depicting the buildings of missionary and colonial infrastructure – churches, church interiors, missionary schools, hospitals, printing houses, and public buildings – as well as the individuals operating them, were primarily regarded as falling outside the museum's collecting scope, even though a small number of enlargements on similar themes were kept. The majority of the deaccessioned Tunisian photographs also fall into this category. However, in the case of two images portraying turners and gunsmiths (inv. no. 27136, 27141) in Tunis that may have formed part of the series presenting crafts to be discussed later, their removal does not correspond to the logic of profile-based selection. In these cases, the possibility of physical damage may also be considered, although in the case of positive paper enlargements this would likely have been negligible.

The material lacks the photographs outlined by Ribényi that document missionary work and the life and activities of missionary communities. Nevertheless, as will be demonstrated in a later chapter of the study, the photographs of the Carthage excavation and exhibition provide insight into a different dimension of the monks' activities: archaeological work undertaken alongside their evangelising mission, and the results thereof.

Although the Tunisian photographic material contains only one indoor studio photograph (Figure 12), the outdoor images were likewise produced by professional photographers who travelled extensively across the Arab countries of North Africa. Their work addressed all the thematic categories that travellers of the period were eager to purchase as souvenirs during their journeys: orientalist portraits, scenes of everyday life, urban and

panoramic views, and genre photographs. Among the Tunisian photographic positives that entered the museum's collection, alongside several street scenes and costume studies, there emerges a coherent series depicting crafts, workshops, and shops, together with their owners, customers, premises, and merchandise. These images condense characteristic scenes of local everyday life. The chosen viewpoint is almost identical throughout the series. The photographer looks into the interior spaces from outside, stepping very close to the subject. The external world disappears from view; the street is no longer visible, and only the photographed interior remains, together with the figures within it. The photographs were not provided with captions or signatures by their maker. For this reason, the identity of the photographer remained unknown until the present research, and even during the investigation further uncertainties and new questions emerged.

One of the best known and most frequently cited images in the series entered the collection of the Museum of Ethnography under the title Arab Notary of Tunis (Figure 1). Its gelatin dry plate negative is preserved by one of Europe's largest photographic archives and picture agencies, the French L'agence Photographique, founded in 1938. In this archive the image is no longer anonymous. At the bottom of the glass plate a serial number, a French caption, and even two photographers' names are also visible. On the image itself, in small white printed letters, the following text appears: "Tunisie 1270 Arabe dans son Étude ND Phot" (Arab notary in his office) (Roger-Viollet 82024-7).



1. Arab notary. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1885–1896.

Taken by Albert Clappier. Black and white positive, 19,5x25,5 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 1136

The abbreviation ND Phot was used by the Paris-based Neurdein brothers, Étienne and Louis-Antonin Neurdein, on their photographs and on the postcards they published. The two brothers, who inherited their profession from their father, operated a photographic studio in Paris from 1863 onwards (Degroise, Neurdein). They received commissions and financial support from the French government to produce photographs in North Africa, primarily in Algeria. These images were disseminated in travel guides, souvenir albums, and postcards, thereby promoting colonial tourism and encouraging private investment in the colonies (DeRoo 2004: 159). In addition to running a photographic studio, they also operated as a publishing company. By the end of the nineteenth century they had become the largest producers of tourist photographs and postcards, mainly from France,

Belgium, Algeria, and Tunisia (Jacobson 2007: 259). They produced and distributed large quantities of landscape views, city and street scenes, and genre photographs from Algeria and Tunisia, both in the colonies and in Europe, in order to compete with local photographic studios and publishers (Jacobson 2007: 55).

However, due to the volume of travel and work required, the Neurdein brothers, similarly to other Paris-based studios, employed photographers who travelled throughout the colonies and produced images on behalf of the French company. In 1898 the French government entrusted the Neurdein enterprise with the management of the photographic archive of the Service des Monuments Historiques (Hannavy 2013: 992), which likewise contained the work of numerous photographers. The combination of publishing activity, picture agency operations, and archival management resulted in a situation in which the signature of the Neurdein brothers appears on works produced by different photographers, either alongside the name of the original photographer or leaving it entirely ambiguous. For this reason, it is often impossible to determine the true creator of a particular image today. In certain cases, the same photograph appears under different authors' names in various archives or publications. This explains how it is possible that on the glass negative depicting the Arab notary, preserved in the L'agence Photographique Roger-Viollet, another French caption and signature can be read in the black strip beneath the previously quoted inscription, also in white printed letters. The title is identical to the one cited above, but the signature reads "ALBERT Ph – Tunis". On the opposite side, written by hand, another serial number and place designation appears: "1870 Tunis".² The signature "Albert Ph", and occasionally "Albert Phot.", is interpreted by some sources as referring to Albert Clapier³ or Clappier, whose full name was Albert Joseph Marie Clappier (Mégnin 2024). Other sources identify the photographer as Charles Albert (e.g. Degroise, Albert). However, according to Michel Mégnin, who is preparing an encyclopaedia of Tunisian photographers, no documentary evidence supports the latter attribution (Mégnin 2024). However, researchers agree that Albert began his photographic career in Paris and opened a studio in Tunis in the mid-1880s. After the turn of the century, he relocated to Algiers. Mégnin considers him one of the most influential figures in the photographic life of Tunis in the 1890s. He served as the official photographer of the bey of Tunis and received medals for his photographs at several world fairs (Mégnin 2024). Although many of his photographs were distributed on postcards published by the Neurdein brothers, in the early twentieth century he also issued postcards himself, including works by other photographers, under the designation EPA, meaning Collection Etoile-Photo Albert, later Editions Photo Africaines (Degroise, Albert).

Beside the photograph of the Arab notary, the Paris-based L'agence Photographique Roger-Viollet preserves the negatives of ten further Tunisian genre scenes that entered the missionary photo corpus of the Museum of Ethnography, mostly as anonymous works. On most of these negatives both the mark of the Neurdein brothers and that of Albert can be found. This suggests that the photographs were most likely taken by Albert and later incorporated into the photographic agency operated by the Neurdein brothers. Most of these images were also published as postcards. On the postcards, the photographer's name is generally absent, and only the designation "Collections ND Phot" appears as the source reference (Figures 2 to 5). In the second half of the 1910s or beginning of 1920s the Neurdein collection merged, under the direction of Emile Crété, with the second most significant French photo agency, Lévy et fils. under its new unified name, Lévy et Neurdein Réunis, which was acquired by the L'agence Photographique Roger-Viollet in the 1970s (Jacobson 2007: 259). This is how the original glass negatives of the photographs discussed in this study were preserved.



2. Arab chef. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1885–1896.

Taken by Albert Clappier. Black and white positive, 19,5x25 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 1133



3. Blacksmith. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1885–1896.

Taken by Albert Clappier. Black and white positive, 19x25 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 184012



4. Furniture makers. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1885–1896.

Taken by Albert Clappier. Black and white positive, 19x26 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 1397



5. Leather goods stores. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1885–1896.

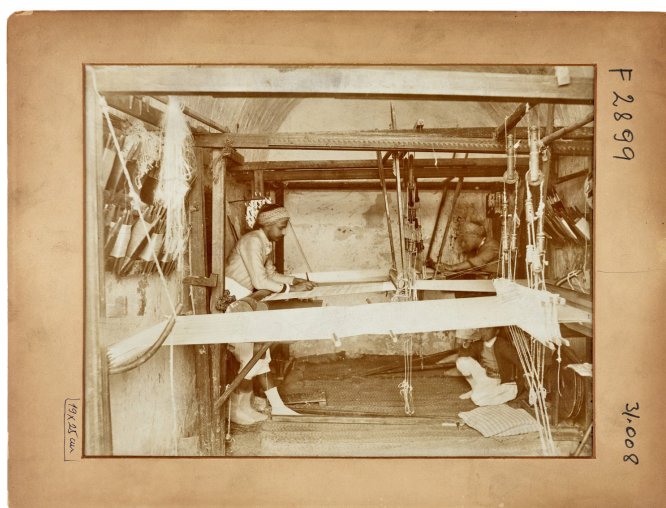
Taken by Albert Clappier. Black and white positive, 20x26 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2900

Albert's authorship is further supported, in the case of three images (Figures 6 to 8) by a comprehensive publication on Tunisia that appeared in Paris in 1896, the very same year in which the ethnographic Missionary Exhibition initiated by Antal Ribényi was organised (Olivier 1896). In the chapter presenting the handicrafts of the indigenous population of Tunisia, the author published three photographs and explicitly indicated the name of the photographer. These same images could also be viewed by visitors in Hungary that year, displayed in the colonnaded hall of the National Museum (Fleury 1896: 1119, 1121, 1124).



6. Arab painters. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1885–1896.

Taken by Albert Clappier. Black and white positive, 19,5x25,5 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 1138



7. Tunisian weavers. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1885–1896.

Taken by Albert Clappier. Black and white positive, 19x25 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2899



8. Manufacturers of baskets and mats. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1885–1896.

Taken by Albert Clappier. Black and white positive, 20x26 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 184013

In terms of style, subject matter, and visual formulation, the photograph entitled Barber's Shop in the inventory of the Museum of Ethnography fits closely into Albert's series depicting street-facing workshop interiors. However, the negative of it – in which the French inscription indicates that the image in fact offers a view into a wig maker's shop – attests exclusively to the authorship of the Neurdein brothers. Up to the present stage of research no source is known that would conclusively link the image to Albert or to any other photographer (Figure 9).



9. Wigmaker's shop. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1863–1896.

Taken by Neurdein Frères. Black and white positive, 20x26 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 1135

Four photographs within the Tunis section of the material bear Albert's signature. Two of these belong to the series depicting street vendors. However, their original or duplicate negatives likewise came into the possession of the Neurdein brothers and eventually entered the holdings of L'agence Photographique Roger-Viollet. In this archive, every photograph that once formed part of the Neurdein agency is today catalogued under their name, even in cases where the image clearly bears the name of another photographer (Figures 10 and 11).



10. Shop at the saddlers' market. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1885–1896.

Taken by Albert Clappier. Black and white positive, 20x25 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2790



11. Grocery store. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1885–1896.

Taken by Albert Clappier. Black and white positive, 19,5x25,5 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2901

The photograph providing a view into a saddler's shop (Figure 10), as well as a studio portrait of a woman (Figure 12), clearly illustrates the close interconnections among the Maghreb countries that fell within the French sphere of influence, as well as the transregional mobility and professional networks of European photographers and publishers active there. The images originally produced by Albert entered the commercial sphere of the Neurdein Frères through the mechanisms described above. Later both representations became available as part of an extended postcard series published in Morocco, without indication of the author's name. On the reverse side "Imp. Phot. Neurdein et Cie. – Paris", while on the picture side "P. Cousin et Cie, Rabat" was imprinted. Cousin was a French photographer too who operated a studio in Rabat and was also active as a postcard publisher (Degroise, Cousin). The precise professional relationship between the Neurdein brothers and Cousin requires further investigation. It is, however, plausible that Cousin functioned as the Moroccan representative or intermediary of the Neurdein enterprise. It is misleading that in the aforementioned postcard series the photographs originating from various countries of the Maghreb were published not only without indicating their actual location, thereby automatically presenting them as Moroccan, but in some cases even with altered titles adjusted to the geographical context. A characteristic feature

of the period was the production of studio genre scenes and staged compositions in which often the same paid models represented different occupations, social groups, or even nationalities. Photographic and postcard series presenting the “ethnic types” of particular regions were also highly popular, fulfilling European demand for exotic imagery. These photographs did not give any information about the individuals portrayed, they particularly intended to display anthropological and of attire characteristics. Because the depicted places and populations were geographically distant from the target audience, it could occur that the same photograph served to illustrate different ethnic groups.

A similar procedure, namely the broadening of the subject and the shift from precise designation to more general classification, can be observed in the case of the signed, numbered, and captioned studio photograph by Albert (Figure 12). The original title of the image depicting a woman carrying her child on her back was “Bédouine des environs de Tunis” (Bedouin woman from around Tunis). On the Rabat postcard edition, however, the more general designation “Mauresque” (Moorish) appears. This term presumably intended to function as a generalisation referring to the North African Arab population as a whole, yet it is by no means identical with the nomadic Bedouin communities.



12. A Bedouin woman from around Tunis. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1885–1896. Taken by Albert Clappier. Black and white positive, 11,5x16,5 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2785



13. Arab horsemen. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1885–1896. Taken by Albert Clappier. Black and white positive, 20x25 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 184014

The North African network of the Neurdein Frères once again becomes visible in the case of a full-length portrait of an Arab man, which likewise entered the Museum of Ethnography without the author's signature (Figure 14). On the gelatin dry plate negative of the same portrait preserved in the L'agence Photographique Roger-Viollet the inscription "Chef Arabe, ND Phot. Tunis" appears, which suggests the authorship of the Neurdein brothers. On the postcard version of the photograph, above the designation "Collection ND Phot.", the inscription "D'Amico libraire 15, Avenue de France, Tunis" is also visible. This indicates that the card was published by Emilio (Degroise, Amico, D'), or according to other sources Emmanuel (Bourial n.d.) D'Amico, an Italian-born entrepreneur who established a bookshop and publishing house in Tunis in 1878.

Although several sources mention only his activities as bookseller and publisher, Marie-Hélène Degroise, who researches and publishes biographies of European photographers active overseas between 1840 and 1944, provides more information about his profession. She notes, with reference to a Tunisian commercial directory from 1901, that D'Amico himself also practised photography, sold cameras and photographic equipment, and acted as an assistant to the Neurdein brothers in Tunisia (Degroise, Amico, D'). This may explain how the image of the Arab leader, which formed part of the ND Collection, was also distributed in Tunis issued by D'Amico. These cases illustrate the dynamic circulation of photographs within the network linking agencies operating from Europe and locally based photographers and publishers.

Following the criteria set out in the appeal of the Hungarian parish priest, Antal Ribényi, visual documentation of characteristic local living spaces and the built environment was also included in the selection compiled by the missionaries in Tunisia, although only in the form of a single image (Figure 15). This photograph differs markedly from the previously discussed human-centred representations. It depicts an almost entirely empty street scene, showing the Sidi ben Ziad Mosque, also known as Becquia and today called Youssef Dey or Al B'chamqiya, together with the surrounding souk and the buildings of the traditional Arab market. This photograph entered the Museum of Ethnography as an anonymous work. However, on a signed version the name Garrigues appears, who's activity and photographic career will be discussed in detail in the following chapter of the study. The characteristic nature and popularity of the location is demonstrated by the fact that several well-known photographers of the period produced images at this site with almost identical framing and from approximately the same viewpoint as Garrigues. One such image appears on a postcard preserved in the Collection of Prints at the Museum of Ethnography. This postcard was produced after the late nineteenth-century renovation of the mosque. The author is unknown, while the publisher is indicated as Lévy et Neurdein,



14. Arab chief. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1863–1896.
Taken by Neurdein Frères. Black and white positive, 10,5x15 cm.
Museum of Ethnography, F 1142

signalling that the card was issued after the merger of the two largest French publishing companies. The monogram LL following the title suggests that the photograph originally belonged to the publishing house Léon et Lévy, founded in 1864 (Méglin n.d.a).

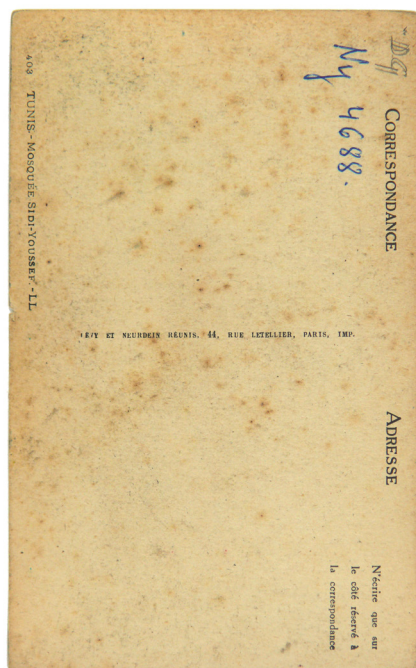


15. The Sidi ben Ziad (or Becquia) Mosque with the buildings of the traditional market. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1863–1896.

Taken by Neurdein Frères. Black and white positive, 19,5x25,5 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2397



16. Sidi Youssef Mosque. Tunis, Tunisia, ca. 1900.
Edited by Lévy et Neurdein Réunion. Museum of Ethnography,
Ny 4688



17. Reverse side of the postcard
Museum of Ethnography, Ny 4688

At the ruins of Carthage

For most orientalist photographers working in North Africa, documenting local tourist attractions and newly excavated archaeological sites formed a significant part of their professional activity. The ruins of Carthage belonged to this category. As a result of later deaccessioning, the museum's missionary photographic collection currently preserves five photographs of the site. In addition, eight object photographs entered the collection from the Musée Lavigerie de Saint-Louis, founded by Alfred Louis Delattre, where artefacts discovered during the excavations at Carthage were displayed.

The outdoor photographs of Carthage were produced partly for documentary purposes and partly to satisfy the growing demand for souvenirs. Three of the images bear the photographer's signature, while two remain anonymous. One of the signed photographs carries, alongside a serial number and a French title, the printed inscription "Phot. Garrigues – Tunis" (Figure 25). The other two display the handwritten signature "Soler Phot. Tunis" (Figures 18–19). The careers of the two studios show several similarities, yet they were each other's principal rivals in the region. Both were among the earliest registered photographic studios in Tunis. After relocating several times, they operated for decades in the same street, the Avenue de la France (Jacobson 2007: 235; Degroise, Garrigues, Soler). The Maison Garrigues was first located at number 9 (Jacobson 2007: 235) and

later at number 5 (Degroise, Garrigues), while the Soler studio opened at number 10 (Degroise, Soler). Each served in turn as the official photographer to the bey of Tunis: Garrigues held the position first, followed later by Soler (Mégnin n.d.).

In case of Soler, there is no uncertainty concerning authorship. The signature "Soler Phot." on the positive prints refers to a single individual, Francisco Soler, born in Oran in 1861 (Mégnin n.d.). He began operating a photographic studio in Oran together with his brother-in-law, Juan Pavia. After establishing his independence, he transferred his business to Tunis in 1890. In the early years of the twentieth century, his nephews, Desiré and Adrien Pavia joined him. Following Soler's retirement in 1908, they continued to run the studio under the name Soler – Pavia Frères (Mégnin 2024).

The 1905 Hachette Almanach described Soler as a „defining figure of Tunisian colonisation“, whose photographs and postcards made the country widely known internationally (Almanach Hachette 1905: XLII). With his Tunisian photographs, he was awarded a silver medal in Paris in 1892 and a gold medal in Monaco the following year (Mégnin 2024). Besides fulfilling state commissions, one of his most recognisable themes was the aboriginal types presented in studio portrait series, circulated widely as postcards too. Like his contemporaries, he also offered an extensive range of Tunisian views (Degroise, Soler). Among them is the photograph depicting the old harbour of Carthage, taken from a nearby elevated vantage point, most probably from the Byrsa Hill (Figure 18).



18. Old harbour of Carthage. Tunisia, 1890–1896.

Taken by Francisco Soler. Black and white positive, 19,5x24,5 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2909

The location used for this photograph was easily accessible and popular among photographers. Numerous engravings and photographs from the last decades of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century depict the harbour from almost identical viewpoints and with similar framing. By comparing these visual documents, the changes in the natural environment are visible, which may assist in dating the image. In Soler's case, however, a firmer chronological point of reference also exists. He relocated his studio from Algeria to Tunis in 1890 (Mégnin 2024), and the missionary photographs reached Hungary in 1896, so the date of the image can be narrowed down to the first half of the 1890s.

Another photograph by Soler preserved in the Museum of Ethnography bears both a serial number and a French title on the positive print, indicating that it depicts a Punic tomb at Carthage. Based on H  l  ne B  nichou-Safar's 1982 publication, the photograph can be identified as showing Tomb No. 10, a built stone tomb on Byrsa Hill, in its condition at the time of excavation (B  nichou-Safar 1982: 146).

19. Punic tomb in Carthage. Tunisia, 1890–1896.

Taken by Francisco Soler. Black and white positive, 19,5x24,5 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 1416



146

LES TOMBES PUNIQUES DE CARTHAGE

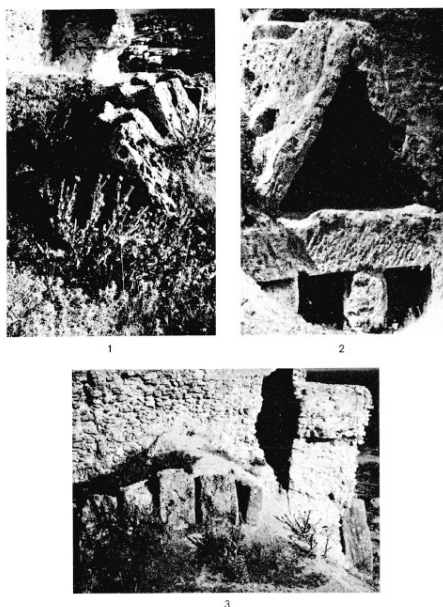
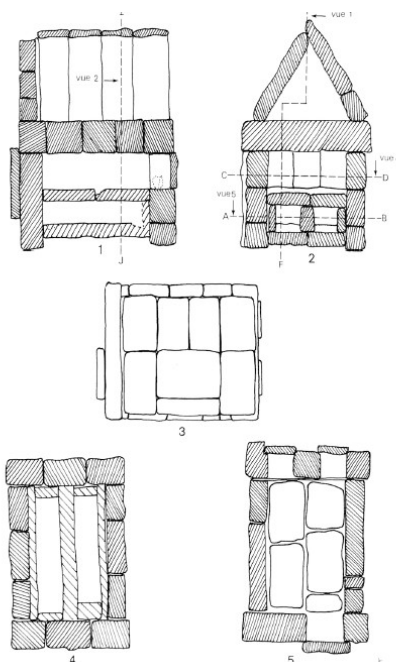


Fig. 83 – Tombeau n   10 de Byrsa (fouille n   14) : type X, 3, h. 1, stat actuel du tombeau vu de l'arri  re; 2, face post  rieure du tombeau lors de sa d  couverte; 3, tombeau vu de c  t  .

20. Stone tomb No. 10 from Excavation No. 14 at Byrsa, Carthage: the tomb's current condition as seen from the rear; the rear side of the tomb at the time of discovery; the tomb as seen from the side. (B  nichou-Safar 1982: 146).



21. Cross-sections of Stone Tomb No. 10 at the Byrsa Excavation Site No. 14. (B  nichou-Safar 1982: 147).

Although Bénichou-Safar does not mention the photographer's name, it is evident that she used Soler's photograph in her book. As the source of the image, she cites the archive of the White Fathers in Rome (Bénichou-Safar 1982: 427). This confirms the claim discussed later, namely that the positive print depicting the Punic tomb, together with the other Carthage photographs, reached Hungary from Tunisia through the mediation of the White Fathers. Soler's photograph also appeared as a postcard, most likely in the first decade of the twentieth century. However, instead of the photographer's name, the monogram "D. P." appears on it alongside the serial number, location and title. This indicates that the postcard was issued by his nephew Desiré Pavia, using a negative created by his uncle.

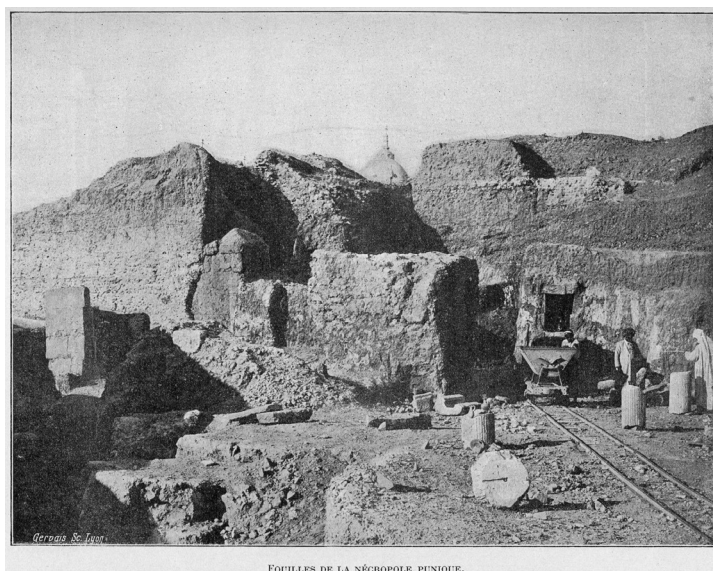
By government commission, Francisco Soler documented not only archaeological excavations but also mining activity in the vicinity of the capital (Mégnin n.d.). For this reason, his name was considered as a possible author of a photograph in the missionary corpus that was catalogued in the museum inventory under the title The Carthage Quarry. The image, however, was reproduced by Alfred Louis Delattre, the French archaeologist and missionary who directed the excavations at Carthage, in his 1896 publication *Carthage: nécropole punique de la Colline de Saint-Louis*. From the caption it becomes clear that the photograph does not depict an ordinary quarry in operation at all, but a moment during the excavation of Punic tombs (Figure 23) (Delattre 1896: 17). The reproduction appears in the section of the book in which the author discusses the excavations of 1890 in detail. It is therefore likely that the photograph also dates from that year. The positive print preserved in the Museum of Ethnography bears neither inscription nor signature. However, in the lower left corner of the version published by Delattre, the inscription "Gervais Sc. Lyon" is visible. Some researchers, based on similarity of names, have attributed photographs bearing this signature to Jules Gervais-Courtellemont, also known as Jules Claudin Gervais (e.g. Quejido 2002: 2016), a French photographer active in Algeria during this period, who is known to have produced several images in Tunisia, including views of Carthage. However, there is no evidence that he was connected to Delattre or that he photographed the excavations on site. Nor can he be associated with the city of Lyon. The same signature appears on several illustrations in Delattre's volume, not only on photographs but also on maps (Delattre 1896: 6) and drawings (Delattre 1896: 47). The abbreviation "Sc." in the signature is revealing. It is the abbreviation of the Latin word *sculpsit*, meaning "engraved it", which indicates that the image was adapted for printed reproduction. It is therefore clear that the Lyon-based Gervais merely prepared a version of the original photograph suitable for printing.

Delattre's book was published as a special issue of the Lyon-based journal *Les Missions Catholiques*. In the same year, the journal also printed extracts from the archaeologist-missionary's book, including the section containing the photograph under discussion. The image published in the journal does not bear a signature (Figure 24). However, the caption states that it was made after a photograph by Delattre. There is, nevertheless, no evidence as to whether Delattre himself took photographs during the excavations. Consequently, the question of authorship requires further research.

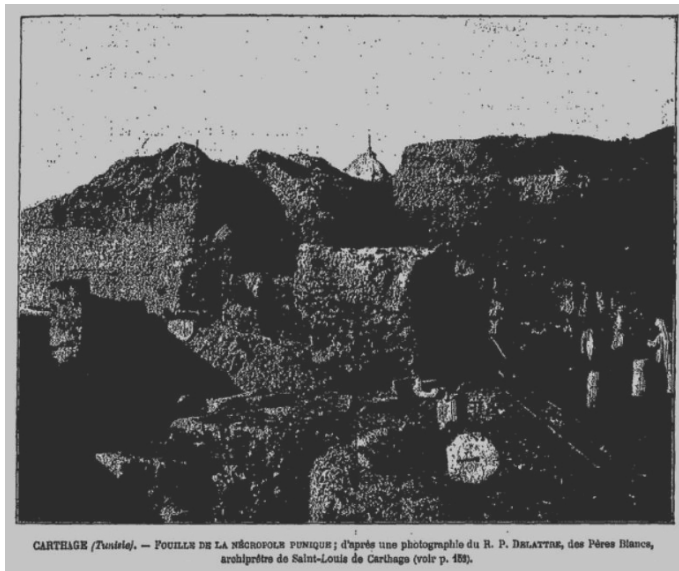


22. Excavation of a Pun cemetery. Carthage, Tunisia, 1890.

Photographer unknown. Black and white positive, 20x27 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2908



23. Reproduction of the above photograph in Delattre's book 'Carthage: nécropole punique de la Colline de Saint-Louis' (Delattre 1896. 17).



24. Reproduction of the above photograph in *Les Missions Catholique* (*Les Missions Catholique* 1896: 151).

The third signed Carthage photograph in the missionary photographic collection of the Museum of Ethnography comes from the previously mentioned Garrigues studio. However, the question of authorship here is not as straightforward as in the case of Francisco Soler. Although the Maison Garrigues was one of the most popular resident photographers in Tunis during his time, and the most surviving 19th-century Tunisian landscape photographs bear his signature, according to Ken Jacobson, a researcher of orientalist photography (Jacobson 2007: 235), still, there are uncertainties regarding his biographical details, including even his first name, as well as the identities of the persons associated with the studio. The Garrigues-signature appears in several different forms on his positives, his postcards and on the rectos and versos of his visit cards⁴, but the most that can be learnt from all is only 'J. Garrigues'. Some photo historians, gallery owners, and antiquarians interpret the signature as Joseph Garrigues (e.g. Heliouli 2015: 140–143), while others – including internationally recognised museums⁵ – refer to him as J. André Garrigues. Neither interpretation is supported by concrete evidence, and in the absence of reliable sources, these remain speculative or are best understood as virtual words-of-mouth rapidly circulating online. As for biographical facts, many assumptions exist in printed and online sources, yet most authors agree that although Garrigues ran one of the most productive studios in the region, verifiable data on his operations are scarce.⁶

The most up-to-date and comprehensive information is provided by Michel Mégnin in his continuously updated 2024 database, written as part of the preparations for the encyclopaedia of Tunisian photographers (Mégnin 2024). According to him, the founder of Maison Garrigues was the French photographer Henri Jules Jean Garrigues, born in 1835,

who opened a studio in Paris in 1860. From 1864, he was also active in Tunis but only established a permanent studio in the city around 1868–1869, which he operated alongside his Paris atelier. After his early death in Tunis in 1870, his wife Josephine Naudin, herself a photographer, continued the business in North Africa under her late husband's name. In 1873, the widow married Paul Antoine Delsol, who managed the studio between 1881 and 1884, still using its original name. Garrigues' daughter, Celine Henriette Maria, married Auguste Joseph Marichal (sometimes written as Marechal), who became the fourth principal of the studio and ran it the longest, until 1910 (Mégnin 2024), still continuing to use its original name.

The title "photographe de SA le bey de Tunis" (photographer to his highness the bey of Tunis) appears on the earliest Tunisian versions (Mégnin 2024), even before Garrigues had a studio in the African capital. It indicates that initially, the founder Henri Jules Jean Garrigues himself held this position, later succeeded by his heirs, who together, according to the research of Moncef Helioui, served two beys through the existence of the studio.⁷ However, the greatest professional recognitions in contemporary photography as seen in later versos, were earned later: in 1888 in Tunis and Toulouse, and in 1889 at the Paris World Fair, so these awards are associated already with Marichal's management of the studio.

Jean-Yves Tréhin, in his French lexicon of orientalist photographers, notes that Garrigues' photographs are very reminiscent in style and visual composition of those taken by Jean Geiser in Algiers at the same period (Tréhin 2012: 448). Moncef Helioui takes this idea further. In his comparative research highlights that the two photographers' activities are similar not only in style but also in subject choice and in the characteristics of the clientele visiting their studios. He proposed that gaps in Garrigues' biographical data may result from the fact that the two photographers, sharing even the same monogram, 'J.G.', in fact, are the same person. (Helioui 2015: 143). However, Michel Mégnin's latest research supersedes this hypothesis.

One photograph in the Museum of Ethnography's missionary collection bears the Garrigues studio signature. According to its French inscription, this photograph depicts the old cisterns of Carthage prior to their restoration. Although some archives identify the site as the La Malga cisterns – Carthage's largest and best-known cistern system – it actually depicts the Borj Jedid (or Bordj Djedid, Bordj el Djedia, Bordj el Djedid, Borj ej Jedid, Burj al Jadid) that supplied water to the Baths of Antonius. In order to use the cisterns in their original function and supply water to the area of Tunis, the beg commissioned French engineers to excavate and restore the cisterns. G. Gouvet worked on them from 1862 to 1864 and J. Vernaz between 1884 and 1887, who published a thorough documentation on the cistern system in the *Revue Archéologique* in 1887 (Vernaz 1887: 11–27). Given the period while the Garrigues photo studio was active in Tunis and the partially excavated state of the cisterns, it is likely that the photograph was taken during the 20 years between the two excavations, between 1864 and 1884. R. Cagnat and H. Saladin published Garrigues' photo as an engraving made by Maynard in their article "Voyage en Tunisie" in the August 19. 1893 issue of *Le Tour de Monde*, using the same title as Garrigues but without mentioning his name. Another engraving – held in the collection of the London-based Wellcome Collection – also presents the image without mentioning its author, but its caption lists the geographical features in the background. In this case the engraver (Hillborn?) enriched the right-hand foreground of Garrigues's photograph with staffage figures – a packed donkey next to a seated and a standing figure – in order to convey a sense of scale and spatiality and to enliven the composition. The Garrigues

photo studio later issued this photograph both as black-and-white and coloured post-cards, indicating its author (Bibliothèque Nationale de Tunisie E-CP-1329). Such early photos depicting the cisterns of Borj Jedid are rare. Apart from Garrigues, M. Catalanotti – another Tunis-based orientalist photographer, who was also among the first ones to open a photographic studio in the North African city – photographed the same site during this phase of the cisterns' excavation. His photograph, which has circulated with various authorship data,⁸ was taken from a slightly different angle but with nearly identical composition.



25. The cisterns of Carthage before their restoration. Tunisia, 1864–1884.

Taken by Garrigues. Black and white positive, 20x26 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2907

The fifth surviving outdoor photograph of Carthage in the museum's missionary collection depicts the amphitheatre (Figure 26). This paper positive also provides evidence regarding the sender and the nature of the package that arrived from Tunisia in response to Ribényi's letter. The photograph was numbered and annotated on the reverse side by the missionary who assembled the Tunisian selection. When it entered the museum, in accordance with contemporary practice, it was mounted on cardboard along with the other images, turning the backside text into unseeable. Nevertheless, using ink that penetrated the paper, portions of the information became visible on the emulsion side too. So, despite the mounting, it is possible to learn – when reading in reverse – that this positive received the number 1 in the series of sent images. Most of the text is also partially readable: "Emplacement de l'amphithéâtre de Carthage, (?) une croix en occupe le centre. La chapelle a été érigée dans une caverne, où on mettait les bêtes fauves" (The location of the Carthage amphitheatre, with a cross at the centre. The chapel was erected in a pit where wild animals were kept previously).



26. The Amphitheater of Carthage. Tunisia, 1887–1894.

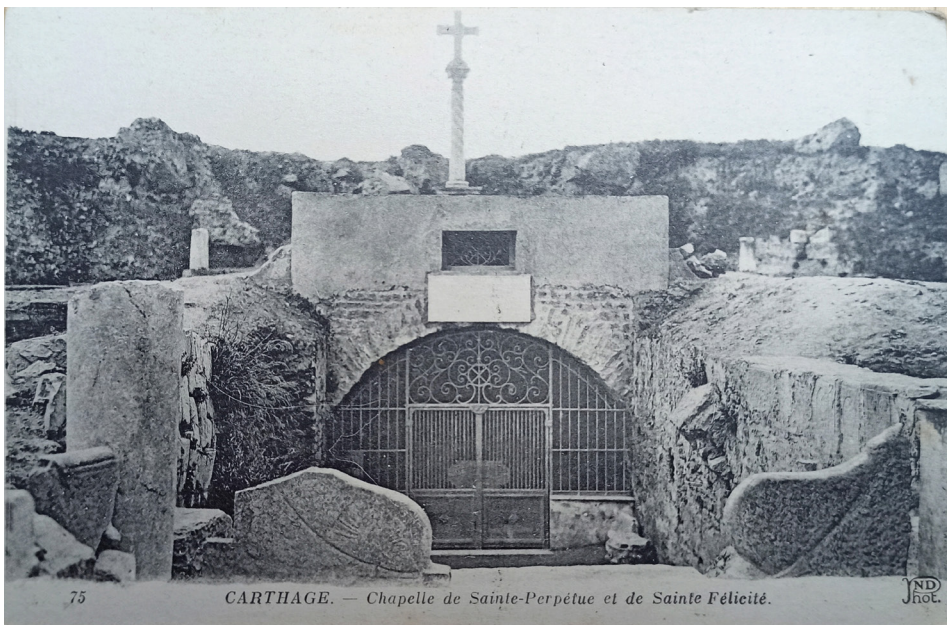
Photographer unknown. Black and white positive, 20x25 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 1419



27. Inverted inscription from the back of the photograph

F 1419 (figure 26.) Museum of Ethnography, F 1419

The photograph clearly shows the cross erected in 1887 (Delattre 1906: 18), mentioned by the annotator. The underground chapel, however, likely did not yet exist when the photograph was taken. There is no precise date for the creation of this photograph, but comparison with later images of the amphitheatre indicates that it was taken before the beginnings of Alfred Louis Delattre's excavations. The chapel was brand new when the missionaries sent their shipments to Hungary. The first mass was celebrated there by the Archbishop of Carthage, Barthélemy Clément Combes in 1895, on the feast of Saint Perpetua and Felicitas martyrs, who were executed – according to Delattre supposition in this same amphitheatre – in 203. The Murray guidebook, also published in 1895, provides detailed descriptions about this occasion, and also explains that in 1881 Delattre had uncovered the underground chamber used to house wild animals, which later became the prison of the martyrs before their execution, and that in 1894 a chapel was established there to honour the martyrs (Playfair 1895: 306–307) (Figure 28). Later researches suggested that the two women might have been executed in another amphitheatre. Based on all the data provided above, the time the photograph has been taken can be narrowed down between 1887 and 1894. The photographer likely stood just above the future chapel's edge when the photograph was taken.



28. 'Chapelle de Sainte-Perpétue et de Sainte-Félicité'.

Taken and edited by Neurdein Frères (own property)

There is one more Carthage photograph that reveals traces of its backside inscription, the one previously discussed depicting the old harbour of Carthage (Figure 18). The inscription is faint and unreadable, but it confirms that the photographs were part of the same shipment and originate from the same missionary centre. In the inventory and on the cardboard mounts, only a few words were recorded for each photograph, so information from the paper positives' backside – or in other cases from a separate paper or covering letter – was not preserved before mounting. It remains uncertain whether curators of the time deemed these details unimportant or whether the rapid preparation for the 1896 Ethnographic Mission exhibition required staff to mount the photographs before the curator could catalogue them, permanently concealing valuable information. Future research might develop technologies to recover the content of such paper-embedded information.

The information was inscribed in French on the back of the mounted photographs. This supports the hypothesis that the photographs originated from French monks, specifically the White Fathers (Missionnaires⁹, Pères Blancs, M. Afr.), established in 1868 for the mission of Africa. A significant portion of the missionary photographs of the Museum of Ethnography consists of shipments from the White Fathers from various regions of Africa, primarily the eastern part of the continent (modern-day Tanzania), and from North Africa, specifically Tunisia and Algeria. The previously mentioned archaeologist, who conducted excavations at Carthage, Alfred Louis Delattre was also a member of this religious order. In 1875, he founded and served as first director of the museum named after Charles Lavigerie, the founder of the White Fathers, the Musée Lavigerie de Saint-Louis de Carthage (Héron de Villefosse 1900: VII) to preserve and display the artefacts uncovered at the site. According to early 20th-century inventories of the Museum of Ethnography, one of the photographs sent from Carthage depicted Delattre's archaeological museum: *P. Delattre, view of the archaeologist's museum. Carthage, Tunisia*. It shows that the White Fathers sent an image in order to introduce their local museum, but it was later deaccessioned from the collection. However, eight photographs survived illustrating some of the display cases and individual objects of Delattre's museum, including Christian tombstones, early Christian lanterns, Carthaginian pottery, as well as necklaces and other jewellery found in tombs.



29. Oil lamps and pots. Tunisia, 1874–1896.

Photographer unknown. Black and white positive, 21x27 cm.

Museum of Ethnography, F 2911



30. Artefacts found in a tomb in Carthage. Tunisia, 1874–1896.

Photographer unknown. Black and white positive, 19,5x25,5 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2918



31. Votive stelae. Carthage, Tunisia, 1874–1896.

Photographer unknown. Black and white positive, 21x27 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2916

During his lifetime, Delattre published several works on his archaeological excavations and his museum. In 1880, he published *Lampes Chrétiennes de Carthage*, analysing Christian lanterns found in Carthage and the symbols on them (Delattre 1880). Two photographs in the Museum of Ethnography correspond to the illustrations of this catalogue (Figures 32–33).



32. Oil lamps decorated with Christian symbols. Carthage, Tunisia, 1874–1896.

Photographer unknown. Black and white positive, 21x27 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2912



33. Oil lamps decorated with Christian symbols. Carthage, Tunisia, 1874–1896.

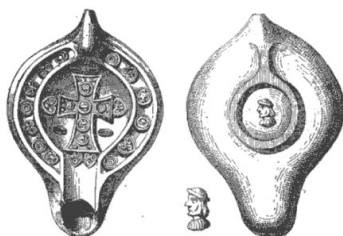
Photographer unknown. Black and white positive, 20x28 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2915

54

LAMPES CHRÉTIENNES

Quand saint Augustin décrit la croix de la Passion, c'est la forme latine qu'il lui donne.

Le culte des fidèles de Carthage pour la croix est bien exprimé sur deux lampes nouvellement retrouvées, où elle



se dresse sous une espèce de niche ou de portique, composée de deux colonnes avec chapiteau qui portent un cintre orné. Tout autour sont des oiseaux comme symboles.

Mais la plus belle croix que nous possédions sur nos lampes est, sans contredit, celle qui renferme plusieurs médaillons, dans lesquels est figuré l'Agneau. C'est ce genre de croix qui a précédé immédiatement l'apparition du crucifix, tel que nous le voyons aujourd'hui.

XXIII

DANIEL DANS LA FOSSE AUX LIONS

Ce sujet, que l'on rencontre fréquemment dans les antiques fresques des catacombes, est moulé sur une lampe,



trouvée en juin 1879, au pied de la colline de Byrsa. Daniel est debout, les bras étendus dans l'attitude de la prière. Deux lions sont à ses pieds. Près du prophète, on voit deux personnages. L'un représente Habacuc qui offre un pain rond, et l'autre ressemble à un ange, qui, comme pour bénir, tend la main vers Daniel.

XXIV

NOTRE-SEIGNEUR JÉSUS-CHRIST

Mais la lampe la mieux conservée et la plus intéressante que nous ayons recueillie est celle dont nous allons parler.



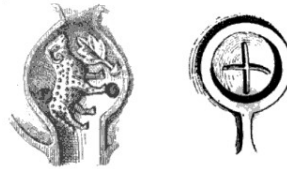
Le sujet qu'elle représente n'est plus un symbole, ce n'est plus le nom du Christ caché sous les emblèmes des différents monogrammes, ni même la croix pure et simple, soit latine, soit grecque, mais Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ lui-même debout, la tête nimbée, vêtu de la tunique,

VII.

L'AGNEAU ET LA FEUILLE DE VIGNE

Une lampe d'argile trouvée à Oudena (l'ancienne Uthina) porte cet emblème au milieu de son disque. Elle est aujourd'hui dans notre collection.

Nous avons déjà étudié le poisson comme figure eucharistique. « Ce second symbole, dit l'abbé de Solesmes, a la



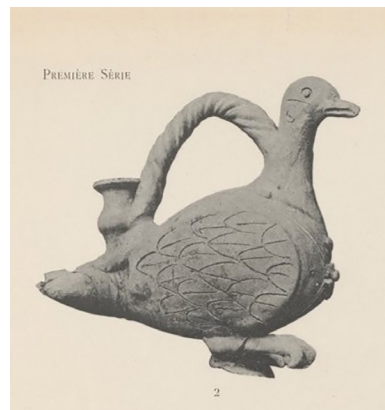
même signification. » Il est aisé de reconnaître en effet que la feuille de vigne placée à côté de l'agneau a ici un sens tout-à-fait dogmatique. C'est l'explication de ces paroles de Notre-Seigneur : « Ma chair est véritablement une nourriture et mon sang est véritablement un breuvage. » L'Agneau divin s'immole chaque jour sur les autels et sa chair devient l'aliment des fidèles ; le vin, signifié par la feuille

34–37. A few examples from Delattre's book, where the lanterns' motif pictured in the drawing can be found on one of the photographs.

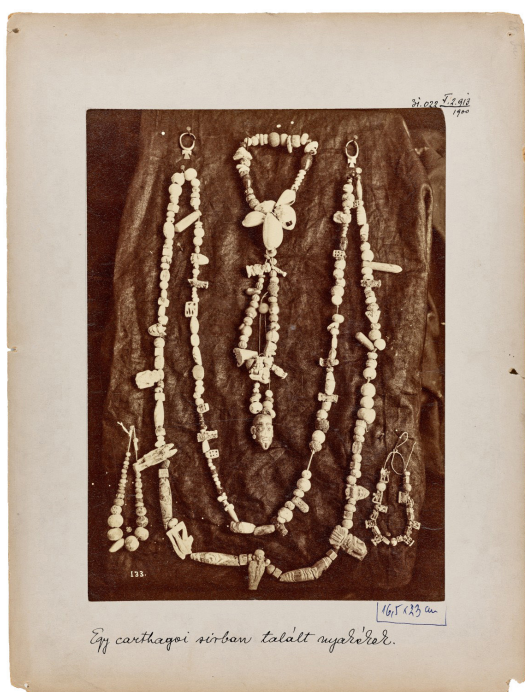
The 1900 catalogue of the Carthage museum (Berger 1900) provides detailed descriptions of individual objects and object groups that are illustrated through photographic reproductions in the appendix. This use of photography clearly demonstrates how objects, originally photographed in their display cases with drapery, supports, and backgrounds, as seen in the photographs now in the Museum of Ethnography, are removed from their context. The focus is solely on the object, which becomes 'floating' and, simultaneously, a generalized museum artefact. The following three photographic pairs illustrate how museum catalogue pages remove objects from their surroundings (Figures 38–43).



38. A pigeon-shaped vessel found in a Punic necropolis on Byrsa Hill. Carthage, Tunisia, 1874–1896. Photographer unknown. Black and white positive, 20x26 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2917

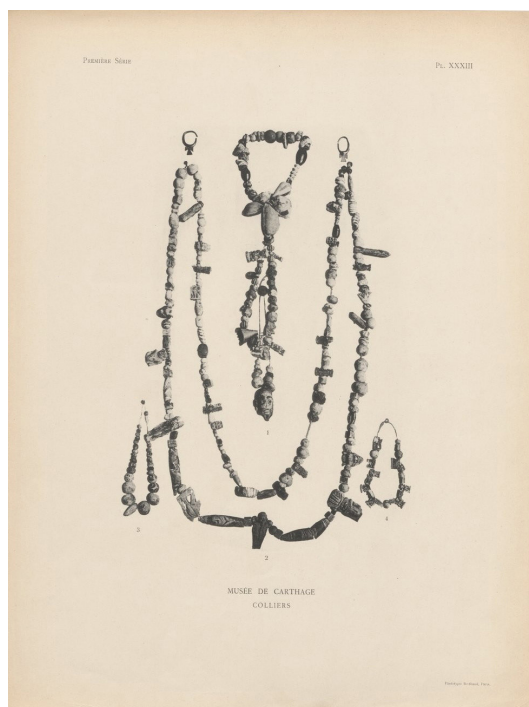


39. Musée Lavigerie De Saint-Louis De Carthage, Collection Des Pères-Blancs. 1900. PL XX.2



40. Necklaces made of glass and ceramic beads, amulets, and shells found in a Punic tomb. Carthage, Tunisia, 1874–1896.

Photographer unknown. Black and white positive, 16x23 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2913



41. Musée Lavigerie De Saint-Louis De Carthage, Collection Des Pères-Blancs. 1900. PL XXXIII



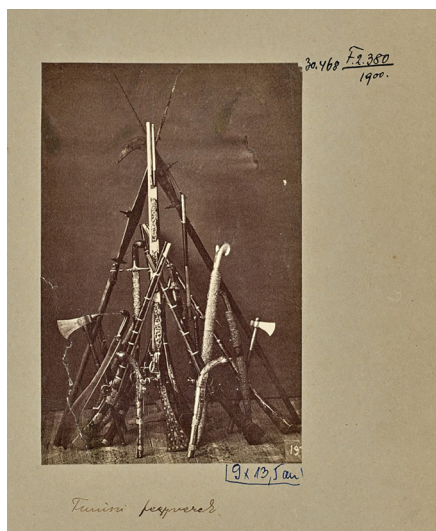
42. Votive stelae dedicated to the main deities of the Puns, Tanit-Pené-Baal and Baal-Hamon. Carthage, Tunisia, 1874–1896.

Photographer unknown. Black and white positive, 22x27 cm. Museum of Ethnography, F 2914



43. Musée Lavigerie De Saint-Louis De Carthage, Collection Des Pères-Blancs. 1900. PL II.5–8

One of the photographs sent from Tunis could, in terms of composition, setting, and mood, belong to the Carthage museum series (Figure 44). Its central focus, however, is on contemporary craftsmen, weaponsmiths and goldsmiths at work. Beyond Delattre's archaeological museum in Carthage, the White Fathers also operated a missionary museum in Algiers, which, unlike the Tunisian one, had ethnographic rather than archaeological significance. It presented the cultures, attire, everyday and ceremonial practices of indigenous peoples living in different parts of Africa. Twenty-nine photographs from members of the order active in Algiers were accessioned into the Photography Collection of the Museum of Ethnography Budapest. Of these, only one has been deaccessioned in recent decades; it depicted the Algerian headquarters of the White Fathers, the *Maison Carrée d'Afrique* in Algiers. Among the surviving photographs, three provide a glimpse into the daily life of the mission. Twenty-five positive prints – similarly to the object photographs of the Musée Lavigerie in Carthage – present exhibition material, individual artefacts, and groups of objects from the museum of the Algerine mission. This visual ethnographic collection includes weapons of African indigenous peoples (spears, knives, and arrowheads), musical instruments – including several drums of varying shapes and sizes – along with jewellery, scoops, wooden spoons, pipes, and a shield. The photographs were most likely taken within the museum interior. A white drapery used as a background – probably part of the display setting – creates a sense of weightlessness and lightness, lending an airy quality both to the exhibited objects and to the photographs themselves, even in the presence of strong contrasts. No data is currently available on a comparable museum in Tunis which collection might be depicted in the photograph in question. However, the photographic parallel with objects sent from the museum of the White Fathers in Algiers suggests that the numbered positive of weapons arranged in a pyramid may have been created as part of an ethnographic display established by the missionaries in Tunisia.



44. Weapons. Tunis, Tunisia, before 1896.

Photographer unknown. Black and white positive, 9x13,5 cm.
Museum of Ethnography, F 2380

Although the Carthage material in the missionary photographic corpus is small in number, its examination and interpretation provide substantial new photo-historical information and the synthesis of earlier and recent data, while also opening possibilities for further research.

Summary

The photographic material sent by the White Fathers, heavily reduced due to deaccessioning, does not offer a comprehensive view of the country or its inhabitants where the missionaries operated. Instead, with a few exceptions, it provides two significant ‘deep dives’ into late-19th-century daily life in Tunisia and the region’s ancient treasures. The corpus exemplifies how photographs, once better or less documented, became stripped of context through musealisation.

During the research process, I started to recontextualise individual photographs, placing them within the photographic period in which they were created. This allows the visual symbols and newly emerging layers of meaning in the images to be interpreted.

The study also revealed that contemporary photographic research is being significantly transformed by the expanding possibilities of the digital realm. The number of digitally accessible materials from various archives, libraries, photo collections, and other visual archives is rapidly increasing, and advances in search and image recognition technologies offer photo-historians new opportunities. This makes the study of 19th- and 20th-century photography a dynamically evolving field, necessitating the regular review of even recent research findings. Consequently, further study of the Tunisian photographs in the missionary photographic corpus of the Museum of Ethnography, including multi-faceted interpretations and exploration of additional layers of meaning, remains essential.

Notes

- 1 In 1622, Pope Gregory XV established the Vatican-based Congregatio de Propaganda Fide (Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith), between 1988 and 2022 named as Congregatio pro Gentium Evangelizatione (Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples) (Erdő 2004: 738). Since 2022, the global coordination of missionary activity has been overseen by the Dicastery for Evangelization. <https://www.vatican.va/content/romancuria/en/dicasteri/dicastero-evangelizzazione/index.html>
- 2 In this case, the number 1870 might at first appear to indicate a date. However, when compared with the inscriptions found on the other glass negatives in the same series, it becomes clear that it does not refer to a year but rather to the serial number of the photograph.
- 3 E.g. Musée d’art et d’histoire du Judaïsme https://www.mahj.org/en/collections-online/search?collection_fulltext=Clapier, Musée des Confluences https://portail.museedesconfluences.fr/en/collections/search?recherche_libre=Clapier (last downloaded 2026. 02. 12).
- 4 J. Garrigues, Phot. Tunis / J. Garrigues Tunis / Ph Garrigues Tunis / Phot. Garrigues. Tunis / on recto: Photographie Garrigues, Tunis / on verso: J. Garrigues. Photographie. Tunis / on postcards: Photo Garrigues, Tunis
- 5 e.g. Victoria & Albert Museum, Photo Collection https://collections.vam.ac.uk/search/?page=1&page_size=15&q=Garrigues (Last download 29. 01. 2026.) or The Israel Museum, Jerusalem <https://museum.imj.org.il/imagine/collections/AZSearch.asp?let=G&artist=Garrigues,%20J.%20Andre,%20Tunisia> (last downloaded: 29. 01. 2026).
- 6 The Aix-en-Provence-based Galerie Vincent Bercker provides specific birth and death dates – 1851–1901 – for Garrigues; however, these are given without any source citation <https://www.proantic.com/display.php?id=472942#> (last downloaded: 08. 05. 2023). Until the publication of Mégnin’s most recent publication in 2024, neither printed nor online scholarly literature recorded either a birth or a death date for Garrigues. In his synthetic study, Ken Jacobson merely defines the period of activity of the Maison Garrigues as extending from the 1870s until 1911 (Jacobson 2007: 235) The Tunisian art blogger ARTmedina-tounes describes Garrigues as having been born in Tunis <https://art-tounes.blogspot.com/2017/04/patrimoine-de-tunisie-de-quelques-legs.html> (last downloaded: 09. 05. 2023.) This information, however, does not appear in other sources, and was later refuted by Mégnin.
- 7 III. Muhammad (Sadok) bey and III. Ali bey (Helioui 2015: 140–143).

- 8 Two versions of the same image – one bearing the signature “Catalanotti Tunis”, the other inscribed “Collection AM Tunis” – were included in a photographic album belonging to the Swiss–Swedish von Hallwyl family. The album contains 146 photographs depicting scenes from Algeria and Tunisia, which the family purchased and arranged into an album during their North African journey in 1889. Hallwylska Museet, DIG 21472, DIG 8259.
- 9 <https://www.peresblancs.org/en/about-us/origins-of-our-society/> (last downloaded: 10. 05. 2023.)

References

Almanach Hachette

1905 *Petite encyclopédie populaire de la vie pratique*. Paris: Hachette.

Bénichou-Safar, Hélène

1982 *Les tombes puniques de Carthage. Topographie, structures, inscriptions et rites funéraires. Études d'Antiquités Africaines*. Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.

Berger, Philippe

1900 *Description de l'Afrique du Nord. Musées et Collections Archéologiques de l'Algérie et de la Tunisie*. Paris: Leroux.

Bibliothèque Nationale de Tunisie Carthage postcard at the Bibliothèque Nationale de Tunisie https://www.bibliotheque.nat.tn/KHNU/doc/SYRACUSE/6774140/carthage?_lg=fr-FR (last downloaded: 23. 03. 2026.)

Bourial, Hatem

n. d. Maltais de Tunisie: La mémoire du libraire Louis Namura. In *Harissa*. <https://harissa.com/news555/fr/maltais-de-tunisie-la-memoire-du-libraire-louis-namura> (last downloaded: 05. 02. 2026.)

Congregatio de Propaganda Fide (Hitterjesztési Kongregáció). In *Magyar Katolikus Lexikon*. Vol. 4. 880–881. Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1998. <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/H/Hitterjeszt%C3%A9si%20Kongreg%C3%A1ci%C3%B3.html> (last downloaded: 13. 03. 2026.)

Delattre, Alfred Louis

1880 *Lampes Chrétiennes de Carthage*. Lyon: Mougin-Rusand.

1896 *Carthage: nécropole punique de la Colline de Saint-Louis*. Lyon: Imprimerie Mougin-Rusand.

1906 *Un pèlerinage aux ruines de Carthage et au Musée Lavigerie*. Lyon: Imprimerie J. Poncet.

Degroise, Marie-Hélène

Photographies d'Afrique (1840–1944)

Albert – *Photographies d'Afrique (1840–1944): Albert, Charles* <https://photographesenoutremerafrique.blogspot.com/search/label/Albert%20%28Charles%29> (last downloaded: 13. 02. 2026.)

Amico, D' – *Photographies d'Afrique (1840–1944): D' Amico, Emilio* <https://photographesenoutremerafrique.blogspot.com/search/label/Amico%20%28d%27%29> (last downloaded: 17. 02. 2026.)

Cousin – *Photographies d'Afrique (1840–1944): Cousin, P.* <https://photographesenoutremerafrique.blogspot.com/search/label/Cousin%20%28P.%29> (last downloaded: 13. 02. 2026.)

- Garrigues – *Photographes d'Afrique (1840–1944)*: Garrigues, J. <https://photographesenoutrem-erafrique.blogspot.com/search/label/Garrigues> (last downloaded: 08. 05. 2023.)
- Neurdein – *Photographes d'Afrique (1840–1944)*: Neurdein. <https://photographesenoutremerafrique.blogspot.com/search/label/Neurdein> (last downloaded: 12. 02. 2026.)
- Soler – *Photographes d'Afrique (1840–1944)*: Soler, F. <https://photographesenoutremerafrique.blogspot.com/search/label/Soler> (last downloaded: 08. 05. 2023.)
- DeRoo, Rebecca J.
 2004 Colonial Collecting: French Women and Algerian Cartes Postales. In Eleanor M. Hight and Gary D. Sampson (eds.): *Colonialist photography: imaginizing race and place*. 159–171. London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315015262>
- Erdő, Péter
 2004 Népek Evangelizációjának Kongregációja (Congregatio pro Gentium Evangelizatione). In Magyar Katolikus Lexikon. Vol. 9. 738. Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Eves, Richard
 1996 Colonialism, corporeality and character: Methodist Missions and the refashioning of bodies in the Pacific. *History and Anthropology* 10. 1996. 1. 85–138. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02757206.1996.9960893>
 2006 Black and white, a significant contrast': Race, humanism and missionary photography in the Pacific. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29. 2006. 4. 725–748. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870600665490>
- Fleury, Victor
 1896 Les Industries des Indigènes en Tunisie. In Louis Pierre Frédéric Olivier (ed.) *La Tunisie. Revue générale des sciences pures et appliquées* (Paris) 1896. 22. Novembre 30. 1118–1127.
- Heliouli, Moncef
 2015 *La fibule berbère, la Melia et le voeude la paix. /Les cahiers artistiques d'ART-Médina Tounes, Cahier 01./*
- Héron de Villefosse, A.
 1900 Musée Lavigerie De Saint-Louis De Carthage. In *Description de l'Afrique du Nord. Musées et Collections Archéologiques de l'Algerie et de la Tunisie 8,1*. Paris: Leroux.
- Jacobson, Ken
 2007 *Odaliques & Arabesques: Orientalist Photography 1839–1925*. London: Quaritch.
- Mégnin, Michel
 n. d. Soler Francisco. In *Dictionnaire des orientalistes de langue Française*. <http://lodel.ehess.fr/dictionnairedesorientalistes/document.php?id=310> (Last downloaded: 07. 11. 2020.)
 n. d. a. Leon & Levy, puis Levy & Fils (L. L.). In *Dictionnaire des orientalistes de langue Française*. <http://dictionnairedesorientalistes.ehess.fr/document.php?id=173> (last downloaded: 14. 02. 2026.)
 2024 Index des photographes installés à Tunis (1865–1930). In *Photographes et éditeurs en Orient*. <https://iconosud.hypotheses.org/4191#more-4191> (last downloaded: 28. 01. 2026.)
- Missions catholiques
 Les Missions catholiques: bulletin hebdomadaire illustré de l'Oeuvre de la propagation de la foi. Lyon, Nr. 1399. 27. Mars 1896.
- Olivier, Louis Pierre Frédéric (ed.)
 1896 *La Tunisie. Revue générale des sciences pures et appliquées* 7. 1896. 22. Novembre 30.
- Playfair, Sir Robert Lambert
 1895 (*Murray's*) *Handbook for Travellers in Algeria and Tunis* [...]. London: John Murray.

Quejido, Virginia Salvé

2016 *Visiones De Túnez: Datación y autoría de las albúminas donadas por el Bey de Túnez al Museo Arqueológico Nacional en 1892* <https://www.man.es/man/dam/jcr:cf65a11f-17f9-4b52-92c0-263f1172d6b2/visionestunez.pdf> (last downloaded: 13. 03. 2026.)

2002 Imágenes de Túnez del siglo XIX. Albúminas de la Colección Martínez Santa-Olalla del Museo Arqueológico Nacional (Madrid) *Boletín del Museo Arqueológico Nacional*. 20. 2002. 244–264.

Roger-Viollet

The Tunisian photographs of the Neurdein Frères at the L'agence Photographique Roger-Viollet: <https://www.roger-viollet.fr/photographer/neurdein-146> (last downloaded: 23. 03. 2026.)

Szűcs, Enikő Viktória

2025 Svájc és Szicília Makoldy Sándor hagyatékában. *Etnofotó, a Néprajzi Múzeum fotó és filmblog-ja* 2025. 09. 29. <https://etnofoto.neprajz.hu/index.php/2025/09/29/svajc-es-szicilia-makoldy-sandor-hagyatekaban/> (last downloaded: 13. 03. 2026.)

Tréhin, Jean-Yves

2012 Garrigues. In François Pouillon (ed.) *Dictionnaire des orientalistes de langue française*. 448. Paris: IISMM; Karthala.

Vernaz, Jean

Note sur des Fouilles a Carthage 1884–1885. *Revue Archéologique* (Paris) Série 3. 1887. 10. (Juillet-December) 11–27.

Műhelyek és ásatások Tunéziai fényképek a Néprajzi Múzeum missziós fotókorpuszában

GEBAUER HANGA

muzeológus, Néprajzi Múzeum (Budapest)

Rezümé | 1896-ban a kispesti plébános felkérésére több ezer tárgy és közel ezer fényképnagyítás érkezett Magyarországra a világ különböző pontjain működő misszionáriusoktól egy nagyszabású kiállításához, amelynek bevétele a helyi templom építésének költségeihez járult hozzá. Így kerültek be a Néprajzi Múzeum legkorábbi tunéziai felvételei is, amelyek néhány fényképtől eltekintve két nagy témára és helyszínre összpontosítanak, Tuniszban elsősorban kézművesek utcára nyíló üzleteibe, Karthágóban az ásatások eredményeibe engednek bepillantást. A korai leltárkönyvek néhány szavas meghatározásán kívül nem állt rendelkezésre több adat a nagyrészt hivatásos fényképészek által készített felvételekről. A tanulmányban megvizsgálom mind a 29 fotó készítésének hátterét, szerzőségi adatait, nemzetközi fotótörténeti és szűkebb, gyűjteményi kontextusát.

Kulcsszavak | fotó, misszió, Tunézia, Karthágó, kézműves, ásatás, múzeum