

Translated Studies Series(2)

Lithographic Press in Sudan



Written by:

Hatim Al-Siddiq Mohammad Ahmed

Translated by:

Ahmed Gumma Siddiek Mohammed

Second edition 2025 AD

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اسم الكتاب

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الإيداع القانوني

2025/.....م



دار آريثريا للنشر والتوزيع
Arithria for Publishing and Distribution

الناشر

دار آريثريا للنشر والتوزيع - الخرطوم - السودان

جوال: 121566207 - 00249122094856

البريد الإلكتروني: arithriaforpublishing@gmail.com

تاريخ النشر:

الطبعة الثانية - 2025م

جميع حقوق الطبع محفوظة للناشر والمؤلف

لا يسمح بإعادة إصدار هذا الكتاب أو أي جزء منه أو تخزينه كنسخة إلكترونية أو نقله
بأي شكل من الأشكال دون إذن خطي مسبق من المؤلف والناشر

Dedication

This work is dedicated to Dr. Ikhlas Makawi Mohamed Ali, for years of dedication, perseverance, hard work, and service to science and scholars across the country and beyond.

The Author

Acknowledgments

I extend my sincere thanks, appreciation, and gratitude to everyone who contributed to the publication of this book. I would like to especially acknowledge Dr. Awad Ahmed Hussein (Shabba), Deputy Director of the Red Sea Basin Research and Studies Centre – Sudan, for his kind review of the manuscript of the book; Dr. Hala Abayzeed Boştan, of Omdurman Ahlia University, for reviewing and editing the language of the book; Professor Abdul-Baqi Younis Ismail, Professor of Library Science at Nilein University; Dr. Anam Mohamed Osman, Professor of History at the University of Khartoum; and Mr. Noor Al-Huda Mohamed Noor Al-Huda, Director of Azzah Publishing House – Sudan, the Secretary General of the Sudanese Publishers Union, for kindly providing the foreword to the book..

The Author

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Introduction

1

Printing Industry is considered one of the greatest communication revolutions ever invented by humans and has had the longest-lasting impact. It contributed to solving the challenges of message transmission, which required both the sender and recipient to be in the same place and time when sending a message. It also addressed the issue of limitation of copies, as it enabled the production of millions of copies of a single message, a problem that had accompanied the revolutions of speech and writing. As a result, printing helped spread knowledge, science, culture, and heritage from one place to another and from one generation to the next.

The history of printing industry has been a long journey, starting from inscriptions on lithographic and walls to three-dimensional printing. The Arabs wrote on lithographic, bones, skins, wood, and palm fronds, while the Egyptians used papyrus and the Romans used parchment. The Chinese were the first to invent printing on paper, initially printing images and decorations on fabrics. But Gutenberg is credited as the first inventor of the printing press, which helped provide printed paper books. These books have remained resilient despite technological developments, despite the spread of electronic publishing, and its advantages, such as reduced costs, faster information delivery to users, and the elimination of time and space barriers, among other issues.

This Invaluable and engaging book, titled *The Lithographic Printing Press in Sudan* by Professor Hatem Al-Siddiq Muhammad Ahmed, traces the history of printing in Sudan, starting from the establishment of printing business in Egypt. It then covers the Royal Printing Press in Sudan, as well as the Lithographic Printing Press during the Mahdist State, which lasted until the beginning of the condominium rule. The author uses images and illustrations, as well as examples of some newspapers published during that period, including an Italian-Arabic Dictionary, printed during the era of Muhammad Ali Pasha. The book also includes publications and financial bonds printed by Gordon Pasha at the Lithographic Printing Press. During the Mahdist period in Sudan (1881–1898), where-publications by Imam Al-Mahdi, Khalifa Abdullah, and numerous public and private letters, as well as books about Imam Al-Mahdi and the Mahdist movement in Sudan-were printed. All of this served to support and explain the scientific content of the book.

The book represents a new addition to human knowledge, the Sudanese library, and to specialists, and to those who are interested in the history and development of the printing industry in Sudan. The book also stands out for its objectivity and accuracy in gathering information from various sources, as well as for its use of scientific methods in documenting sources and references. This is especially notable, given the author's ability in research, analysis, interpretation, and his encyclopedic knowledge in the field.

Professor. Abdul-Baqi Younis Ismail

December 23, 2024

Introduction

2

Anyone who examines the scientific output of our esteemed colleague, Professor Hatem Al-Siddiq, will notice his great interest in topics that we might call “forgotten” subjects. We mean by these the topics that many historians tend to avoid or do not address to the extent they deserve. The reason for this is perhaps rooted in the tradition of historical scholarship, which has primarily focused on political issues. Indeed, the emphasis on political aspects has significantly weakened the attention given to historical studies in areas such as civilization, culture, society, and the broader production of human thought.

Tackling a topic like the history of printing industry requires patience and determination. While these two qualities are essential for any historian, many researchers tend to focus only on topics that can be accomplished through the easiest methods—topics that are not found in the writings and works of Professor Hatem Al-Siddiq. This is perhaps the reason why his works stand out in the historical field. The primary task of a historian, after all, is to make a sincere effort to uncover the truth, regardless of the time it may take or the effort required to achieve the desired goal.

Based on this, the book in our hands is considered an important and serious addition, both to the Arab library in general and the Sudanese library in particular. It represents a pioneering work in this field, and we hope that more precise studies

within the same framework will continue, to uncover the truths related to the subject. Undoubtedly, this is one of the most important duties that historians should undertake, as reaching the truth is at the core of their work.

This book is structured into four chapters, an introduction, a conclusion, and a list of sources and references. The first chapter serves as an essential introductory chapter, providing the general framework for the book. The second, third, and fourth chapters follow a historical sequence of the Lithographic Printing Press in Sudan, starting from the era of Muhammad Ali Pasha, through the Mahdist period, and concluding with the British colonial era. This sequence is both logical and scientific. Considering this structure, we can observe the significant unity of the subject matter covered throughout the book

In conclusion, this book *Lithographic Printing Press in Sudan* is one of the most remarkable books I have ever read, not only because of the importance of its content but also because of its thematic unity. It is a book that cannot be overlooked in any way, due to the strong connection between knowledge and the printing industry. Without the printing press, knowledge would have remained within a narrow scope, accessible only to those with great fortune. However, the advent of the printing press in those eras sparked a significant scientific revolution in the academic field in general. Therefore, any serious researcher must understand this crucial development, which cannot be underestimated under any circumstances. The necessity of exploring hidden topics to bring them to light is imperative in order to complete the broader picture of knowledge.

Dr. Ana'am Mohamed Osman Al-Kabbashi

Sudan, December 24, 2024

Introduction

3

Printing refers to the process of transferring images and letters from one surface to another. The origins of printing are attributed to the Babylonians, and it is said that China was the first to develop a movable type, but this technology did not spread beyond their borders.

The development of printing is credited to the German inventor Johann Gutenberg, who invented movable type in 1456. This innovation spread to the world through his disciples. At the time, printing was considered a form of witchcraft, and some of Gutenberg's disciples were even put on trial. One of his disciples was nearly burned alive as a sorcerer. Gutenberg eventually gave in and moved to the city of Mainz in Germany, where a museum bearing his name still exists today.

The Ottoman Sultan issued a decree prohibiting the use of printing presses in the Islamic World, considering it to be the work of the devil. Later, however, the printing of the Quran and Hadith was permitted, marking the final stage of the spread of printing industry in the Arab-Islamic world.

The Arab World was first introduced to the printing press in the Levant through the church. Egypt became familiar with the printing industry during the French campaign in 1798. In 1821, Muhammad Ali Pasha established the famous Bulaq

Printing Press. Sudan received its first printing press in 1835, which was a small lithographic press, also referred to by Egyptians as the “Balouza Press.” It was managed by the government and located east of the Governor’s Palace. During the Mahdist period, the press was moved to Omdurman, where it was used to print some government documents and was also employed by the Mahdist state to publish the Mahdi’s teaching book and some other written materials.

The first modern printing press to enter Sudan was in 1903. It was owned by Fares Nimer and Shahin Makarios. It initially operated on steam but was converted to electricity in 1911. In 1924, it was purchased by the Markodil Company at the behest of the government. It was located on University Street, in front of the Directorate building. It was followed by a commercial press owned by Greeks, Salou and Khersto, where Hadharat Sudan newspaper was printed. The second newspaper was Al-Gazetta in 1891 after published by government of Sudan. Hadharat Sudan press, was established in 1919. It was the first press to be owned by Sudanese nationals. It was a partnership between Abdul Rahman Al-Mahdi, Khalil Akasha, Othman Saleh, Hussein Al-Khalifa Sharif, Mahjoub Fadl Badri, and Abdul Rahman Jamil. It was later bought by the Markodil Company and transformed into a government press in 1965. Other private printing presses followed, including Mandil Press in 1928, the Limited Printing Company affiliated with Al-Mahdi House in 1935, and Al-Salam Press, owned by the Khatmiya community in 1940. Subsequently, other private and party printing establishments emerged, such as (Al-Rai Al-Aam, Al-Taba’a Al-Arabiya, Al-Ayam Press, Al-Sara-

ha, Al-Midan), all of which were private and affiliated with political parties.

These printing presses contributed to spreading awareness and culture by printing newspapers and books. Along with this, bookshops were established, starting with Sudan Bookshop in 1902, the National Library in 1907, Khartoum Library in 1920, and Al-Nahda Library in 1929. The establishment of libraries and printing presses continued until the founding of the first publishing house for book printing by the University of Khartoum in 1962.

The printing industry and publishing houses contributed significantly to political and cultural work, with a clear and substantial impact on spreading awareness and culture. Printed materials continue to shape the awareness and culture of nations. Notable works included *Ratib Al-Mahdi*, *Diwan Nafthat Al-Yara*, and *Diwan Al-Banna Al-Kabeer* in 1923, as well as *Tabaqat Wad Dief Allah*, which was prepared by Judge Ibrahim Sadiq, a native of Tuti Island. He is considered the first Sudanese publisher to document the biography of a publisher in *Al-Tabaqat*, using the term “publisher” in 1930. This work was one of the publications of the National Sudanese Library.

The importance of this unique book lies in its title, subject, and content, as the author, Professor Hatem Al-Siddiq Mohammed Ahmed, has recognized the significance of the printing press and its role and impact on the history of Sudan. This is a clever observation on his part, as he has chosen to address this device, which has been overlooked by

Sudanese historians, writing a separate book about it despite its critical importance and significant effects. This makes the book one of a kind in the history of Sudan, and the author deserves commendation for this effort, which we take pride in.

Noor Al-Huda Mohammed Noor Al-Huda

Secretary-General of the Sudanese Publishers Union

Preface

Printing industry is considered one of the first professions and crafts that significantly contributed to the transition of societies from backwardness to openness, development, and growth. This transformation was achieved through encouraging authorship, translation, and publishing. Sudan experienced modern printing in the mid-19th century during the rule of Muhammad Ali Pasha and his successors, who governed the country from 1821 until the liberation of Khartoum in 1885. According to various sources and references, it is likely that Sudan received its first printing press during Muhammad Ali's reign, and interest in it grew during the rule of Khedive Abbas and Khedive Ismail, due to its importance and the roles it played. Furthermore, printing significantly propelled the publishing movement in Sudan throughout the time of the Turkish and Egyptian rule, as well as during the Mahdist State and the British rule.

The printing press which was known as the "the Amiri Press" or the "Lithographic Press" was a modern facility by the standards of its time. To increase interest in it among the administrators who succeeded in governing the country, it was placed among the assets of the military arsenal located east of the administrative building, which is now the Presidential Palace. The press contributed significantly to printing the government's needs, including notebooks, orders, directives, publications, and official documents, as well as stamps, which represented a major source of income for the Khedive and the Sudanese administration.

Additionally, the press successfully covered the needs of the Khartoum School and other government schools established later during Khedive Ismail's era. Furthermore, during his last administration, General Gordon benefitted from this press to print his diaries, known as "Gordon's Diaries," in which he documented military confrontations against the Mahdist forces and his correspondence with the Mahdi. The press also assisted in printing the first paper currency in Sudan's history, known as "Gordon's Bonds," which was an emergency currency issued on April 25, 1884, with additional prints released in November 1884.

After the Mahdist Revolution, led by Imam Muhammad Ahmad Al-Mahdi, he successfully established control over Sudan following the liberation of Khartoum on January 26, 1885, the Lithographic Press became one of the most significant assets of the revolution. Khalifa Abdullah bin Al-Sayed Muhammad (Turshin), who assumed leadership of the Mahdist State after the death of Imam Al-Mahdi on June 22, 1885, recognized the importance of the Lithographic Press, which became a hallmark of the nascent state.

Khalifa Abdullah took a keen interest in the press, placing it under his direct supervision and that of his brother, Prince Yaqub (known as "Jarab Al-Rai-Think Tank"), due to its critical role in disseminating the publications and communications of the new state to various regions both within and outside the country. Consequently, the Khalifa moved the press from its previous location in the military arsenal in Khartoum to the buildings of (Bait Alamana-the House of Trust) in Omdurman, placing it under the administration of (Bait Almal)-

the Public Treasury and the direct supervision of the Khalifa and his brother, as previously mentioned.

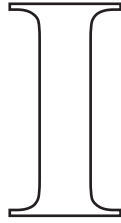
With the assistance of this Printing Press in Omdurman, numerous publications were printed, including the Mahdi's Manual, council's minutes, and the messages of Imam Al-Mahdi. The press also produced messages, which were a series of warning letters issued by Imam Al-Mahdi to various figures within and outside Sudan, inviting them to embrace the Mahdist movement, including Queen Victoria, the Khedive of Egypt, and King Yohannes of Abyssinia. Additionally, it printed internal messages to tribal and clan leaders, as well as publishing the communications from Khalifa Abdullah and his proclamations.

Several books were also published during this period, such as "Sa'adat Al-Mustahdi bi-Sirat Al-Imam Al-Mahdi" by the esteemed scholar Ismail Abdul Qadir Al-Kordofani and "Kitab Al-Tiraz Al-Manqoush bi-Bushra Qatl Yohannes Malak Al-Habash". In addition to other works by Sheikh Al-Hussein Al-Zahra, Al-Hassan Saad Al-Abadi, Al-Awam, and "Wa Futuh Al-Sham lil-Waqidi.", along with other various poems praising the revolution and the Mahdist State, as well as other publications by scholars and sheikhs of that era.

The book is divided into an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion, and a bibliography of sources and references. The first chapter is titled "Printing Industry in Egypt," which serves as a preliminary section that highlights the foundations of printing in Egypt and the stages it went through. The second chapter discusses the printing press in Sudan

(the Lithographic Press) during the era of the Egyptian Pashas and Khedives (1830-1885). The third chapter covers the Press Industry during the Mahdist State (1302-1316 AH / 1885-1898 AD). The fourth chapter examines the Lithographic Press in the early period of the British rule in Sudan and its role in printing the first official government newspaper known as "Al-Ghazita." Subsequently, modern printing presses continued to emerge in Sudan throughout the period of The British rule. This chapter includes a table cataloging all the publications and printed materials produced by the press throughout its history, extending from the Pashas and Khedives era to the Mahdist period and the British invasion of Sudan.

"The objectives of the book is to trace the history of the printing press, which accomplished all the tasks assigned to it during various historical periods that were crucial and significant in shaping the modern history of Sudan, with all its small and large details. It can be said that the role played by the Lithographic Printing Press in Sudan is one of the most important and critical roles across the three historical eras, as its output serves as a living and vibrant memory for the Sudanese people to this day."



Printing Industry Egypt and the Arab World

Chapter One

Printing Industry Egypt and the Arab World

The printing industry, on a global scale, represented a turning point and a significant event in making written words accessible to large numbers of people. The invention of printing led to the widespread distribution of books and manuscripts, increasing the number of printed copies, which were previously limited to hand-copied versions. A review of the history of the writing craft reveals that it was known since the Babylonian civilization in Iraq. It is believed that the Chinese and Korean civilizations were the first to use movable type in the mid-11th century AD, but this practice remained confined to them and did not spread to the world.

When the movable type fonts cast from copper was discovered in Europe by Johannes Gutenberg in 1456, it brought about a significant revolution in the field of printing. Printing industry then spread to most of Europe and subsequently to the Arab countries in the 17th century. The first printing press was established in Syria in 1704, but it did not last long. This was followed by the establishment of a press in Istanbul in 1728, then one in Lebanon in 1733. Napoleon Bonaparte introduced a modern printing press when he occupied Egypt in 1798, which printed orders and publications of the new government. After that, Arabic books were printed using lithography. Baghdad witnessed its first printing press in 1830, followed by Yemen in 1877. In 1821, Muhammad Ali Pasha established the first printing press in Cairo,

known as the “Bulaq Press,” which was the fourth press known in Egypt after those brought by Napoleon. In 1882, the first printing press appeared in Hijaz, while the introduction of the printing press in Sudan was linked to the rule of Muhammad Ali Pasha and his successors (1821-1885).⁽¹⁾

Lithography (from Ancient Greek λιθος (líthos) ‘stone’ and γράφω (gráphō) ‘to write’ is a method of printing originally based on the immiscibility of oil and water. The printing is from a stone (lithographic limestone) or a metal plate with a smooth surface. It was invented in 1796 by the German author and actor (Alois Senefelder) and was initially used mostly for musical scores⁽²⁾

The development of printing throughout history has occurred parallel with the advancement of human civilization worldwide. The Printing industry is an integral part of human development and has contributed to the evolution and spread of culture across the globe. Since ancient times, humans have sought to innovate modern printing methods and enhance their tools and quality.⁽³⁾

The three printing presses that Napoleon brought to Egypt were equipped with Arabic, French, and Greek fonts. The purpose of these presses was to print orders and publications. They initially operated from the Mediterranean Sea during the beginning of the campaign, and after gaining control of Cairo, the three presses were transferred there. This printing press became known as the “National Press” and ceased operations with the end of the French invasion in 1881, with its fate remaining unknown afterward. Egypt remained without a printing press until 1819, the year in

which Muhammad Ali Pasha ordered the establishment of a press in the Boulaq area, known as the “Royal Press,” which began its operations in 1821.⁽⁴⁾

It is believed that the National Press, or Napoleon’s Press, which was brought to Egypt during the invasion, was returned to France after the French campaign withdrew.

Tracing the history of printing industry in Arab countries, it is found that printing craft entered these countries at different times. It first arrived in Lebanon in 1610, making it the first Arab country to adopt printing industry. This press was established in the Qozhaya Monastery, one of the monasteries of the Maronite community, but it later ceased operations.

In Egypt, the Bulaq Press, during the era of Muhammad Ali Pasha, successfully published its first book, a bilingual Arabic-Italian dictionary. Between 1822 and 1842, the press managed to publish 252 books, surpassing the total output of all printing in the Ottoman Empire since the introduction of printing industry there until 1842. In addition to printing books, the press also published newspapers and other publications, which distinguished it from all other presses in the region at that time⁵⁾

To ensure the optimal functioning of the Bulaq Royal Press, Muhammad Ali sent an official delegation to the city of Milan, Italy, headed by Nicola Al-Masabki, to learn the arts of printing. Upon his return, he succeeded greatly in managing the press and in publishing numerous government publications related to the state and its various institutions.

The first publication from the Bulaq Press was titled “Al-Waqai’ Al-Masriyya,” an official newspaper affiliated with the government. It is noted that prior to “Al-Waqai’ newspaper,” another publication was issued by order of Muhammad Ali Pasha called “Journal Al-Khedive,” but it was not of the same quality or comprehensiveness as “Al-Waqai’.” Nevertheless, the journal was the first means used by Muhammad Ali to convey his orders and directives to all members of his state. As for “Al-Waqai’,” the Pasha instructed that no material should be published through the press without his approval.⁽⁶⁾

The Bulaq Press was not just a letterpress; it also had lithographic presses. The paper and ink used for printing at this press were imported from Italy, but they were shortly produced locally in Egypt after the establishment of the press.⁽⁷⁾

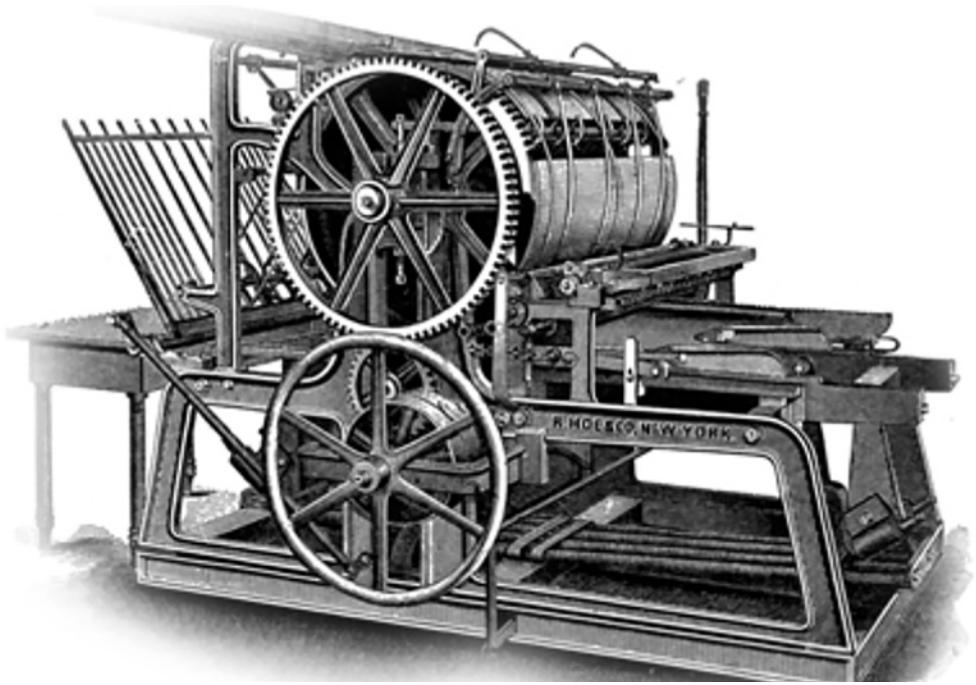
We noticed that Muhammad Ali Pasha quickly sought to localize the production of paper and inks in Egypt instead of importing them from abroad. As a result, the Pasha succeeded in providing the required paper and inks for the Bulaq Press and other presses that emerged later.

In 1831, the number of printers at the Bulaq Press reached eight, all of which were imported from Paris. The Egyptian Official Gazette press at the Citadel area imported its stamps and supplies from the Bulaq Press. If a printing machine at the Gazette press broke down, it was sent directly to the Bulaq Press, and another machine was put in its place to ensure that work on the Gazette did not stop. There was a special maintenance department at the Bulaq printing house.⁽⁸⁾

Due to the importance of the Bulaq Press, the management worked to ensure it did not stop and focused on promptly maintaining any machines that experienced malfunctions. To prevent any disruption in the press's production, a replacement machine is introduced when one breaks down. This procedure reflects the competence of the administrators and their strong commitment to continue the printing process despite the daily challenges they faced.

The Amiri Press (Bulaq Press)

Printing industry spread widely in Egypt, and alongside the Amiri Press in Bulaq, private presses emerged and gained popularity during the reign of Muhammad Said. His stance towards printing and presses underwent a significant shift during his rule, especially after he closed the Bulaq Press and gave as a gift to Abdel Rahman Rushdi. He also sold the Engineer Khana Press at an auction. Despite this, he maintained several government presses in the provinces. The number of lithographic and type presses increased, reaching seven presses: four lithographic and three type presses. It is believed that the number of lithographic presses was even higher. Muhammad Saeed is credited with encouraging the local population to establish private presses, despite his position towards the Bulaq and Engineer Khana presses. He was the first to enact a law regulating printing industry in Egypt. ⁽⁹⁾



Amiri Press – Bulaq Press

Source: the General Authority for the Affairs of Amiri Presses – Cairo

In the first issue of “Al-Waqa’i,” the newspaper expressed itself by saying: “... The benefactor wanted the reports sent to the mentioned court – the General Office – to be refined and selected for their usefulness, and to be published generally along with some matters that come from the regions of Hijaz, Sudan, and other areas. News from Sudan was present in “Al-Waqa’i,” and the newspaper was distributed in Sudan, albeit on a limited scale. During the reign of Khedive Ismail, the relationship between the Sudanese and “Al-Waqa’i” strengthened, as it began to dedicate significant space to news from Sudan. The newspaper also paid attention to publishing works by Sudanese writers during the era of Hakimdaar Jaafar Pasha Mazhar, who was known for his expertise in religious and literary sciences. He would meet



Part of the Bulaq Press – Alexandria Library.

**DIZIONARIO
ITALIANO E ARABO**
 CHE CONTIENE IN BREVE
TUTTI I VOCABOLI
 CHE SONO PIÙ IN USO E PIÙ NECESSARI PER IMPARAR E PARLAR
 E DUE LINGUE CORRETTAMENTE
 OLLI E DIVISO IN DUE PARTI
PARTI I
 DEL DIZIONARIO DISPOSTO COME IL SOLITO NELL'ORDINE ALFABETICO
PARTI II
 CHE CONTIENE UNA BREVE RACCOLTA DI MONI E DI VERBI
 PIÙ NECESSARI, E PIÙ UTILI ALLO STUDIO DELLE DUE LINGUE.

—————

BOLACCO
 DELLA STAMPERIA REGIA
 M. D. CCCC. XXXII

دِيْوَانُ الْاَلْفَبَائِيَّةِ الْاِثْنَيْنِ
 قاموس
 اَلْاِيْطَالِيَّةِ وَ اَلْعَرَبِيَّةِ
 يتضمن باختصار حصل الالفبا اَلْعَرَبِيَّةِ بِهَا الْعِلْمُ وَالْاَلْفَبَائِيَّةِ
 لتعليم الالفبا
 و اَلْعَرَبِيَّةِ الْاَلْفَبَائِيَّةِ عَلَى الْمَصْنُوعِ وَ اَلْمَقْسُومِ لِئَلَّا يَتَسَبَّرَ
 الْقِسْمُ الْاَوَّلُ
 فِي الْاَلْفَبَائِيَّةِ الْاَلْفَبَائِيَّةِ عَلَى حَسَبِ الْعِلْمِ الْمَوْجُوبِ تَرْجُمَهُ مَعْرُوفِ الْاَلْفَبَائِيَّةِ
 الْقِسْمُ الْاِثْنَانِ
 وَتَتَضَمَّنُ مَجْمُوعَ مَعْتَصِرِينَ لِمَا وَ اَلْعَمَالَ مِنْ اَلْاَلْفَبَائِيَّةِ
 الْاَلْفَبَائِيَّةِ الْاَلْفَبَائِيَّةِ لِدَرْسِ الْاَلْفَبَائِيَّةِ

—————

تم الطبع في بولاق مطبعة صاحب السعادة
 ١٢٣٢

The Italian-Arabic Dictionary by Father Rafael is one of the three books that were printed at the Bulaq Press during the era of Muhammad Ali

Khedive Ismail took an interest in printing industry in Egypt and focused on the Bulaq Press. He also established paper factory under the management of Hussein Bey Hosni, the director of the printing house. This factory began supplying paper to various government departments since 1871, for printing scientific works, and for businessmen stationary. The credit for bringing the best paper machines from London and operating them in Egypt near the Bulaq Press goes to Hussein Bey Hosni.”⁽¹¹⁾

Lithographic Presses in the Arab countries:

By tracing the Lithographic Press industry in the Arab and Islamic countries, we find that there were several stone presses operating in these regions. Among was Lithographic Press in Iraq, located in the city of Kadhimayn, that has been in operation since 1821, known as the Dar Al-Salam press. Some people say that it was established in 1830. There is also Lithographic Press in Tabriz, Iran, that has been operating since 1830, brought from Europe by a person named ‘Mirza Al-Tabrizi.’

In Aleppo, Syria, the first Lithographic Press was established in 1841 by a Sardinian named (Belfati). In Algeria, a Lithographic Press was set up in 1847 by French colonialists. In Syria, the Catholic press of the Jesuit fathers was founded in 1848. In 1853, the Lebanese poet Hanna Bey Al-As’ad established a Lithographic Press in Beit Ed-Din Palace in Lebanon. In 1856, the governor of Baghdad, Muhammad Rashid Pasha, brought a press named by (Karbala).

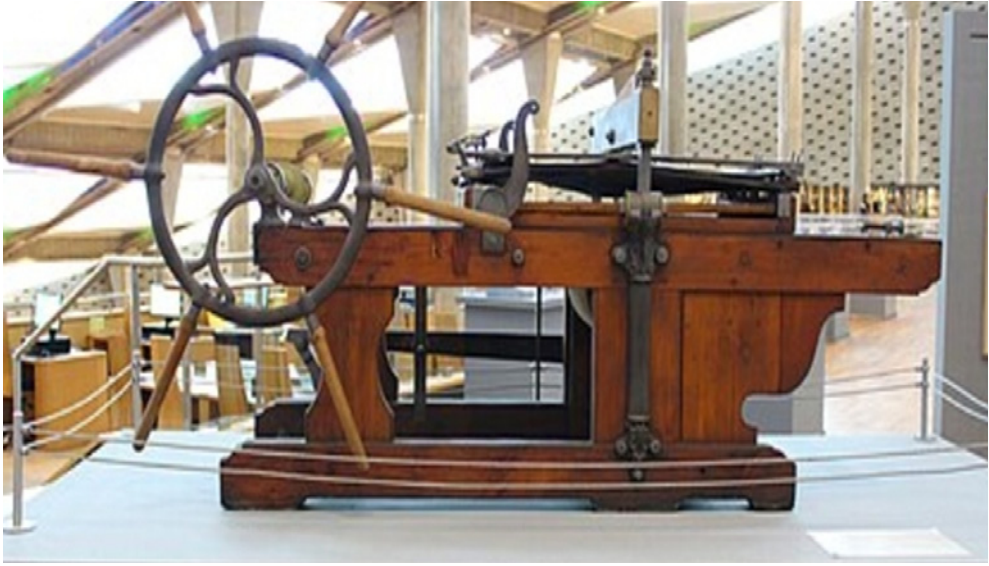
In Mosul, a Lithographic Press was established in 1858. In 1879, a Lithographic Press known as (Bibrov) was estab-

lished in Jazan. In Yemen, the first press appeared in 1872 under the Ottoman Empire. In Zanzibar, the first press was established by Sultan Barghash bin Said in 1882, known as the Royal Press, which is considered one of the oldest Arab presses in East Africa.”⁽¹²⁾

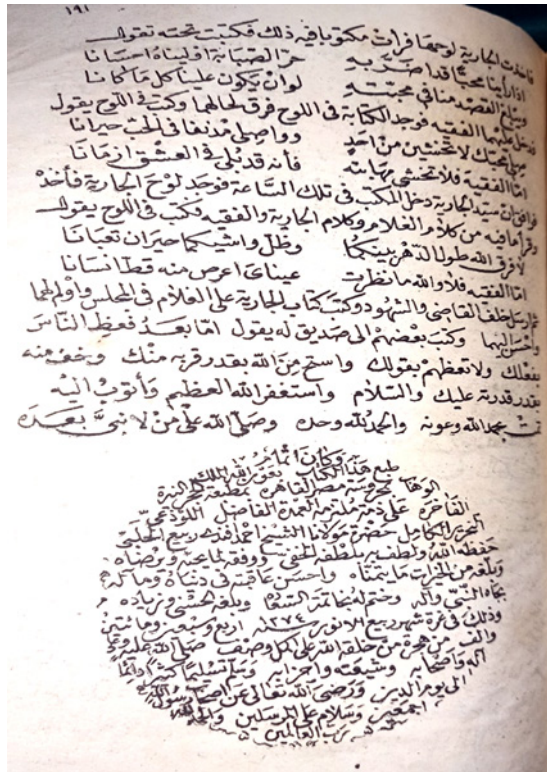
Certainly, there were several factors and reasons that significantly contributed to the spread of stone printing presses in the Arab countries, including:

- The connection of the beginnings of printing industry to those countries.
- ease of use.
- low financial and administrative costs.
- ease of transporting devices from one location to another.
- Access to maintenance and supervision.

For all these factors, lithographic printing industry succeeded in securing its place in the Arab countries and contributed to the production of numerous publications that led to the success of administration system in the Arab world.”



Lithography machine in Bibliotheca Alexandrina



A publications made by lithographic Machines in Egypt

Notes

- (1) Mahgoub Mohamed Saleh, *Al-Sahafa Al-Sudaniya fi Nisf Qarn (1903-1953)*, J1, T2, Markaz Al-Dirasat Al-Sudaniya, Cairo, 1996, p. 8-9.
- (2) Lithography, Wikipedia.
- (3) Maha Mutie Muslim Al-Abesat, *Anwa'a Al-Taba'a wa Marahilaha*, Majallat Al-Mujtama'a Al-Arabi li Nashr Al-Dirasat Al-Ilmiya, Jordan, 20 Shubat 2023, p. 178.
- (4) Iman Abdullah Al-Tahami, *Tarikh Tatawwur Sina'at Al-Waraq wa Al-Taba'a fi Misr*, Majallat Kulliyat Al-Adab, Jami'at Al-Fayoum, Maj 13, A2, July 2021, p. 3174.
- (5) Osman Sid Khalil, *Atha Al-Rusum wa Al-Dara'ib 'ala Al-Taba'a fi Al-Sudan*, Majallat Jami'at Omdurman Al-Islamiyya, Al-Majallad Al-Ashar, Al-Adad Al-Thani, 1435H/July 2014, p. 216-217.
- (6) Abdullah Hussein, *Al-Sudan min Al-Tarikh Al-Qadim ila Rihlat Al-Ba'thati Al-Masriya*, J2, Mu'assasat Hindawi, Cairo, 2013, p. 611.
- (7) Khalil Sabat, *Tarikh Al-Taba'a fi Al-Sharq Al-Arabi*, T2, Dar Al-Ma'arifa, Egypt, 1966, p. 155.
- (8) Khalil Sabat, *Ibid*, p. 158.
- (9) Abu Al-Futuh Radwan, *Tarikh Matba'at Bulaq wa Lamha fi Tarikh Al-Taba'a fi Buldan Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, Al-Matba'a Al-Amiriya, Cairo, 1935, p. 389.
- (10) Mahgoub Mohamed Saleh, *Ibid*, p. 11-12.
- (11) Abdul Rahman Al-Rafii, *'Asr Ismail*, J1, T2, Maktabat Al-Nahda Al-Masriya, Cairo, 1948, p. 250.
- (12) Iman Abdullah Al-Tahami, *Ibid*, p. 3175.

2

The Amiri Press (Lithographic Press) in Sudan

Chapter Two

The Amiri Press (Lithographic Press) in Sudan

Mohamed Ali Pasha was able to maintain his control over Sudan in 1821, after his forces succeeded in defeating the Funj Sultanate (1504-1821) and controlling all the lands from Dongola in the north to Fazughli in the south. These territories were previously under the authority of the Funj Sultanate. Additionally, the Pasha's forces managed to take control of Kordofan region, which is one of the most important regions in Sudan in terms of resources and wealth. By doing so, he placed all the resources and riches of these lands directly under his control to fulfill his personal ambitions and desires. To facilitate the management of the country, he aimed to introduce modern administrative and organizational systems to promote development and progress in Sudan in line with his objectives.

In the early days of Mohamed Ali Pasha's rule in the country, administrative matters were recorded by clerks who were sent to Sudan to carry out writing tasks. Each administrative division had a number of clerks, predominantly Copts and Levantines, who used Arabic and Turkish in official correspondence. After the death of Mohamed Ali Pasha, the use of the Turkish language declined in the country, and Arabic became the official language, further expanding during the reign of Khedive Ismail.⁽¹⁾ During Khedive Ismail's era, Sudanese people were given various administra-

tive positions, including managerial roles, after their positions had previously been limited to tribal leadership and simple clerical roles within the state administration.⁽²⁾

To develop administrative and writing matters in Sudan, a printing press known as the “Hajar Press” was sent, believed to date back to the rule of Muhammad Ali Pasha. This was intended to facilitate administrative and office tasks. By examining the printing presses that entered Egypt during the era of Muhammad Ali Pasha, it becomes evident that several presses were brought from Paris. Among them, it was possible that the Hajar Press, which was sent to Sudan, was of French origin. This is indicated by tracing the movement of lithographic presses equipped with type, which were made in France and brought to Egypt by order of Muhammad Ali Pasha.

What reinforces the hypothesis of the entry of industry Lithograph Press into Sudan during the lifetime of Muhammad Ali Pasha (1805-1848) is the mention made by Father Luigi Montori as that took place in Khartoum in 1843. In a letter to one of his colleagues dated September 23, 1843, he described his journey from Abyssinia to Khartoum. The letter, was written in Italian, stated that Khartoum had a printing press that published government news and maps.⁽³⁾

From the account of Father Luigi Montori, we can conclude that the printing industry was introduced to Sudan during the reign of Muhammad Ali Pasha before 1843. It contributed to printing government supplies, notebooks, and other tasks, while also producing a number of maps that we suspect were drawn by travelers and explorers who visited Su-

dan during the period of the Egyptian Pashas and Khedives. The number of these explorers increased during the reign of Khedive Abbas and Ismail.

These maps were part of the movement of European travelers and explorers who regularly visited Sudan throughout the rule of the Egyptian Pashas and Khedives. They were particularly keen on creating detailed and accurate maps of Sudan, which included the geography of the area, its inhabitants, resources, wealth, rivers, and other riches that this country enjoys. Notable figures mentioned among those who drew maps of Sudan during the Pasha and Khedive periods include Muhammad Bey al-Daftardar and the British officer Stewart. Additionally, there is a detailed map of the roads in Sudan prepared by the Austrian consulate in Alexandria in 1856, along with other travelers and explorers who mapped the Sudan.

The Amiri Printing Press (lithographic Press) in Khartoum:

The lithographic Press was known in Sudan during the rule of the Pashas and Khedives as the Amiri Printing Press. A paper manufacturing facility was attached to it, and Ibrahim Afandi Ahmed, an Egyptian national, was appointed to manage the press, along with a group of assistants and technicians brought from Egypt to oversee its operations. Ibrahim Afandi passed away in Khartoum and was succeeded by his son, Hassan Bey al-Matba'ji.

The Amiri Printing Press and its facilities successfully sourced their supplies from within Sudan and did not require imports from Egypt. The government also succeeded

in printing revenue stamps at the press, which contributed significantly to generating income, as these stamps were linked to all civil and commercial transactions. The government decided to formalize these transactions on the stamped papers.⁽⁴⁾

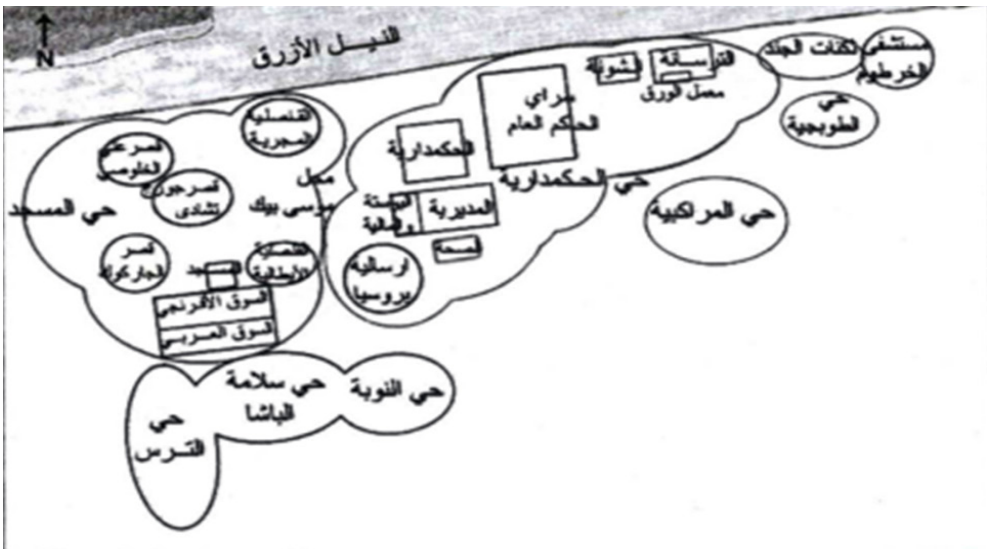
There is a consensus among specialists and researchers in Sudanese history regarding the importance of the Hajar Press, as it is considered one of the key assets of the Pasha and Khedive administrations in Khartoum. Alongside the paper manufacturing facility that met the government's daily needs for paper and notebooks. The government organized all its affairs using these papers, and complaints were not heard, nor were any government transactions conducted without this stamped papers.⁽⁵⁾

The Amiri Printing Press (Hajar) was attached to the military arsenal, which was located at the Sudanese Survey Authority, which is now part of the Ministry of Defense, and east of the current government building (the Presidential Palace) in Khartoum. The management of the arsenal included the printing press, a large paper storage facility, and a workshop for binding books and notebooks.⁽⁶⁾

The Khedive government regularly printed accounting books, revenue stamps, and all necessary publications at this press, achieving significant success in these endeavors. In addition to printing and binding, the press was also responsible for maintaining the government's stock of writing supplies and distributing them to various units.⁽⁷⁾



How Lithographic machine works
 لوحة توضح كيفية العمل في مطبعة الحجر



Map showing the location of the military arsenal where the printing press was located – by courtesy Saad Mohamed Ahmed Suleiman.

The military arsenal occupied a large area due to its importance and included the Amiri workshops, which encompassed all industrial crafts of that time, such as mechanics, blacksmithing, metalworking, and carpentry. The arsenal was known among the people of Khartoum as the “Industrial Zone.”⁽⁸⁾

Governor Ismail Ayoub⁽⁹⁾ took interest in the printing press in Khartoum and worked on its development by attaching it to a paper factory that helped meet the needs of the government. It is noteworthy that the paper produced by the factory attached to the press covered all daily requirements of the government offices, institutions, and traders in the state.

After the Khedive rule ended in Sudan following the liberation of Khartoum on January 26, 1885, by Mahdist forces, the remaining paper became the main resource for the Mahdist state. The Mahdist government could not import any quantities of paper from outside Sudan due to the policies adopted by Khalifa Abdullah, as well as the blockade imposed by Britain and Egypt, alongside the country’s involvement in numerous internal and external conflicts, which made it difficult to obtain paper from abroad.

Governor Ismail Pasha Ayoub’s interest in the printing press stemmed from his personal capabilities, his interest in various fields of knowledge and sciences, and his proficiency in several languages. The press facilitated his administration as needed, and the presence of a paper factory complemented the work of the press, enabling it to perform its functions effectively.



Printing Papers



Khedive Ismail

The Amiri Printing Press during Gordon Pasha's Era:

When the Mahdist Revolution broke out in Sudan (1881-1885), the printing press was utilized by the government to print pamphlets and propaganda messages attacking Imam al-Mahdi. After the Mahdist forces tightened their siege on the capital, Khartoum, in 1884, Gordon Pasha used the press to print financial notes known as "Gordon Notes" or "Gordon Bonds" as a substitute for coin currency. Additionally, permissions and Gordon's diaries were printed.⁽¹⁰⁾

The Gordon Bonds, or the currency issued by Gordon in Khartoum and printed at the Hajar Press, were promissory notes due in six months after issuance. This was aimed at preserving the local economy due to the siege imposed by Mahdist forces on the city. Gordon intended to use this currency to pay the salaries of the garrisons that were in dire need of funds. In a letter dated April 26, 1884, he stated that he issued currency notes worth 2,500 pounds, redeemable within six months from the treasury in Khartoum or Cairo, with denominations ranging from 1 piaster to 5,000 piasters, in addition to 50 pounds.⁽¹¹⁾



Gordon Pasha



Gordon Pasha Bonds printed at the lithographic Press in 1884



خريطة مدينة الخرطوم في نهاية العهد التركي كما رواها سلاطين

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ١٥ - قصر الحكمارية | ١ - مخزن البارود |
| ١٦ - القنصلية النمساوية | ٢ - حلة توتي |
| ١٧ - البوستان والمالية | ٣ - قبة الشيخ خوجلي |
| ١٨ - المديرية | ٤ - طابية الشرق |
| ١٩ - الصحة | ٥ - قصر راسخ |
| ٢٠ - الكنيسة الكاثوليكية | ٦ - حلة بري |
| ٢١ - كنيسة الاقباط | ٧ - طابية بري |
| ٢٢ - حدائق | ٨ - مستشفى الخرطوم |
| ٢٣ - طابية القرن | ٩ - مخازن سلاح |
| ٢٤ - حلة الكلاكة | ١٠ - مصنع خرطوش ومهمات عسكرية |
| ٢٥ - حلة شجرة محوبك | ١١ - القنصلية |
| ٢٦ - القنصلية الفرنسية | ١٢ - الترسة |
| ٢٧ - القنصلية الإيطالية | ١٣ - الشوكة |
| | ١٤ - السراي |

Map showing the neighborhoods of Khartoum at the end of the Khedive's rule - by Courtesy of Sa'ad Mohamed Ahmed Suleiman.

Notes

- (1) Bashir Koko Hamida, *Safahat min Al-Turkiyah wal-Mahdiyyah*, (n.d.), (n.t.), p. 48.
- (2) Bashir Koko Hamida, *Ibid*, p. 56.
- (3) Badreddin Hamid Al-Hashimi, *Al-Khartoum: Wasf Madinah Mutaghayyirah*, J6, *Ibid* pp. 95-98.
- (4) Mohamed Mahgoub Malik, *Al-Khidmah Al-Diniyah fi Dawlat Al-Mahdiyyah*, *Al-Khartoum Magazine, Journal of Arab-African Culture*, Issue 8, Year 2, May 1967, p. 35.
- (5) Mahgoub Mohamed Saleh, *Al-Sahafa Al-Sudaniya fi Nisf Qarn (1903-1953)*, J1, *Markaz Al-Dirasat Al-Sudaniya*, Cairo, 1996, p. 9.
- (6) Mahgoub Mohamed Saleh. *Ibid* p. 9.
- (7) Osman Sid Khalil, *Ibid*, p. 216.
- (8) Saad Mohamed Ahmed Suleiman, *Al-Khartoum 'Abr Al-'Uqood: Al-Nash'ah wal-Tatawwur (1821-1970)*, T2, *Hay'at Al-Khartoum lil-Thaqafah wal-Nashr*, Dar Al-Sadad, Khartoum, 2006, p. 39.
- (9) Ismail Pasha Ayub: Gordon Pasha described him as "Ismail Ayub from Kurdistan, originally a soldier in Muhammad Said's army, an excellent musician who learned French and German. According to Gordon's opinion, Ismail Pasha Ayub was the best governor in Sudan's history." He held the position of Interior Minister in Egypt and wrote a letter about the ineffectiveness of using the (kurbaj) in Egypt, which was famously used in Sudan when he was governor from 1873 to 1877. General Gordon's diaries during the Siege of Khartoum (September 10 to December 14, 1884), translated into Arabic by Faisal Mohamed Ahmed Suleiman, *Hay'at Al-Khartoum lil-Thaqafah wal-Nashr*, Khartoum, 2018, p. 262.

- (10) Mazen Miri, Nuqud Hisar Al-Khartoum, Al-Muqta'ni Al-Arabi, published article, 5/1/2022.
- (11) Mohamed Mahgoub Malik, Al-Khidmah Al-Diniyah fi Dawlat Al-Mahdiah, Al-Khartoum Magazine, Journal of Arab-African Culture, Issue 8, Year 2, May 1967, p. 35.

3

The Lithographic Printing Press in the Mahdist State (1302-1316 AH / 1885-1898 AD)

Chapter Three

The Lithographic Printing Press in the Mahdist State (1302-1316 AH / 1885-1898 AD)

After the liberation of Khartoum on January 26, 1885, and the elimination of Gordon Pasha, Khalifa Abdullah took an interest in the printing press. He issued strict orders to preserve it and subsequently moved it to the new capital of the state, Omdurman, in 1307 AH, relocating it from its site in the military arsenal in Khartoum to the (Bait Alamana)-House of Trust. He called upon the workers who had been employed at the press during the Khedive's rule in Sudan (1821-1885) and also sought the expertise of experienced individuals in the field of printing.⁽¹⁾

The press was incorporated into the House of Trust and became one of its departments, which included the Printing Department and the Camel Corps (owners of camels). The printing press was one of the most important sections linked to the postal system, as the Mahdist state relied heavily on it. It printed numerous publications and pamphlets during the Mahdist period, such as the Manual of the Mahdi and various important letters and communications drafted by Khalifa Abdullah. The Camel Corps served as the backbone of the postal movement in the Mahdist state due to their speed and ability to reach various regions of Sudan.⁽²⁾



Imam Mohamed Ahmed Al-Mahdi

The lithographic Printing Press contributed to translating the ideas and orders of the Mahdist leaders into written and printed words, which were subsequently disseminated to the princes, military leaders, and district workers throughout the Mahdist State. Over a period of fifteen years, the

supporters of the Mahdi were able to print a large number of volumes of books and various writings, as well as a substantial number of letters and documents. Over time, they managed to master the production of publications from the press, despite facing numerous technical and other challenges.⁽³⁾

Due to the importance of the printing press for the new state and Khalifa Abdullah's awareness of this significance, he issued a decision to affiliate it with the House of Trust in Omdurman, one of the most important administrative repositories in the Mahdist State, where all state-related tasks were stored. It was under the direct supervision of Khalifa Abdullah and his brother, Prince Ya'qub (known as Jarab al-Ra'y-Think Tank). Khalifa Abdullah consistently devoted attention to the House of Trust and regularly monitored it in coordination with Prince Ya'qub.



Khalifa Abdullah bin Sayyid Muhammad Turshin – from Wikipedia

The Mahdist State, in addition to the Hajar Printing Press, seized large quantities of paper that were stored in government warehouses in Khartoum, as well as more paper found in the houses of merchants. Orders were reproduced at the printing press, and the Mahdist State sought to enlist anyone knowledgeable in printing or binding to work at the

press. Prince Mukhtar Badi, who was from the Dongola city of Bara, became the manager of the press. It wasn't long before the press was operational, producing hundreds of copies with a unified format and agreed-upon text, which were often distributed by postal workers under the supervision of Khalifa Abdullah.⁽⁴⁾

Khalifa Abdullah was able to benefit from a group of scribes and accountants, including Copts, Sudanese, and others, who became the real support for the state in managing its administrative and economic affairs. This group successfully managed the administrative and accounting work efficiently, leveraging the extensive experience they had accumulated during their time under the previous Khedive regime.⁽⁵⁾

Among the writers who became known for their work at the printing press with Prince Mukhtar Badi were Muhammad Zahni, Hassan Sala, Muhammad Amin, and Omar Al-Azhari. They used to receive both in-kind and cash salaries.

By the month of Sha'ban in the year 1303 AH 1885 AD, Khalifa Abdullah issued orders to operate the printing press, which comprised six printing units (lithographic) that had not functioned since the liberation of Khartoum. In the same month, the press manager, Mukhtar Mahmoud, sent an inquiry to the supervisor of the press, Ibrahim Al-Matba'ji, asking about the press's capabilities. The message stated: "We request your clarification on whether it is possible to clean four or five stones to print those publications, and if it can be done, could each stone operate independently? If that is possible, please inform us what is needed for the gather-

ing of the workers and scribes. Can this be printed before Ramadan, and is it possible to print the salary along with all the publications before Ramadan?”

By the year 1304/1886, the press succeeded in printing many publications and books, as evidenced by the quantity of paper consumed during that year. ⁽⁷⁾

According to Ms. Ni'mat, the curator of the Khalifa House Museum, the museum possesses about forty-nine stones belonging to the Hajar Printing Press, which contributed to increasing the output of the press across its various branches. ⁽⁸⁾



“One of the special plates of the lithographic press in Omdurman – by courtesy of Naamat Abdel Jabbar and others.”

Publications of the Lithographic Printing Press in the Mahdist State:

In 1307 AH / 1889 AD, the Amiri printing press (lithographic Printing Press) printed a compilation containing several publications written by Imam al-Mahdi in favor of Khalifa Abdullah. The purpose of printing these publications was to affirm Khalifa Abdullah's status after the tension that arose between him and the Ashraf following the liberation of Al-Obeid and Khartoum, serving as a response to the attacks by the Ashraf against him. Subsequent editions of this compilation were released, and by the month of Ramadan in the year 1314 AH / 1896 AD, a second compilation was issued, containing several publications written by al-Mahdi regarding Khalifa Abdullah and his position, including various letters directed to him. This was in response to the Ashraf's renewed conflict with Khalifa Abdullah.

Prince Ya'qub, who oversaw Bait Alamal in Omdurman, was responsible for issuing expenditure approvals. Requests for disbursements were presented to him, and he would write to the treasurer for approval. The treasurer would then write to the cashier responsible for disbursement. As for the salaries in Bait Almal, they were as follows: the treasurer received fifty riyals, while the writers earned eight riyals. In the month of Dhul-Qi'dah in the year 1314 AH / 1896 AD, the central treasury in Omdurman disbursed one thousand and forty-nine riyals to the Jihad forces, and one thousand five hundred and ninety riyals to the artillery workers and the stationed troops in Dongola and the Taa'isha. The disbursements also included payments for ammunition workers, postal employees, muezzins, court staff, and the printing press. ⁽¹¹⁾

It is evident from the above that the expenses of the press were paid from the central treasury and under the supervision of Prince Yaqub, who issued spending orders regularly, highlighting the press's status and importance in the state.



*Lithographic press (Khalifa House Museum)
by courtesy of Naamat Abdel Jabbar and others.*



Another image of the lithographic press (Khalifa House Museum) – by courtesy of Na'amat Abdel Jabbar and others."

طبعة الحجر

وجهدت طبعة الجوهريه داخل بيت الأمانة وببدران الإبراهيم الصرية بعد
فتح الخرطوم استوردت هذه الطبعة الجوهريه الصنية لمقاومة متطلبات الإبراهيم وافتتاح
مدرسة الخرطوم وطبعت عليها ناسخ الكرسية ضد دعوة المهدي الأولى كما طبعت عليها
تقوداً أو أذونات وعند ما فتحت مدرسة الخرطوم وبينت أم ديان نقلت هذه الطبعة إلى بيت
الأمانة بانتم يانه وخصص لها فريش بقوم بإدارتها وتسهيلها على رأسه أمين وكيل الطبعة
مختار محمد باري وكان لها كاتب تيسر لمرابرا العيسم الطبعي ولها عمال آخرون وبها قسم للتجليد
برأسه الجاه السبرني أنا إمداد النور من ومراجعة لستودات والإشراف على طباعتها
سنة 1302 هـ الفاسم أحمد الفاسم بعاونه المرابرا العيسم الجاه وأحمد على قاضي الإسدوم وكانت
إدارتها شيع بيتنا لال . طبعت عليها منشورات الإمام المهدي ورأته كما طبعت عليها رسائل
هـ سيد القباري رسالة إبراهيم العوام رسالة الشيخ الحسين إبراهيم الزهرا وعدرسه
الكتب والرسائل الخاصة بالعبادات والشرع والفقه الإسلامي . طبعت على هذه الطبعة
منشورات وإبذارات الخليفة عبدالله إلى كل من المهدي بمصر والسلطان العثماني بالإستان
والملك فكرياً ملكة إنجلترا وإلى أهل سنغافيه وشيبيبا ومرأكس بجانب الرسائل التي
أرسلت قبلها إلى هنري بلبيا وإلى الجاه . وطبعت بها العديد من الرسائل التي أرسلها
الخليفة عبدالله إلى مختلف مناطق السودان تناولت شتى أمور الدولة . لعبت هذه الطبعة
دوراً كبيراً ومتميزاً فقد كانت وسيلة ثقافية وإعلامية للإستعمار وسلاماً كانت تمسكاً لبيد
وترسل إلى مناطق لعمليات للجهاد وكذلك كانت منشورات قطع ونزيع على كل الجبهات فذل
يقول تأثيرها عمه تأثير الجبريس وكانت هي الوسيلة الرسمية لإعلام رسمي ونشر التقارير
الرسمية ورسيلة الإتصال بيه القيادة والراكز والقاعدة العريضة . وأذن كذلك دورها
الهام في الحياة الفكرية والثقافية وأثرت الدعوة الجهادية لدولة المهديتة بالمعديتة
الأفكار والأسس النظرية

Sign board about the lithographic press that was in the first exhibition
of the Khalifa House Museum in Omdurman
by courtesy of Naamat Omar Abdel Jabbar and others.

Press Operations:

First, the work of the press was limited to supplying writing materials such as ink and paper to the labour units and administrative divisions. The officials in the treasury would refer the requests from the units and labour divisions to the press after obtaining approval from Khalifa Abdullah. The press's treasurer would then distribute the materials according to the requests and approvals.

For example, in 1886 (1302 AH), an order was issued to supply a bottle of ink for use at the telegraph station in Khartoum Bahri near the Rasikh Palace. In 1887, Khalifa Abdullah noticed that supplies from the press were being issued without his permission. Therefore, he ordered an inquiry into the press clerk. The press treasurer, Mahmoud, approached the press clerk, Ibrahim Al-Matba'ji, and informed him that the Khalifa had prohibited opening the press's stores without his order. He had been informed that they had been opened, and paper, ink, skins, and other items had been taken.

Ibrahim Al-Matba'ji explained that he opened the press after requesting permission from the treasury clerk to obtain approval from the Khalifa for the items he was asking for. However, the clerk told him, "... those restrictions were during the Kafra (infidels) period and at the Mahdia they were not..."

As a result, orders were issued by Khalifa Abdullah to inventory the press, which included the following:

1,750 skins of yellow Haur leather from Hijaz

671 skins of red Haur leather from Hijaz

12 skins of Egyptian boumout

5 white skins

22 pieces of velvet

All these tasks were part of the binding process at the press, and there were items in the press that the treasurer could not make inventory of them due to their abundance, such as white paper and notebooks. The inventory conducted for the press on the 29th of Jumada al-Thani, 1303 AH / 1885AD, paved the way for its operation in printing matters. ⁽¹²⁾

One of the most important administrative decisions issued by Khalifa Abdullah in the history of the Mahdist State, printed at the lithographic press in Omdurman, was the decision regarding Khalifa Muhammad Sharif, the fourth Khalifa of the Mahdi, after the Ashraf Revolution on the 2nd of Sha'ban, 1309 AH / 2nd of March, 1892. Khalifa Abdullah intended to eliminate Khalifa Muhammad Sharif had he not shown repentance. Therefore, he was sentenced to imprisonment. Among the judges who ruled against Khalifa Muhammad Sharif were Ahmad Ali, the Islamic judge, Sayyid Maki Ismail, Abdul Qadir Wad Umm Mariyum, Ismail Abdul Qadir Al-Kurdafani, Muhammad Al-Badawi, Maki Abu Haraz, and Judge Hussein Jazw. The number of judges reached forty-three.⁽¹³⁾ Most of the scholars and judges who signed the ruling were those who had accompanied the Mahdi during his lifetime. The ruling issued against Khalifa Muhammad Sharif was printed at the lithographic press and distributed to all the directorates.



A Copy of the Quran from the possessions of Khalifa Abdullah, taken by Kitchener after the fall of Omdurman and gifted to Queen Victoria, is part of the British royal collection of Queen Elizabeth II.

The lithographic press operates by applying an image drawn with oil, wax, or grease onto a flat, smooth surface of lithographic limestone. The stone is treated with a mixture of acids and gum Arabic. An oil-saturated stone may be used to repel water and assist in the adhesion of ink only to the original drawing or text. The ink is then transferred onto a blank sheet, resulting in a printed page.⁽¹⁴⁾

Among the most significant letters printed at the lithographic press are a collection of invitation letters sent to various regions of Sudan during the life of Imam Al-Mahdi, as well as to external locations, including those addressed by Al-Mahdi to Egypt, the regions of Chinguetti, and Nigeria. After Al-Mahdi's death, several publications were printed

during Khalifa Abdullah's reign, including warnings sent to Queen Victoria of Britain, the Governor of Egypt, and the Ottoman Sultan. The printing of important letters continued at the lithographic press until the end of the Mahdist state. The National Archives in Khartoum stands as a testament to the volume of letters and publications issued and received throughout the history of the Mahdist revolution and state⁽¹⁵⁾

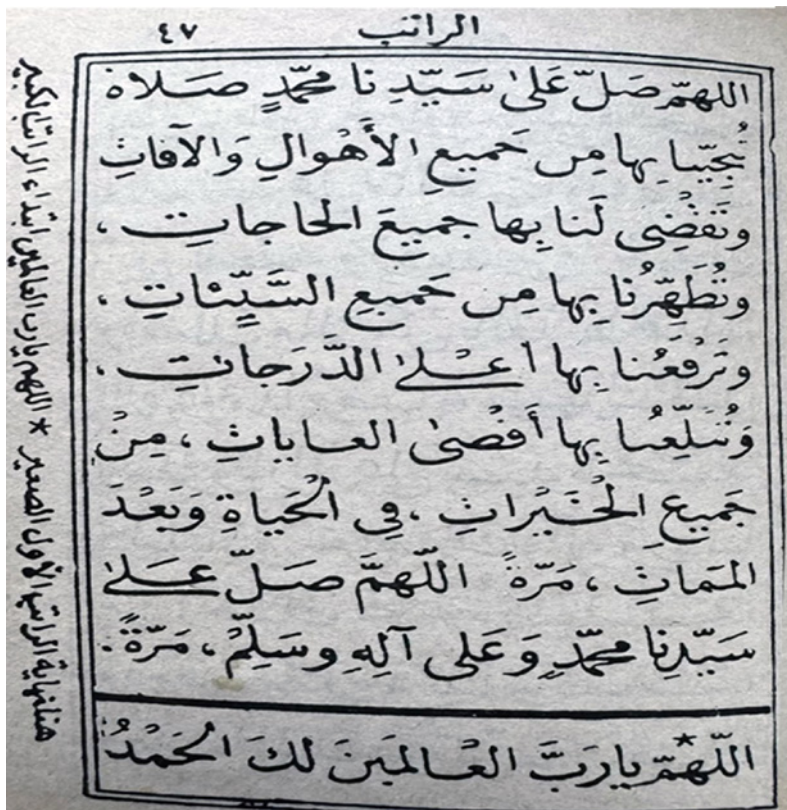
Among the publications that the lithographic press managed to print were:

The Ratib (manual) of Imam Al- Mahadi:

The ratib (manual) is a collection of Quranic verses, supplications, and remembrances compiled by Imam Al-Mahdi in a book consisting of one hundred and twenty-five small-sized pages. It is read aloud in groups known as "Ratib Circles." A person can also read the ratib individually, and it is recited before specific portions of the Quran and after the Fajr and Asr prayers. The first Quranic verses included in the ratib were from Surah Al-An'am. It is believed that the ratib was established by Al-Mahdi before he announced his call.

The first copies of the ratib were handwritten, commissioned by Al-Mahdi for Ibrahim Al-Dalil. The first printed edition was produced at the lithographic press in Omdurman a few days after Al-Mahdi's death, specifically in the month of Ramadan in 1302 AH/1884. Subsequently, there were ten editions throughout the history of the Mahdist State, with the last edition published in 1315 AH/1897, also from the lithographic press.⁽¹⁶⁾

From the above, we find that the ratib of Imam Al-Mahdi received attention and care from Al-Mahdi himself during his lifetime, as he commissioned Ibrahim Al-Dalil to write several copies of it. After Al-Mahdi's death and the liberation of Khartoum, Khalifa Abdullah took on the responsibility of caring for the ratib and printing it at the lithographic press in ten editions. These various editions were continuously distributed to the leaders and princes of the state. Many letters exchanged between the Khalifa in Omdurman and the leaders and princes of the Mahdist state indicate their ongoing requests for copies of the ratib to be sent to them in the different regions of the Mahdist territories.



Page from the Ratib of Al-Mahdi:

Publications of Khalifa Abdullah:

These are the letters, warnings, and messages sent by Khalifa Abdullah to Queen Victoria, the Khedive of Egypt, the Ottoman Sultan, the people of Hijaz, the regions of Chinguetti, and others. Additionally, there were internal letters to the princes and governors, all printed at the lithographic press in Omdurman.

Works of Sheikh Al-Hussein Al-Zahra:

Among them is the book "Ayat Al-Bayyinat fi Dhuhur Mahdi Al-Zaman" (The Clear Signs of the Appearance of the Mahdi of the Time).

"Kitab Nasihat Al-Awwam." "Advice to the Masses" by Ahmad Al-Awwam, a preacher of the Arab Revolution who was exiled to Khartoum. He published his book as advice for both the general public and the faithful of Islam.

Sheikh Ismail Abdul Qadir Al-Kordofani:

The lithographic press in Omdurman published two books by Sheikh Ismail Al-Kurdifani:

"Sa'adat Al-Mustahdi bi Sirat Al-Imam Al-Mahdi" (The Happiness of the One Seeking Guidance in the Biography of Imam Al-Mahdi).

"Al-Tiraz Al-Manqush bi Dhikra Qatl Yuhanna Malik Al-Habash" (The Engraved Design in Memory of the Killing of King John of the Abyssinians).

"Risalat Al-Hassan Sa'ad Al-Abadi" (The Message of Hassan Sa'ad Al-Abadi).⁽¹⁷⁾

“Waqa’i’ Uthman Digna fi Sharq Al-Sudan” (The Events of Uthman Digna in Eastern Sudan).

“Al-Rasa’il Al-Amma wa Al-Khassa, lil-Aamma wa Al-A’yān” (General and Private Letters for the Public and Notables).

“Al-Ahkam Al-Fiqhiyyah” (Legal Rulings).

“Risalat Al-Awwam, Manshur Man’ Al-Zulm lil-Khalifa Abdullah” (Message to the Masses, Publication Prohibiting Injustice by Khalifa Abdullah).

“Kitab Al-Zawjah fi Al-Mirath” (The Book of the Wife in Inheritance).

“Kitab Al-Nasa’ih Al-Mursalā ila Al-Jihat Al-Bahriyah” (Book of Advice Sent to Coastal Regions).

“Manshur Tarak Al-Asliha Al-Nariya wa Ghayr Dhālik min Al-Manshurāt” (Publication on the Abandonment of Firearms and Other Publications).⁽¹⁸⁾

Writers of the Mahdi’s Councils:

Al-Tahir Al-Tatayi was commissioned by the Khalifa to write the book “Majalis Al-Mahdi, Minutes of the Mahadi” in which he recorded the sayings and renowned judgments of the Mahdi, as well as what he cited. Others, such as Abkar Al-Alun, followed his example and produced works on these minutes. Many works were compiled in Omdurman, drawing their content from the printed publications and original documents discovered from time to time in the homes of writers and princes. Awad Al-Karim Al-Muslimi

wrote a collection titled “Al-Fuyudat,” which consists of the Mahdi’s letters in Omdurman.⁽¹⁹⁾

Moreover, the lithographic press played a significant role in advancing intellectual movements in the Mahdist state; it printed numerous books, publications, letters, and documents. The release of printed parts of the publications was a breakthrough in the field of classification, which was previously unknown to many supporters at that time. Initially, they would copy whatever was requested of them on whatever paper they had available.⁽²⁰⁾

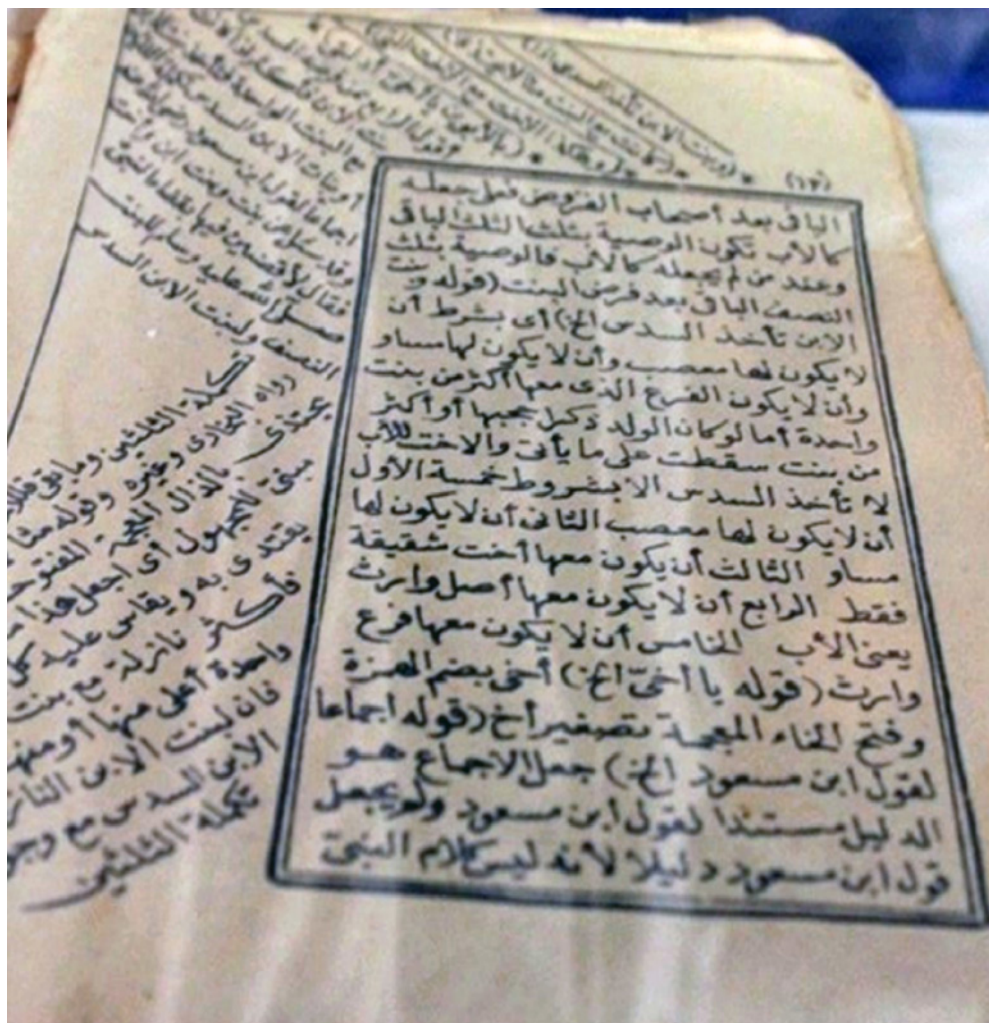
In addition to these publications, the lithographic press printed many poetic works for supporters of the Mahdiyya, along with some praises that glorified the Mahdi and the Mahdiyya. The press was one of the important service institutions in the Mahdist state, providing significant services to the state, and its products are still available to specialists, researchers, and those interested in the history of Sudan during its various periods: the Ottoman, Mahdist, and condominium rule.



*The Lithographic Press at the Museum of Khalifa Abdullah
in Omdurman – by courtesy of Nimat Abdul Jabbar and Others*

Despite the large quantities of paper that the Mahdist state acquired from the Turkish-Egyptian rule, which greatly aided in documenting everything, it faced a shortage of paper. This was particularly challenging since there was no other source of paper except what the Mahdiyya seized from the Pashas and the Khedive. Khalifa Abdullah emphasized the necessity of preserving it, ensuring that it was not wasted, and that its stores would only be opened with his special permission. The consumption of paper in the Mahdist state

becomes evident, especially in the month of Safar in the year (1316 AH / 1898 AD), when the Directorate of Construction, which oversaw the state's buildings, reported that it had consumed fifty sheets of paper, while the military arsenal consumed two hundred sheets.⁽²¹⁾



Patterns of Publications from the Lithographic Press During the Mahdist Period – by courtesy of Naamat Omar Abdul Jabbar and Others

Press Staff:

In the year 1307AH/1889, the number of workers at the press reached ten craftsmen with their assistants, eleven “technicians,” four bookbinders, and six of their assistants, not including those who were hired to work at the press but fled from their jobs.⁽²²⁾

Dr. Bashir Muhyi Al-Din mentioned that the lithographic press employed several staff members, including:

- **Press Manager:**

The position was equivalent to that of a prince, and it was held by Mukhtar Mahmoud Badi, assisted by Hassan Sati.

- **Press Workers:**

Among the workers was Muhammad Zahana, the chief worker at the press. One of the staff who worked in book-binding was Al-Jak Al-Siyufi, who was the head of the binding department.

- **Proofreaders and Editors:**

Among the proofreaders who worked as editors and reviewers of the publications at the press was Omar Al-Azhari.

The initial publications released from the press were characterized by some errors due to haste and urgency in publishing. However, these mistakes were later rectified.⁽²³⁾

The Press Warehouse Manager:

In addition to the group of employees mentioned at the press, there was Ibrahim Al-Matbaji, who was the chief writer at the press. The task of preparing, reviewing, and overseeing the printing of texts was assigned to Abu Al-Qasim Ahmad Hashim, assisted in this task by Al-Mudathir Ibrahim Al-Hijaz and Ahmad Ali Qadi Al-Islam. The press served as the official media of the Mahdist state and became the sole means of communication between the leaders, princes, and Khalifa Abdullah.

Abu Al-Qasim Ahmad Hashim was the primary person responsible for reviewing the texts approved for printing, followed by Al-Mudathir Al-Hijaz in second place. Among those who played a role in reviewing the press texts was Qadi Al-Islam Ahmad Ali. The press printed a substantial number of books, letters, and other publications.⁽²⁴⁾

Regarding how Ibrahim Al-Matbaji joined the lithographic press during the Khalifa's reign, he clarified that he had not worked at the press during the Khedive's rule in Sudan. He stated, "...but after the conquest of Khartoum, when the situation required the gathering of the press staff and due to the early death of our brother who was overseeing it, I was asked about my knowledge of its operations. Given that it was originally our craft and my familiarity with part of its work, I introduced them to it in front of the Treasurer, and at that time I was authorized to take it over..."⁽²⁵⁾

Paper Shortage in the Mahdist State:

Since 1314 AH / 1896 AD, the Mahdist State faced a noticeable shortage of paper used for writing letters and correspondence. This is evidenced by a letter from Abdul Rahim Salem Abu Daqil to Prince Yaqub, requesting paper to assist him in writing letters due to his limited supply. Paper in the Mahdist state was susceptible to various climatic factors such as rain, high humidity, and occasional fires.⁽²⁶⁾

When the paper used for correspondence ran out for the Mahdist princes Abdul Majid Anif and Madani Hussein, they wrote to Prince Yaqub seeking a supply of paper. They had previously written to the Treasury but received no response to their request, prompting them to reach out to Prince Yaqub once again.⁽²⁷⁾ It is clear that when Prince Yaqub sensed the shortage of paper, he took measures to conserve its use significantly and reduced the distribution of paper to the princes and military leaders in the various provinces of the Mahdist state.

The press in Omdurman suffered from a paper shortage, a problem that also affected many units of the state reliant on this important resource, such as the princes, provincial leaders, military commanders, and the Treasury in its various branches, as all these entities required paper continuously for recording, preserving, and writing.

Mohammed Ibrahim Abu Salim mentioned in his book "The Intellectual Movement in the Mahdist State" that the Mahdist state consumed large quantities of paper since its establishment. In 1315AH/1897, the amount of paper allocated

to the accounting department was 150 sheets. He noted that the Directorate of Construction, which oversees the state's engineering, consumed 50 sheets of paper in the month of Safar 1316 AH / 1898 AD. The Treasury's deduction and addition department consumed 30 sheets, the military arsenal consumed 200 sheets, and two steamers consumed 20 sheets.

The performance of the press was significantly affected due to the severe shortage of paper. In addition to this shortage, the press faced challenges stemming from the lack of loyalty among some of its workers to the Mahdist state. Most of them were mixed-race individuals opposed to the Mahdiyya, who wasted the press's supplies, including ink, paper, and other tools used in the press. They also tampered with the printing plates. However, their actions were addressed after being monitored by Khalifa Abdullah and Prince Yaqub, who managed to curb their misconduct. ⁽²⁸⁾

From the above, we find that the press was a point of manipulation by the opponents of the Mahdist state, who extended their hands to waste paper and ink. However, the Khalifa's watchful eyes were upon them, leading to the punishment of those who manipulated resources, which positively impacted the subsequent operations of the press.

The press performed its role effectively within the Mahdist State, despite the challenges it faced. The quality of the printed materials was also good, but according to Abu Salim, the quantities produced were limited due to the small size of the press, the difficulty of lithography printing, as well as the shortage of paper and the limited number of beneficia-

ries from the press, which included senior leaders, princes, provincial officials, and scholars in the Mahdist State.

Its production significantly decreased after 1304AH/ 1886, as it only printed the salary and classifications of orders related to Khalifa Abdullah. This decline was attributed to the lack of a publishing plan among the press workers. Despite its role in the Mahdist state, its impact was weak due to the scarcity of printed materials and their limited distribution. Groups of writers in the Mahdist state attempted to fill this gap and cover the deficiencies. ⁽²⁹⁾

The author differs with Abu Salim regarding the limited output of the press. By examining the attached table at the end of the book, which details the press's production of books, letters, publications, and various notices throughout the Mahdist period and before, we find that the press succeeded in supplying the Mahdist community with numerous publications in various forms. These contributions significantly helped preserve the heritage of this period and enabled specialists and researchers in the history of the Mahdist state to learn about many events and situations through the press's publications.

We could refer to it as the "Jamla Al-Asara" (the camel that works continuously to accelerate the tools) because it did not cease to produce printed material throughout its history, which spanned from the days of the Pashas, through the Khedive period, and into the early years of British rule.

Notes

- (1) Mahgoub Mohamed Saleh, *Ibid*, p. 9.
- (2) Mohamed Ibrahim Abu Salim, *Al-Taba'a fi Al-Mahdia, Al-Khartoum Magazine, Journal of Arab-African Culture, Issue 12, Year 2, September 1967*, p. 8.
- (3) Mohamed Ibrahim Abu Salim, *Al-Haraka Al-Fikriya fi Al-Mahdia, T3, Al-Matba'a Al-Jami'a Al-Khartoum, Dar Jami'at Al-Khartoum li Al-Nashr, 1989*, p. 154.
- (4) Mohamed Ibrahim Abu Salim, *Al-Haraka Al-Fikriya fi Al-Mahdia, Marja' Sabiq*, p. 86.
- (5) Bashir Koko Hamida, *Ibid*, p. 226.
- (6) Taj Al-Sir Osman, *Kayfa Kanat Ashkal Al-Mu'ardah lil-Mahdia 3/3, Al-Rakuba, February 6, 2024*.
- (7) Mahgoub Mohamed Saleh, *Ibid*, pp. 10-11.
- (8) Interview conducted by the author with Nimat Mohamed Al-Hassan Abu Reida, Curator of the Khalifa House Museum, on December 17, 2024.
- (9) Mohamed Ibrahim Abu Salim, *Al-Taba'a fi Al-Mahdia, Marja' Sabiq*, p. 10.
- (10) Mohamed Said Al-Qudhal, *Al-Siyasah Al-Iqtisadiyah lil-Dawlah Al-Mahdiyyah, ...*, p. 188.
- (11) Gabriel Weberq, *Al-Sudan fi 'Ahd Wanjit, Al-Idarah Al-Ingleziyah Al-Masriyah fi Al-Sudan (1899-1916) (Translation) Mohamed Al-Khidr Mohamed Salem, Publisher, Kadogli, Capital of Sudanese Heritage, Matba'at Tarbil, 2015*, p. 531.
- (12) Mahgoub Mohamed Saleh, *Marja' Sabiq*, pp. 9-10.
- (13) Ali Mohamed Ali, *Al-Qadha fi Dawlat Al-Mahdia, Markaz Al-Dirasat Al-Sudaniya, Cairo, 2002*, p. 154.

- (14) Lithography, Wikipedia, Ibid.
- (15) Taj Al-Sir Osman Babou, *Tabia'a wa Khusais Al-Dawlah fi Al-Mahdia*.
- (16) Ma'a Abu Salim, Article about Ratim Imam Almahdi published in *Al-Sahafa Al-Sudaniya* on 19/8/2010.
- (17) Al-Hassan Saad Al-Abadi: *From the Ababda Tribe, he held the Emirate of Halayeb and Shalatin during the Mahdia in Sudan. He was appointed to this emirate when Khalifa Abdullah learned that Lord Kitchener wanted to build a fortress in Halayeb within Sudanese territory. The Khalifa feared this and mentioned that he did not want another Suakin there, so he sent Al-Hassan Saad Al-Abadi at the head of a force of cavalry to Halayeb and managed to defeat the enemy forces. After a while, a dispute arose between the Khalifa and Al-Hassan Al-Abadi, which led him to join the leadership of the Anglo-Egyptian invasion campaign in 1314H/1897. Wanjit, head of the intelligence office there, tried to benefit from Al-Hassan Al-Abadi in uncovering more information but he claimed he did not know much about the Mahdist State. After the fall of the Mahdia, he returned to his family in Abu Hamad, worked in agriculture, and teaching religious sciences, then became a judge in Dongola, and later moved to Hijaz. In 1322H/1905, Al-Hassan Saad Al-Abadi died in Yanbu, Saudi Arabia. Dawlat Youssef Ahmed Ibrahim, Umara' Al-Mahdia wa Al-Thabat 'ala Al-Mabda (Documentary Study of the Positions of the Emirs of the Mahdia 1881-1898), by Sudanese historian Mohamed Abdel Rahim, Majallat Jami'at Omdurman Al-Islamiyya, Vol. 14, Issue 1, Ramadan 1439H/May 2018, pp. 119-121.*
- (18) Osama Abdullah Mohamed Al-Amin, *Tarikh Al-Taalim fi Al-Dawlah Al-Mahdiyah fi Al-Sudan (1298-1315H/1881-1898)*, Majallat Jami'at Al-Nil Al-Abyad, p. 118.

- (19) Nemat Omar Abdel Jabbar et al., *Al-Athar Al-Madiya lil-Dawlah Al-Mahdiyah fi Omdurman (1302-1316H/1885-1898)*, Dar Arithiria li Al-Nashr wa Al-Tawzi, Khartoum, 2024, p. 224.
- (20) Mohamed Ibrahim Abu Salim, *Al-Taba'a fi Al-Mahdia*, Marja' Sabiq, p. 9.
- (21) Ibid p. 10.
- (22) Mahgoub Mohamed Saleh, Marja' Sabiq, pp. 10-11.
- (23) Osama Abdullah Mohamed Al-Amin, *Tarikh Al-Taalim fi Al-Dawlah Al-Mahdiyah fi Al-Sudan (1298-1315H/1881-1898)*, Majallat Jami'at Al-Nil Al-Abyad, p. 118.
- (24) Mohamed Ibrahim Abu Salim, *Al-Haraka Al-Fikriya fi Al-Mahdia*, Marja' Sabiq, pp. 158-159.
- (25) Mahgoub Mohamed Saleh, Marja' Sabiq, p. 9.
- (26) D. W. M. Kh/Mahdia 2/6/1 from Abdel Rahim Salem to Amir Ya'qub, 11th of Qidah 1314H, April 1897, p. 28.
- (27) D. W. M. Kh/Mahdia 2/6/1 from Abdel Majid A'nif and Madani Hussein to Amir Ya'qub, 22nd of Rabi' Al-Awwal 1314H, August 1896, p. 2.
- (28) Mohamed Ibrahim Abu Salim, *Al-Haraka Al-Fikriya fi Al-Mahdia*, Marja' Sabiq, p. 158.
- (29) Mohamed Ibrahim Abu Salim, *Al-Haraka Al-Fikriya fi Al-Mahdia*, Marja' Sabiq, p. 161.

4

Lithographic Printing Press in the Early Days of English Rule in Sudan

Chapter Four

Lithographic Printing Press in the Early Days of English Rule in Sudan

After the English forces, with the help of the Egyptians, succeeded in defeating the Mahdist state in 1898 and entered Omdurman, the capital of the state; a search was conducted for Mahdist treasures, including money, gold artifacts, weapons, and others. Among these treasures, the lithographic Press was found within the contents of the Bait Alamana (House of Trust).⁽¹⁾

The press was handed over to the English forces in Omdurman by Mukhtar Badi, who was known as the agent or custodian of the press since the Khedivial and Mahdist administrations. He provided Naoum Shuqeir with a statement of the publications produced by the Stone Press, and the press was moved from its location in Omdurman to Khartoum.

After the British organized the administration, they established new governance bodies, and enacted laws and directives were issued outlining the new government's guidelines, rights, and responsibilities. The press was given attention, and modern equipment including printing machines and separate letters were imported for it. The press began operating to print government laws.⁽²⁾ Historically, the Amiri Press (the lithographic Press) was credited with successfully printing the first issues of the Gazette,⁽⁴⁾ which was the first government newspaper during the English rule from 1899 to 1956.⁽⁵⁾ The first issue stated: "... This Gazette is

issued by the Government of Sudan to publish laws, regulations, and announcements to properly guide and inform the people of Sudan about the system of good governance. The price of the copy is 5 millimes, and it is ready to publish commercial advertisements..." In its first year, it was published twice a month, and later it became published once a year.⁽⁶⁾

There was an indication that the English invasion forces, upon entering Sudan, brought with them a special press intended for printing publications and directives for the new government, similar to what the French campaign did when it occupied Egypt from 1798 to 1801. It appears that the press brought with the Sudan invasion did not hinder the use of the Stone Press, at least temporarily, until the new press was installed and utilized.

After the lithographic Press, leading people like Yaqub Sarouf, Faris Nimer, and Shahin Makarios, founders of the Sudan newspaper – a biweekly publication issued on Thursdays and Mondays – managed to import a modern press to Khartoum. They also succeeded in bringing skilled workers for this press and trained Sudanese in printing operations. The Sudan newspaper press was the latest press to enter Sudan during the English rule and consisted of large steam-powered machines. Subsequently, an agreement was made with the Sudanese Works Administration to modify the press machines to be operated by electricity instead of steam, which took place in 1911.⁽¹¹⁾

Many publications from the Amiri Press, or the Lithographic Press, can be found in the Egyptian National Archives, the

National Document House in Khartoum, and at Durham University in Britain. Unfortunately, much of what the press produced was destroyed by Mahdist followers. Despite this, the output of the lithographic Press in Sudan throughout the periods of the Egyptian Pasha, Khedivial rule, the Mahdist Sate, and the Anglo-Egyptian rule remains one of the important primary sources for studying this significant period in modern Sudanese history.

As the role of the Lithographic Press diminished during the Anglo-Egyptian dual rule, the press was placed among the collections of the Khalifa Abdullah Museum and became part of the exhibited items. It attracted visitors who came to the museum to learn about the history of the Mahdist movement in Sudan.⁽⁸⁾

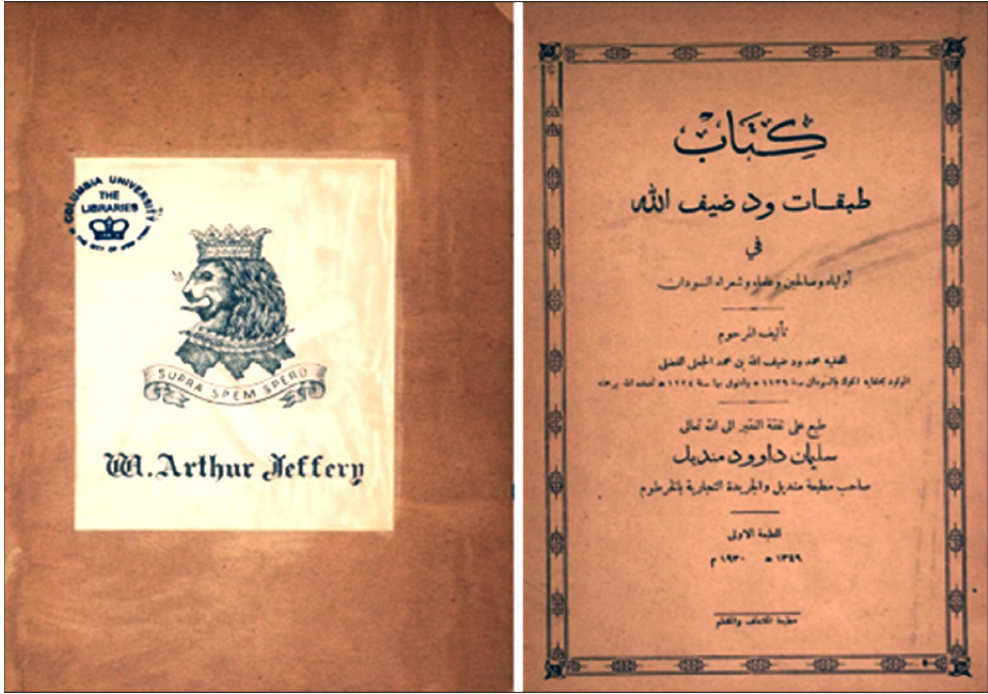
Mandil Press in Khartoum

Among the printing houses that emerged during the English rule in Khartoum was Mandil Press, owned by Suleiman Dawood Mandil. It was located on the Republic Street and also published the weekly newspaper "Al-Jarida Al-Tijariyya." In 1931, he changed its name to "Moltaqa Al-Nilein," which was later merged with the newspaper "Hadharat Sudan."

One of Suleiman Mandil's significant contributions to the Sudanese reader was the printing of "Ratib Al-Mahdi" and the publication of "Al-Dawabit." He was also the first to edit and publish the book "Tabaqat Wad Deif Allah," which was printed in 1930.



Mandil Press on Republic Street in Khartoum



The Book of Tabaqat Wad Deif Allah, printed at Dawood Mandil Press



Suleiman Dawood Mandil – by courtesy of Omar Malassi

Publications Printed at the Amiri Press in Khartoum (1821-1885)

- 1 Government Orders and Directives: These include all orders and directives issued by the Governor of Sudan and distributed to the provinces.
- 2 Government Publications and Documents for Projects: These publications consist of government directives, documents, and tax papers.
- 3 Stamps: These are papers printed at the Lithographic Press during the Pasha and Khedivial rule, used for administrative and commercial transactions.
- 4 Account Books: Government account books used for financial matters, printed at the Amiri Press.
- 5 Meeting the Needs of Schools: Five schools were opened in Sudan during Khedive Ismail's rule, located in Dongola, Berber, Khartoum, Kassala, and El-Obeid. In Khartoum, it was known as the Amiri School and continued its mission until the Mahdist forces entered the city on January 1885 ,26.
- 6 Government Publications against the Mahdi's Call: The government printed numerous publications refuting the Mahdi's claims. Among these was a pamphlet by Sheikh Al-Amin Al-Dharir titled "Guidance for the Seeker Regarding the Mahdi and His Followers," consisting of 26 pages. There was also a letter from Ahmed Al-Azhari regarding the establishment of the Ismaili order, printed during the governorship of Abd al-Qadir Pasha Hilmi.
- 7 Government Printings: The Amiri Press printed all government publications in Khartoum during the Khedivial and Pasha rule, distributing materials to all provinces.
- 8 Gordon Pasha's Bulletins: Daily reports on battles between Gordon Pasha and Mahdist leaders, as well as updates on the relief campaign sent to Khartoum to rescue him and his forces from siege, recorded and signed by Gordon Pasha from March 1884 to January 1885.
- 9 Gordon's Bonds: Financial bonds printed by Gordon at the Stone Press when Mahdist forces besieged the city, distributed to residents as currency after money became scarce.

Publications Printed During the Mahdist Period in Sudan (1898-1885)

- 1 Letters of Invitation: The first publications from the Stone Press under the Mahdist state, consisting of letters sent by the Mahdi to various regions in Sudan, Egypt, Morocco, and Nigeria.
- 2 The Ratib of Imam Al-Mahdi: The first book printed at the Stone Press in Omdurman during the Mahdist period, first published in 1302 AH. This edition is held at the Library of the School of Oriental Studies at Durham University in England. It includes selected verses from the Quran and prayers for the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).
- 3 Small Booklets: Printed in 1304AH/1886 AD, these booklets include the Mahdi's letters regarding worship practices such as fasting and night prayers, and about the status of Khalifa Abdullah.
- 4 The Message of Hussein Ibrahim Zahra: Printed in 1304AH/1886 AD at the Stone Press.
- 5 Letters of Imam Al-Mahdi: Referring to the messages sent by the Mahdi to tribal leaders and army commanders.
- 6 Sessions of Imam Al-Mahdi: A collection of sayings made in the presence of the Mahdi during his private and public sessions.
- 7 Publications of Imam Al-Mahdi: Published in two volumes.
- 8 Publications of Khalifa Abdullah: General and private letters from Khalifa Abdullah.
- 9 Warnings from Khalifa Abdullah: Numerous warnings printed and sent to Queen Victoria, the Khedive in Egypt, the Ottoman Sultan, and the people of Morocco and Nigeria.
- 10 Sa'adat al-Mustahdi bi-Sirat al-Imam al-Mahdi :Written by Ismail Abd al-Qadir Al-Kardfani, a supporter of the Mahdi who studied at Al-Azhar.
- 11 Kitab al-Tiraz al-Manqush bi-Bushra Qatl Yohanna Malik al-Habash : By Ismail Abd al-Qadir Al-Kardfani.
- 12 Publications on State Buildings: A collection of publications addressing state building.
- 13 Public Ethics and Jurisprudence: Publications related to public ethics and jurisprudence during the Mahdist period.

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- 14 Al-Ayat al-Bayyināt wa Ghayat al-Ghayāt : A message written by Hussein Al-Zahra defending the Mahdism and Imam Al-Mahdi, responding to scholars in Khartoum who opposed the Mahdi, printed in 1304 AH (1888-1887). The message consists of 56 pages.
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- 15 Nasīhat al-ʿAwām li-l-Khāṣṣ wa-l-ʿĀm Min Ikhwānī Ahl al-Īmān wa-l-Islām: Compiled by Ahmed Al-Awwam in 1301 AH (1884), a follower and preacher of the Mahdist revolution who opposed Gordon Pasha and was exiled to Khartoum, later becoming a supporter of the Mahdi. Printed at the Stone Press in 1305 AH, spanning 60 pages.
-
- 16 Kutub al-Madhāʾih wa Shuʿarāʾ al-Mahdiyya: Works from the scholars and poets who supported the Mahdi.
-
- 17 Waqāʾiʾ al-Amīr ʿUthmān Daqna (Amīr al-Sharq): Printed by the Stone Press.
-
- 18 Al-Anwār al-Sunniyya al-Māḥiya li-Zalām al-Munkirīn ʿala al-Ḥaḍra al-Mahdiyya :Written by Hassan Saad Al-Abadi after being approved by the Mahdi, printed in 1304 AH (1888-1887). The message defends Imam Al-Mahdi and consists of 268 pages.
-
- 19 Risālat al-ʿAwām : A book printed at the lithographic Press titled “Advice for the Common People” by Ahmed Al-Awwam, supporting the Mahdi.
-
- 20 Letters on Worship, Law, and Jurisprudence: Letters related to worship, law, and jurisprudence published for educational and awareness purposes.
-
- 21 Futūḥ al-Shām: The work of Al-Waqidi, comprising three volumes.
-
- 22 Kitāb al-Rujība wa-l-Mawārīth: Printed at the lithographic Press in Omdurman.
-

Publications Issued by the lithographic Press during English Rule in Sudan

The Gazette: A government bulletin issued by the English government, published following the 1899 agreement between Britain and Egypt regarding the rule and administration of Sudan, with the first issue released on March 1899 ,7, consisting of four medium-sized pages.

Notes

- (1) Naoum Shaqir, *Jughrafiya wa Tarikh Al-Sudan*, Dar Izzah li Al-Taba'a wa Al-Nashr, Khartoum, 2008, p. 938.
- (2) Mohamed Ibrahim Abu Salim, *Al-Haraka Al-Fikriya fi Al-Mahdia*, Ibid p. 158.
- (3) Mahgoub Mohamed Saleh, p. 13.
- (4) Al-Ghazita: It is an official newspaper that publishes laws and government decisions; the origin of the word comes from the Italian word "gazzetta."
- (5) Osman Sid Khalil, *Marja' Sabiq*, p. 218.
- (6) Salah Abdel Latif, *Al-Sahafa Al-Sudaniya, Ta'rikh wa Tawkid, Sijil Kamil lil-Sahafa Al-Sudaniya (1899-1989)*, Matabi' Al-Offset, 1992, p. 20.
- (7) Salah Abdel Latif, *The Same Reference*, pp. 21-23.
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Conclusion

By tracing the emergence of printing industry in Egypt during the rule of Muhammad Ali Pasha, in both lithographic and type forms, it became clear that the Pasha and Khedivial Egypt played a significant role in introducing modern printing first to Egypt and then to Sudan. It was likely that this occurred during the era of Muhammad Ali Pasha. Before the arrival of the lithographic Press in Sudan, office work and correspondence were conducted manually on various types of paper, as evidenced by the flow of letters and written correspondence between the Pasha and Khedive in Egypt and the Governor in Khartoum. These correspondences did not cease during the period leading up to the introduction of the Amiri Press in Sudan, but were conducted in a regular and orderly manner.

It can be said that the entry of Copts and Greeks into Sudan significantly contributed to the development of written work due to the reputation of these groups for precision, adherence to orders and directives, and their skills in accounting and writing matters.

The introduction of the modern printing press, specifically the Amiri Press or the lithographic Press, to Sudan greatly enhanced the speed and development of government publications through an increase in the issuance of government orders, directives, letters, account books, and stamps. When the Mahdist State took control of this press, it utilized it to disseminate messages, letters, publications, warnings, and books related to Imam Al-Mahdi, the Khalifa, and the leaders and commanders of the Mahdiyya.

It can be said that the Lithographic Press represented a significant advancement for the Mahdiyya in Sudan, similar to other remnants and possessions of the Pasha and Khedive in Sudan. It contributed to the rapid development of postal services in the state and the accomplishment of written tasks more quickly and accurately. Due to its importance, Khalifa Abdullah appointed a specific team to oversee the press, headed by the press agent and a group of supervisors. It was also attached to the House of Trust, which was affiliated with the Public Treasury. This demonstrates the significance and status of the press within the state. This action indicated that Khalifa Abdullah aimed to make the press part of the treasury to ensure it would not falter in its duties or suffer neglect due to insufficient funding.

The printing press continued to carry out all its functions excellently until the fall of the Mahdist State in the year (1316 AH / 1898 AD). It then came under the English rule, which sought to benefit from the Lithographic Press and modernize it to keep pace with the expansion movement in Sudan and to issue government orders and directives. This was represented in the Gazette newspaper, which became the first official government publication under the new occupation, serving as the voice of the government and conveying its messages to the people.

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جوال: 00249122094856 - 121566207

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The printing press which was known as the “the Amiri Press” or the “Lithographic Press” was a modern facility by the standards of its time. To increase interest in it among the administrators who succeeded in governing the country, it was placed among the assets of the military arsenal located east of the administrative building, which is now the Presidential Palace. The press contributed significantly to printing the government’s needs, including notebooks, orders, directives, publications, and official documents, as well as stamps, which represented a major source of income for the Khedive and the Sudanese administration.

The objectives of the book is to trace the history of the printing press, which accomplished all the tasks assigned to it during various historical periods that were crucial and significant in shaping the modern history of Sudan, with all its small and large details. It can be said that the role played by the Lithographic Printing Press in Sudan is one of the most important and critical roles across the three historical eras, as its output serves as a living and vibrant memory for the Sudanese people to this day



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