Durham Middle East Papers

Portraits, Postcards, and Politics: Mobilizing Sudanese Visual Culture

Katie J. Hickerson

Durham Middle East Paper No. 107

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Portraits, Postcards, and Politics: Mobilizing Sudanese Visual Culture

Introduction

On the morning of January 19, 1905, Emily Hornby, a young white Englishwoman, rolled south from Egypt at twenty miles an hour aboard a Sudan Military Railway train bound for Khartoum. This train, with three different classes of tickets, carried military men, tourists, diplomats, attendants, and traders into the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, a newly assembled imperial state. The train ran on tracks put down less than a decade earlier as part of the military action officially termed the "Reconquest" of Sudan—a joint operation of a combined British and Egyptian force that defeated the anti-colonial Mahdist state, which had revolted against the earlier Ottoman-Egyptian colonial order in the early 1880s. Hornby's journal entry briefly mentions this past, but while she was on the train what impressed her the most was the dust, the heat, and the stops, "we were glad to get out of the train and stand in the shade on the platform and get some air."[1] On one of these refueling stops roughly three hundred miles north of Khartoum, Emily and her father disembarked the train and walked around the station to stretch their legs and observe the people around them. The father and daughter were struck by the appearance of local people present around the station. Emily's father, a man with means to travel for leisure and enough capital to purchase photographic equipment, then did what he was socialized to do, he withdrew his camera in the belief that he was entitled to photograph the people gathered around the station. However, his potential photographic subjects saw things differently. Emily Hornby wrote in her journal that they "ran away (fearing the evil eye) when they perceived his intention."[2]

"...he withdrew his camera in the belief that he was entitled to photograph the people..."

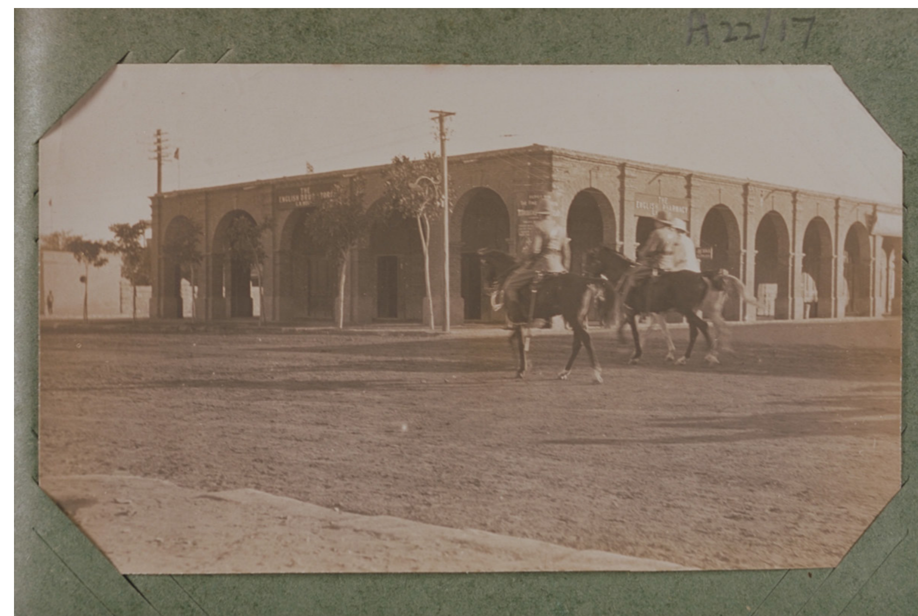
The Hornbys' photograph-not-taken invites us to engage with the politics of refusal and the presence of absence in the visual culture of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Nile Valley. The Hornby account demonstrates that despite deeply unequal power relations in an imperial world and an economic order oriented around extraction, there was political potential vested in one small group's decision to leave. Hornby's brief entry demonstrates that this group of people both recognized the actions of someone preparing to take a photograph and responded by walking away, choosing to opt out of the encounter. Emily Hornby's missive ascribing their action to "fear" of the "evil eye" reveals much about her own interpretive logic of their refusal: not as a judgment based on understanding and experience, but as indigenous "superstition", thereby ascribing their actions to alterity instead of, perhaps, a clear understanding of the imperial work of the camera—a piece of equipment designed, in Hornby's language, "to take", "to shoot", "to capture"—all extractive vernaculars of control. The potential photographic subjects of Mr. Hornby's gaze walking away from the encounter can be seen as a small rebellion beside the train.

This account of an absent photograph is far from alone. When those who kept journals or fieldnotes in the early years of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium believed they missed a photographic opportunity, they often felt compelled to write it down—to note in words something that they had hoped to turn from an event into a visual object, an opportunity that once missed could not be

replicated. Additionally, albums from this era often contain many partial or poor photographs where the subject of the photographer's gaze is entirely out of focus or falls outside the frame. In the photography collection of Durham's Sudan Archive there is another picture — blurry and out of focus—of people running away from the camera. In many collections, this kind of image is often not scanned and made available on digital archive sites, often because this type of image is not a "good photo". But what makes a "good photo" in the context of the imperial politics of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries? Good for whom and for what purposes? How is visual culture mobilized by various actors in projects for specific ends?

To address these questions, I draw from the Hornby account of the photograph-not-taken to think through together the politics of visual culture and image-making in Sudan, South Sudan, the Nile Valley more generally, and their global interconnections during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Beginning with an absent photograph allows us to consider the presence of photographs and visual culture differently. Not as a given, but as sources for understanding the racialized, gendered, and imperial politics involved in the creation and dissemination of this material, one that is both visual—meant to be seen—as well as a material—where the tactile qualities of an album, book, postcard, or print, constitute part of its meaning across time and space. To think through these interconnections, let us return to the Hornbys' absent photograph.

Case One: Kermit at the English Pharmacy



Governor-General, Sir Reginald Wingate, passing the English Pharmacy store during a horseback tour of Khartoum with an unidentified visiting government official or dignitary, 1905 x 1907. F.R. Wingate collection, Sudan Archive Durham (SAD.A22/17).

Eleven months and eight days after the Hornbys' arrival in Khartoum, a new store, imaginatively named the English Pharmacy, opened in the city's newly revived commercial center. Amidst the imported goods, customers could purchase a postcard from the house line, Morhig Photos. This line of images even included some of the railway station, offering an opportunity for a stock image to fill the void of an absent snapshot. Postcards played an important role in this commercial project, as visual evidence from the early years of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium demonstrates.[3] This, thanks to one photograph taken of the former American President Teddy Roosevelt's son, Kermit. In 1909, President Roosevelt, his son Kermit, and a large force of American naturalists and big game hunters traveled to Sudan as part of an East African collecting trip supported by the American government through the Smithsonian Institution. During their stay in Khartoum, Kermit went to the English Pharmacy in the booming reconstructed capital of Khartoum where he posed for a photograph.

Theodore Roosevelt's son buying postcards in the English Pharmacy store owned by G. N. Morhig, during Roosevelt's visit to the Sudan whilst on a hunting tour of East Africa, 14 x 17 March 1910. R. von Slatin collection, Sudan Archive Durham (SAD.A44/90).

In this photo Kermit stands smartly dressed, gently leaning against the wood and glass cabinet partly blocking a round display of postcards with another in the foreground. These display cases held the Morhig Photos line of postcards that included hundreds of different images printed and sent across the imperial world of the early twentieth century. While there were several printers of postcards in early twentieth-century Khartoum, Port Sudan, and Suakin—the Gordon Stationary, the Sudan Times, Karakashian Bros, and others—the Morhig line stands out because of its large range of images available during the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium. Even today, many of their postcards can be found in an internet search. The postcards included photographs from a variety of different sources, but, for the purposes of this essay, let us first look at number 100.

The next postcard depicts the interior of the English Pharmacy with the proprietors at the shop's opening in 1905. One man leans against a display case while facing the camera—like Kermit but beside the counter rather than in front—the other, bespeckled, casually reading. A contemporary write-up for their business states that these two men in their newly crafted commercial space were "meeting the wants of European sojourners in the

Interior of the English Pharmacy, which opened at the end of 1906, with Gorge N. Morhig on the right and his brother, Mansour Morhig, 1907. G. N. Morhig postcard series, no. 100. R.G. Dingwall collection, Sudan Archive Durham (SAD.16/6/7).

Sudan," and intending "to show abiding citizens the advantages of modern medicine."[4] Thus, this space serves a dual purpose: selling material goods as well as a medical civilizing mission to the subjects of this newly reconfigured imperial state. In both this postcard and Kermit's image the individuals photographed are men—two as proprietors, one as customer—yet the commercial space itself is engaged in a gendered and racialized visual discourse; above them all hangs an advertisement promoting the visual ideology of empire, the civilizing mission of Pears' Soap. This soap manufacturer was an influential nineteenth-century company that produced and popularized translucent soap with a global distribution. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, its pictorial advertising was so successful that its leader became known as the "father of modern advertising".[5] This company's commercial success was built by mobilizing the civilizing mission—portraying hygiene as the handmaiden of a benevolent empire and utilizing anti-Black and anti-Indigenous visual tropes. Their advertising was so successful in influencing mass culture and metropolitan minds that, as the anthropologist Janice Boddy demonstrates, in the 1880s, British soldiers spelled out "Pears' Soap is the Best" in white stones against black rocks while on military campaign in the Red Sea Hills.[6]

> “...THIS AD CAMPAIGN DREW FROM IMPERIAL INVOLVEMENT IN SUDAN TO FURTHER THEIR COMMERCIAL INTERESTS...”

After reading about this event, the Pears’ Soap advertisers took this incident and turned it into yet another ad, thereby using the account itself to further sell soap. Thus, this ad campaign drew from imperial involvement in Sudan to further their commercial interests. These images of the interior of the English Pharmacy—from two decades later—demonstrate that this commercial visual iconography held sway not only in the print cultures of a metropolitan center, but within Sudan itself in the early Anglo-Egyptian era.

One might assume, given the name “The English Pharmacy” and the range of materials they sold that this establishment was, in fact, English, but the proprietors were Arab. Born in Mount Lebanon in Ottoman Syria, one of the brothers, George Morhig, came to Sudan as part of the Egyptian Army Medical Corps during the Reconquest. Following the establishment of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, Morhig furthered his training at Gordon Memorial College in Khartoum and pharmaceutical training in London. A 1906 article about the pharmacy for the trade periodical, *Chemist and Druggist*, proposes that this was the space where Morhig came up with the idea of bringing the visual iconography to Sudan:

> It was then, we presume, that he conceived the idea of carrying from London to the Sudan that magnificent piece of mural decoration which Messrs. A & F Pears, Ltd., have made so familiar to us all, but which we have never seen used with finer effect that in this interior.[7]

This writer’s account illuminates two relevant points: First, that this piece of visual iconography was popular enough that the writer could assume readers would be familiar with it; Second, in his judgement, this new pharmacy in Sudan utilized this visual material to its finest potential.

What ideological and commercial messages are embedded in this visual source? The tableau itself depicts a neoclassical bare-chested white woman being cared for by a Black woman who—using Pears’ Soap coming out of fine box—cares for her feet. Behind them, three further white women—two on land, one in the water—socialize in the background. Here, white femininity is depicted as being in position to be cared for by the time and labor of a Black woman using a global cleanliness commodity; the other three figures—occupying space on both land and sea—are seen engaging in leisure activities and taking up both time and space. In bold text above and below this whole visual enterprise is the message, “PEARS’ SOAP: Matchless for the Completion”. In this ad-turned-mural, leisure, time, and receiving care are employed to cultivate desire for a global commodity that explicitly links cleanliness with light skin. This point is further underlined in the figures on either side of the tableau—not actual women but reproduced images of idealized classical sculptures: “Hygeia” the “Goddess of Health” and “Venus” the “Goddess of Beauty”. This mural and its imported visual ideologies depicting racial hierarchies coming from centuries of engagement in the Atlantic World acquire new meanings in the multi-racial capitol of Khartoum—where the Arab proprietors—with their own racialized orientations chose to highlight this piece in their place of business. Its presence demonstrates that colonial modernity was something that was both *brought* from outside as well as something that could be *bought* within.

This ad-turned-mural is meant to sell products; in the photographs in both these interiors, taken five years apart, the figures and the scene they are depicting interconnect ideas of health, beauty, and cleanliness with consumer capitalism. But it also does something more: it links these ideas and products with the technology of photography. In these interior images, you can see technology of the camera: equipment, film, and processing chemicals and services, of which the Morhigs’ business was one of the largest distributors in Sudan during the Condominium period. The coincidence in space of these two technologies—one of medical modernity, hygiene and cleanliness, and beauty products that transforms bodies; and the other, the technology to capture and represent them—is no accident. Instead of separate projects, these two systems

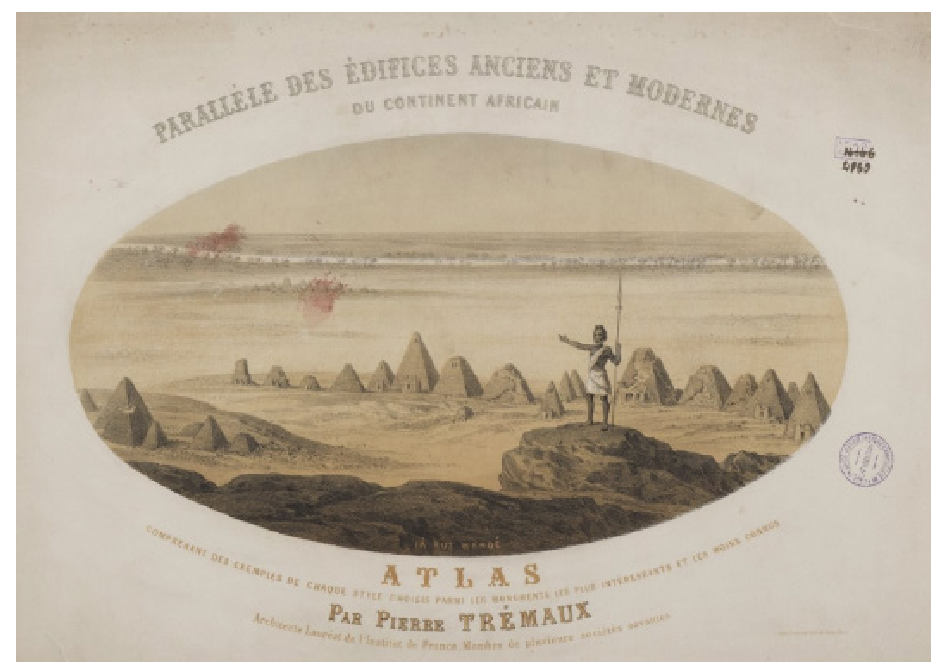
were interrelated: the embodied and the representational.

Thinking through the ways photography and image-making interconnect with other systems opens ways of seeing how these images mobilized narratives about the emerging new order in Sudan. Examining the Morhig postcard collection itself, prominently sitting atop the display case of photographic material, can illuminate a constructed visual order of the new administration. Here, certain themes emerge: The Morhig postcards are numbered, but these numbers are not standardized and sometimes correspond with themes and not specific photographs. A major theme in the postcards on offer is the Reconquest—the destruction of Muhammad Ahmed's tomb, military technologies such as the Maxim gun, and portraits of soldiers, particularly members of the Sudanese Battalions of the Egyptian Army. Another theme is infrastructure: roads and railroad stations, the Governor-General's Palace, the post office—built environment sites that symbolized the transformation brought by the new imperial state in Sudan. Another prominent theme of these postcards are images of women: at celebrations, selling goods, standing in groups or alone. These images attest to a type of photographic intimacy between the photographer and the subject, while the text attached to the images is often flattening. None of the female photographic subjects are named, but many are gendered and ascribed significance by their ethnicity or collective "group" status. In other images, women are seen bare-chested and often wearing clothing that, while unremarkable within the space and time in which the original photograph was taken, would have been purchased for their exoticized and sexualized properties. Thus, in the visual realm of the pharmacy, while white women's bodies were represented to cultivate a desire for body-commodities, the postcards with photographic representations of Sudanese and South Sudanese women were themselves a commodity.

The Morhig postcards and the spaces they inhabited, whether for sale in the English Pharmacy or moving through the post, illustrate the interconnections between visual culture and imperial systems. Art historians and scholars of visual culture have begun to address postcards as important sites of meaning-making in and of themselves alongside more established themes coming from studio, military, and ethnographic photography. However, the Morhig images blur the lines between these categories: They predate formal Anglo-Egyptian ethnographic photography, yet at least one of the Morhig postcards is held in the Royal Anthropological Institute collection as an ethnographic illustration, thus suggesting that postcards played a crucial role at the intersection of photography, knowledge-production,

and mass culture within imperial projects. Beyond institutions, they are also intimate objects, often kept within collections of personal photography, treated not as something different from an individual's colonial gaze, but as a supplement to it.

This leaves us with a question: In the Morhig's pharmacy, whose gaze is Kermit buying? Is it Arab? Ottoman? English? A combination all three? It is most definitely gendered. And how should we consider these postcards in relation to the history of imperialism, slavery, and photographic encounters the Nile Valley? To approach answers to these questions, let us examine the history of Sudanese peoples' encounters with photography from its first uses in the Ottoman-Egyptian Sudan to the Reconquest.

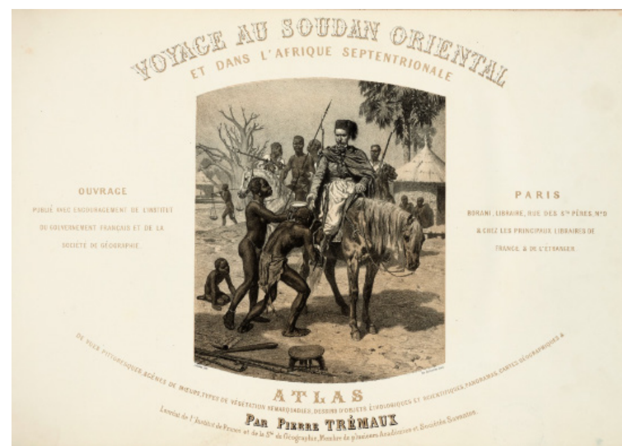


Case Two: The Blurry Photographs of Pierre Trémaux

Less than fifteen years after Louis Daguerre developed the first commercially viable photographic process, known as a daguerreotype, an entrepreneurial French architect named Pierre Trémaux traveled to the Nile Valley. Trémaux—arguably the first person to have photographic encounters in the Ottoman-

Egyptian provinces in Sudan—first left his home country in 1847, visited Algeria and Tunisia and intended to go on to Rome, but instead boarded a ship to Cairo where upon arrival he heard of an Egyptian gold mining expedition to the Ottoman-Egyptian Sudan and Ethiopia. Trémaux obtained permission and support from Muhammad Ali Pasha—the viceroy of Egypt—to join the expedition and was granted Egyptian military support for journey.[8] First with drawing and sketching materials, later with materials to produce engravings, lithographs, and photolithographs, Trémaux's images constituted the first photographic project that embedded a larger visual survey of the Nile Valley. His writings frequently appeared in in the Bulletin de la Société de géographie as well as publications such as *Voyages au Soudan Oriental et dans l'Afrique septentrionale* and *Parallele des Èdifices Anciens et Modernes du Continent Africain*. These publications, containing various types of images, attest to the interconnections between photography and other visual forms.[9]

Trémaux's images build on earlier extractive encounters between the peoples of the Nile Valley and imperial forces through a variety of innovative visual mediums. For example, on the cover of Parallele des Èdifices, Trémaux—with his architect's eye and skills rendering the built environment—depicts the pyramids of Meroë as both visually striking and as spaces of imperial destruction.



Some of the larger pyramids show damage inflicted by an Italian named Giuseppe Ferlini, who came to Sudan as a part of the Ottoman-Egyptian military force that brought Sudan into the Egyptian empire. Ferlini left Egyptian service to make a fortune plundering Meroitic materials: he famously used explosives to blow up pyramids and desecrate tombs for artifacts.[10] Trémaux's print shows the aftermath of one of these encounters on the Nubian built environment. But the visual material does something more: the print includes a figure in a central position who raises his hand to the viewer, gesturing to the Meroitic pyramids in acknowledgement of their importance as well as greeting the visitor. He is a guide, highlighting that there

"THIS THEME OF PEOPLE CONNECTED TO THINGS IS CONTINUED IN A PRINT FROM *VOYAGES AU SOUDAN ORIENTAL*..."

are living inhabitants in addition to ancient monuments in the Ottoman-Egyptian province. There is something welcoming in this rendering, as though the work of this figure is to make the pyramids as accessible to Trémaux's gaze as they were to Ferlini's explosives.

This theme of people connected to things is continued in a print from *Voyages au Soudan Oriental*, where Trémaux rides a pony into a village. Here, Trémaux is not only the central figure in the frame of the image, but also of the social context it depicts. He is being served a drink by an unnamed indigenous person, is the object of interest by a seated child, and literally is bowed to by another who draws attention to his jeweled blade. At their feet and within Trémaux's gaze are their cultural artifacts: a stool, spears, a club—all objects of interest to Trémaux and the target of collectors for the next century. Riding behind him are the lurking figures of the Ottoman-Egyptian order. These men armed with spears and rifles are visual reminders that Trémaux's trip is supported by the imperial state and the ever-present threat of violence. Moreover, his movement itself—particularly the logistics of hauling bulky technological equipment through difficult terrain—was dependent on Ottoman-Egyptian infrastructure and the financial power it derived from colonial extraction. Thus, this print is a visual reminder of the

ways in which the first photographic encounters in Ottoman-Egyptian Sudan must be seen as part of the extractive economies of imperialism during this era: photography is not a witness to these processes but is embedded in these systems of violence and extraction—both of people and things.

An early adapter of photographic technology, Trémaux's use of the medium offers a clue to what practitioners believed this technology capable of rending. Trémaux, while trained in architectural drawing, in the Ottoman-Egyptian Sudan used photography to focus not on the built environment, but instead to create images of people, specifically women. Some enslaved and none named, in the accompanying captions they are identified by age, ethnicity, or occupation (eg. "Laveuse égyptienne", Egyptian washer woman). What these women thought of Trémaux and his contraption is not known; but it is reasonable to assume that they did not have much room for choice in the encounters, Trémaux had the support of the state and their representations were desirable by powerful institutions and systems beyond Sudan. These photographic images, known as salted paper prints, depict women often standing or sitting against earthen walls. They are accompanied by lithographic prints, presumedly because Trémaux believed early photographic renderings often looked less "real" than other image technologies, yet even the salted paper prints show signs of drawn lines and details in the faded form. One woman—captioned "Nouba"—is photographed wearing a *rahat*, a leather skirt worn around her waist, and a bare chest.[11] While her dress was appropriate in the spaces where Trémaux took the pictures—indicating her age or marital status, it was decidedly inappropriate women's dress in the spaces where these images circulated.[12] Images like this one contributed to the sexualization and exoticization of Black women in these early photographic encounters—as the historian Ahmad Sikainga notes, these kind of images in early photography of Black and/or enslaved women represented a paradox that while "more often than not it appeared as beautiful and desirable it was also perceived as crude and dangerous."[13] Trémaux's image sets precedent for decades of visual culture of this kind in the Ottoman-Egyptian era.[14]

Case Three: Image-making in a Photographic Blackout

In the thirty years following Trémaux's photographic encounters, a handful of men took photographs of the peoples and monuments of the upper Nile Valley. These encounters connected photographic practices to the imperial networks and infrastructure of the Ottoman-Egyptian order.[15] During this time, transformations in photographic technologies dramatically changed. Equipment became more accessible and produced increasingly exacting renderings of photographic subjects, yet access to these technologies required both skills and materials coming from colonial metropoles. The technological innovations that made photographic material more accessible and image reproductions easier contributed to increasingly visually minded consumers. Like all economic systems, the production of images was influenced by political transformations, and two major political upheavals shaped the visual culture milieu of the Nile Valley in the 1880s: First, the ʿUrabi Rebellion and the ensuing British occupation of Egypt, which crushed the early nationalist uprising against the Khedive Tewfik Pasha; second, the rise of the Mahdist State in Sudan (1885-1898), which defeated the Ottoman-Egyptian imperial forces and established a new state in much of Sudan. The Mahdists tore up the railroad and effectively instituted a photographic blackout in the territories under their control. The limited photographic material taken within the space that is now contemporary Sudan and South Sudan came from Suakin and was often taken by photographers connected to the Egyptian and British militaries—notably Felice Beato, the Italian-British photographer who played an important part in the foundation role in the genre of war photography and covered the aftermath of the 1857 Indian Mutiny; later, in the 1880s, his images from the Mahdist era were taken when he accompanied the Indian Army contingents sent to fight in Sudan.

The Mahdist state's photographic blackout combined with the British occupation of Egypt and its increasingly robust tourism industry had profound implications for the production of visual materials, especially as printing, photographic, and postal transformations led to the explosion in the markets, consumption, and distribution of photographic images on postcards. Far from an absence of visual materials connected to Sudan; in Egypt, entrepreneurial photographers and military strategists created a proliferation of visual material during the era of the Mahdist state. To better understand this phenomenon, one must consider two things: the use of photographs and visual culture related to Sudan as part of image-making for an Egyptian colonial project as well as the significance of the defeat of the Ottoman-Egyptian forces in 1885. For Egyptian, Ottoman, and British forces the fall of Khartoum and the ensuing massacre of many of its inhabitants was a spectacular imperial defeat at the hands of an indigenous uprising—those deemed outside the temporal march of colonial modernity. Complex responses to this imperial fail were addressed through an unexpected mass culture motif: postcards of soldiers.

This theme in Egyptian photographic culture appears to originate with Hippolyte Arnoux, a man who made his name in Nile Valley photography and print culture not as a photographer of ancient monuments as some photographers did, but of one monument-in-the-making, the Suez Canal.[16] Arnoux held

French nationality and was a long-time resident of Port Said; he took and later sold large-scale photographs of the construction and completion of the Suez Canal. Yet even when composing these commemorative pieces, Arnoux too included the presence of an unnamed Sudanese woman as a part of his larger visual construction of the achievements of Ottoman-Egyptian leaders and the engineer Ferdinand de Lesseps.[17] Yet, in the aftermath of the Mahdist defeat of the Ottoman-Egyptian and British forces, Arnoux appears to have taken the first images of so-described soldiers of Sudan. Later, there are images printed by the Zangaki brothers who at one point worked with Arnoux and who later became influential Egyptian photographers in their own right—at one point there was a legal battle between Arnoux and Zangaki over intellectual property rights.[18] This case attests to the fact that market competition over images and their production in Egypt during the last quarter of the nineteenth century was important enough for Arnoux to bring the dispute to the state for adjudication. Staged and framed with scenic backdrops, accompanied with varying textual data, these images attest to the proliferation of visual material tied to Sudan in the era of Mahdist photographic blackout.

Many of these images used to represent Sudan are of young men and boys holding spears; they are not named and the text identifying them changes across material forms. For example, an Arnoux original signed and held in an 1893 album held in the Bibliothèque National de France, shows a young man and boy lightly clothed and holding spears captioned "trailleurs abyssins".[19] Yet in a postcard form, this same image is titled, "EGYPTE: Soldats du Soudan"—meaning that for mass consumption, it was beneficial for sellers of visual materials to connect figures to Egypt and Sudan. In a similar postcard, two boys sit on rock props in front of a backdrop evoking a European naturalist setting.

Holding spears, one looks into the camera lens while the other looks beyond. An original print of the photograph is held in an album that contains photographs from both Arnoux and Zangaki—yet this specific image in the collection is unsigned or attributed.[20] Here again, in postcard iterations of this image, they are associated with the Ottoman-Egyptian Sudan—"Soldats volontaires de Souakim". The backdrop used in this image appears to be the same as the one found in the following image by the Zangaki firm taken in the early 1890s.

However, printed on this postcard in an image much like the last one, the text "Soldat de Kartoum"; here, the man stands with one foot on the ground and the other on a plaster rock; he holds a spear and shield, and his leveling gaze is directed at the lens. The text on this postcard connects this image to Khartoum itself; the man's presence is linked to a site of imperial defeat. In this image, the figure connected to is "Sodate Bisharin" and while the photograph itself is unsigned, it is part of a numbered collection and with the same hand as many Zangaki images.[21] Here this man stands in front of the distinctive backdrop in the studio production.

These kinds of images circulated throughout the 1880s to the early twentieth century, and images of studio photographs meant to represent Mahdist soldiers or Sudanese volunteers influenced markets of visual material within Egyptian cities. The photographs and printed material related to Sudan produced during this era were not separate from, but embroiled in, market competition for visual material. Many of the most important photography studios in Egypt during this era—Arnoux and Zangaki, but also that of Sèbah, Lekegian, and others—dealt with the production of visual material related to Sudan and its diasporas in Egyptian and Ottoman contexts. In sum, while the Mahdist state had an effective photographic blackout in the territories it controlled, in Egyptian cities commercial competition waged over the production of images printed to represent them.

While Egyptian cities are the main spaces producing photographic visual material related to Sudan, they are not the only spaces where Sudanese people continued to interface with photographic encounters during the Mahdist photographic blackout. Some of the most significant encounters occurred in spaces far from the Nile Valley: World's Fairs and Expositions, where their presence was nested within multiple imperial levels. In the 1889 Exposition Universelle, the event for which Eiffel Tower was built and which attracted more than thirty-two million visitors, many men and women from the former provinces of the Egyptian empire were incorporated into living representations and spaces of imperial power. They sat or stood in photographic studios and engaged with photographers who meant to glorify colonial projects. Exposition photographs operated on multiple scales: they were both entertainment and ethnography. In one album, "Concert égyptien", Egyptian performers were the main event, but within the show itself men and women from Sudan were also present, but often secondary performers within the show. However, in these contexts, the performers were often named, race identified, and tied to place as well as expertise: "Farang Gaddani, 27 ans, nègre né au Soudan, tambourineur".[22]

In the 1893 Columbian Exhibition in Chicago, an event that a quarter of the American population attended, men and women from the former Ottoman-Egyptian empire in Sudan were a major part of the "Cairo Street" attraction—a fantastical reproduction of an Egyptian street. In this exhibition celebrating white supremacy, settler colonialism, and the rise of the United States as a world power, some of the men and women from the Sudan were included in the Fair's photographic accounts. In Portraits from the Midway, one woman, Mahbouba um Zanuba, was connected to the rise of the Mahdist state: "married 4 times, all her husbands are dead—the last one died in the fall of Khartoum".[23] Her presence was thus tied to his absence and the violent encounters that meant the end of the Egyptian empire in these provinces. In the text accompanying another performer, Abou Bakr Ghindi, the absence of imperial—and photographic—access to Sudan is commented on in the text accompanying his portrait:

> Definite information which even approaches accuracy about the Soudan and its people is extremely difficult to obtain; and thus it happened that the representations of certain of its tribes who found their way to Chicago during the fair were never failing objects of interests to visitors.[24]

Here, in this comment, it becomes apparent that the absence of Sudan under imperial control led to greater emphasis on the presence of Sudanese people on

Chicago's Cairo Street. It also points to the imbricated nature of photography within these contexts. One of the most popular shops on the street was the photography studio of G. Lekegian, the Armenian-Egyptian photographer whose sign states his status as "Photographer to the Khedive" on Cairo Street, Chicago, but whose popular studio in Cairo, Egypt—located near the popular Shepheard's Hotel—advertised as being photographers to both the Egyptian Army and British Army of Occupation.[25] The Lekegian souvenir scrapbook, sold at the Fair, itself includes images of "Busherin Warriors", standing in front of this custom-built Cairene Street.[26]

Sir Reginald Wingate (standing next to a camera) questioning the captured Mahdist amir Mahmud Ahmad, wearing a blood-stained jibbah, after the battle of the Atbara, 8 April 1898. F.R. Wingate collection, Sudan Archive Durham (SAD.A27/26).

The imperial and commercial importance of images, intensified by the Mahdist photographic blackout, may help explain the ways that political actors mobilized photography to build support for the Reconquest of Sudan. In the 1890s, political transformations within the Mahdist state combined with concerted actions from the Egyptian Intelligence Department resulted in the escape of members of the former Ottoman-Egyptian order from of the Mahdist capital of Omdurman. Upon their arrival in Cairo, these men and women, including the Priest Joseph Ohrwalder, Sister Venturini, Sister Chincarini, and Adila, a formerly enslaved woman from the Catholic Church in Khartoum

(1892), posed for photographic portraits upon their arrival in Cairo — one of which was included in the publication of Ohrwalder's Ten Years' Captivity in the Mahdi's Camp, 1882-1892.[27] Upon the escape to Egypt of the former Ottoman-Egyptian administrator, Rudolph Slatin Pasha (1895), he too posed for photographs and portraits, one of which was done by the English Orientalist painter R. Talbot Kelly.[28] Both of these texts were highly influenced by the Director of Military Intelligence of the Egyptian Army, Major F.R. Wingate. The role of technological innovations in the destructive power of the Anglo-Egyptian Reconquest of Sudan (1896-1898) has emphasized the role of weaponry such as the Maxim gun and the Lyddite shell, but the camera too was a weapon wielded by empire. In addition to his editorial efforts, Wingate directly influenced the camera's gaze through the press corps, and he effectively staged the visual realms of the Reconquest itself. Following the defeat of Mahdist forces at the Battle of Atbara on April 8, 1898, before taking what became a much-reproduced image of Mahmood Wad Ahmed in front of members of a Sudanese battalion of the Egyptian Army, there exists an image of the two men talking. Next to Wingate stands a camera, a visual testament to the importance of this technology of power to the new political order in the making.

Conclusion

I close with this image of Wingate with the camera because it draws together the themes we have visually analyzed: the presence of this image demonstrates the importance of photography and visual culture to understanding imperial projects in the Nile Valley from the first photographic encounters in the middle of the nineteenth century to the new visual realms made possible by the Morhig postcards in the early twentieth. I want to close by returning to Emily Hornby's encounter with the people outside the station roughly seven years and seventy miles from where F.R.Wingate and Mahmood Wad Ahmad posed. Perhaps, for those who gathered around the station, they understood well that—when faced with multiple technologies of imperial power—one course of action was to simply run away.

BIOGRAPHY

Katie J. Hickerson is a cultural and political historian of the nineteenth and early twentieth-century Nile Valley and an Assistant Instructional Professor at the University of Chicago. Her book manuscript-in-preparation, *Mortal Struggles: Death and Empire in the Nile Valley*, examines cultural practices surrounding death in Sudan throughout the era of Ottoman-Egyptian colonialism, the Islamic-inspired independent state known as the *Mahdiyya*, and the beginning of the co-dominion of Sudan by Great Britain and Egypt, as well as the transitions between these periods. Before coming to the University of Chicago, she was a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Middle East Center at the University of Pennsylvania and a Mary Catherine Mooney Fellow at the Boston Athenæum. She was the 2022 Sir William Luce Fellow, Trevelyan College, Durham University. Her writings have appeared in the Journal of Northeast African Studies; Encyclopaedia of Islam, 3rd edition; and the Sudan Studies Bulletin.

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End notes

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7 SAD A22.93, reprint of *Chemist and Druggist*, March 9, 1907.
8 Kate Addleman-Frankel, "The Experience of Elsewhere: Photography in the Travelogues of Pierre Trémaux," *Photographies*, 11:1 (2018): 33-34.
9 Ibid.

10 Salah Mohamed Ahmed, "History of Archaeological Work in the Middle Nile Region," in Geoff Emberling and Bruce Beyer Williams eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Nubia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021): 9.
11 Pierre Tremaux, Jeune Femme Nouba. 1853-4; print 1853-9, salted paper print, Getty Museum Collection, https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/object/1049A8.
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13 See Ahmad Alawad Sikainga, "Slavery and Social Life in Nineteenth-Century Turco-Egyptian Khartoum," in *Race and Slavery in the Middle East*, ed. Terence Walz and Kenneth M. Cuno (Cairo and New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2010), 162.
14 For image-makers producing photographic material this type of image, see Christopher Morton, "Richard Buchta and the Visual Representation of Equatoria in the Later Nineteenth Century," in *The African Photographic Archive: Research* and Curatorial *Strategies*, Christopher Morton and Darren Newbury eds., (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015): 25; see Eve Troutt Powell, "Training Slave for the Camera: Race and Memory in Representation of Slaves, Cairo and Khartoum, 1882-92," in *Fashioning the Modern Middle East: Gender, Body, and Nation*, Renia Lewis, Yasmine Taan, and Elizabeth Wilson eds., (London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2021): 65.
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17 Hippolyte Arnoux, Canal Maritime de Suez, after 1869, Albumen silver print, Getty Museum Collection, https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/object/109BX7#full-artwork-details.
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20 In the digital form the photograph called, "Jeunes guerriers abyssins", but there is no text in the image itself and it is therefore unclear when and by whom this title was given. See: Unknown, Jeunes guerriers abyssins, collected 1892 album print, "57 phot., principalement d'Égypt et signées par Zangaki et H. Arnoux", Bibliothèque national de France: https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b7702173f/f41.item.r=negress%20soudan.
21 C & G Zangaki, Sodat bicharin, 1880-1890s. Albumen print. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Netherlands. https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/collectie/RP-F-F16221.

22 Terence Walz and Kenneth M. Cuno eds., *Race and Slavery in the Middle East* (Cairo and New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2010): Fig. 10-11.
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24 Ibid., 78.
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26 G. Lekegian, Souvenir of "Street Scene" in *Cairo, Egypt: Cairo Street, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago* (Chicago: Globe Lithographing and Printing Co., 1893): 21.
27 Joseph Ohrwalder, *Ten Years' Captivity in the Mahdi's Camp* (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1892): frontplate.
28 Rudolf Slatin, *Fire and Sword in the Sudan* (London: Edward Arnold, 1898): frontplate.