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HISTORY OF THE BOOK AND BOOK PRINTING IN THE MIDDLE EAST

THE RESEARCH LIBRARY OF DR. GEOFFREY ROPER

Approx. 900 titles, some multi-volume, in various languages, principally English, Arabic, Turkish, Persian, French, German and other European languages.

They are mainly on book history with a focus on printing and publishing history in the languages and countries of the Middle East and Islam.

The collection also covers the history of book printing in Arabic in other parts of the world.

Mostly publications of the last 50 years, but a few are older (19th century).

Geoffrey Roper, who compiled this collection over decades, was the driving force behind four symposia on the history of printing and publishing in the languages and countries of the Middle East, held in Leipzig, Mainz, Paris, and Alexandria between 2008 and 2011. These symposia aimed to build a body of knowledge and understanding of a hitherto neglected aspect of the intellectual and social history of the Middle East.

The starting point of this research project was the thesis that only when a considerable amount of data and factual knowledge on the subject has been collected will it be possible to make an informed assessment of the role of printing and publishing in the development of Middle Eastern societies and its influence on patterns of intellectual and cultural life.

This research library on book printing in the Middle East as well as book printing in Arabic in other countries can be seen as a solid foundation for future research on the subject.

Dr. Geoffrey Roper is a bibliographical consultant and print historian. He was head of the Islamic Bibliography Unit at Cambridge University Library, 1982-2003, and Editor of *Index Islamicus* and of the *World Survey of Islamic Manuscripts*. He has written and lectured on the history of printing and publishing in the Muslim world, and curated an exhibition on the subject at the Gutenberg Museum in Mainz. He was an Associate Editor of the *Oxford Companion to the Book* (2010) and Bibliographical & Library Adviser to the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations (Aga Khan University) in London.

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