

MEAP-6-0130
Surveying Endangered Archives in the Jebel Nafusa, Libya

Title of Collection: Library of Muhammad Ahmad Ali al-Tandinmirti

Date of survey: 12 December 2025

Surveyor(s): Muhammad Ayyub al-Sifaw

Creator or Owner of Collection: Muhammad Ahmad Ali a-Tandimirti

Collection Dates: 1950s-1960s

Signed Grant of Permission (Agreement to Digitize and make content openly accessible): Not yet.

Collection Summary:

The collection dates to the 1960s and was owned by a Muhammad Ahmad Ali al-Tandinmirti originally from the Jebel Nafusa region but resident in Tripoli. The contents of the collection comprise movable type printed books in Arabic, some of which date to earlier in the 20th century and others that date to the initial transition from lithograph to moveable type print. In addition, there are a small number (around 8-10) lithograph texts. The collection is quite large (around 600 volumes) but the majority of these are likely modern Arabic print books, which would not be appropriate for a digitization project in the future. If this collection were included in a future project, it is likely that we would want to prioritize the lithographs, rarer 20th century printed works, and any notes, documents, and other items that are likely stored inside of the volumes in the library.

Restrictions to Collection or Sensitive Material:

Note any restrictions in place or sensitive material identified by the donor or during the survey (e.g., Social Security numbers, student records, etc.).

It is the wife of the late owner who allowed us access to the collection and for the time being, we do not anticipate any future restrictions. Until we have a chance to inspect the collection in more detail, there are no immediate restrictions with respect to content. If we were at a later stage to find that inside the books there were personal papers like bills, receipts, or other documents, these might be considered sensitive and not included in a future digitization project.

Extent:

Note size of collection and explain any unusual circumstances.

Approx.	Linear feet
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0	Number of records cartons	0	Number of oversized boxes
600	Number of volumes (unboxed)		
	Number of items (unboxed)		
0	Oversized material (in flat files or otherwise unboxed)		

Notes:

The number of volumes is approximate. The time allotted to survey the collection was limited and this was a quick estimate done by the surveyor.

Location(s) of Collection: Private residence in Tripoli, Libya.

Languages in the Collection: Arabic.

Existing Intellectual Access or Description:

Be sure to note whether or not any of the information is publicly available.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> Print or online guide (finding aid)
<input type="checkbox"/> Accession record	<input type="checkbox"/> Catalog record
<input type="checkbox"/> Donor/Control file	<input type="checkbox"/> Box/folder level inventory
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> At least one of these documents is publicly accessible

Notes:

Special Formats:

<input type="checkbox"/> Architectural drawings	<input type="checkbox"/> General oversized
<input type="checkbox"/> Art originals	<input type="checkbox"/> Computer storage units

<input type="checkbox"/> Artifacts	<input type="checkbox"/> Film (negative, slide, microfilm, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/> Audio/Visual material	<input type="checkbox"/> Glass
<input type="checkbox"/> Biological Specimens	<input type="checkbox"/> Photographs
<input type="checkbox"/> Botanical specimens	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

Notes: None. All items appear to be on paper. With the exception of a few lithograph items, most appear to be printed works in Arabic.

Conservation and Preservation:

Note any issues relating to conservation and preservation. Note whether the collection appears stable or if it requires immediate attention.

<input type="checkbox"/> Mold	<input type="checkbox"/> Tape
<input type="checkbox"/> Recent pest damage	<input type="checkbox"/> Thermofax paper
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excessive dirt/dust	<input type="checkbox"/> Damaged binding(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Brittle paper	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers
<input type="checkbox"/> Metal fasteners	<input type="checkbox"/> Water damage
<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorating film base (nitrate or other)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

Notes:

One advantage of the collection is that aside from a lot of dirt and dust, there did not appear to be any significant damage from pests or humidity. This might allow us to go through it some detail, identifying items for digitization in the future.

Digitization Planning

Proposed Digital Format:

What might be the best digital format for making this collection accessible online? Check all that apply.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> JPG Image Files	<input type="checkbox"/> PDF Paginated Objects
<input type="checkbox"/> Audio Files	<input type="checkbox"/> Video Files
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

Notes: Again, we are not certain this particular collection should be a candidate for digitization. We would need some additional time to survey its contents and see if there are local printed editions, documents of historical importance, or extensive marginal notes that might justify its digitization.

Accessibility

Consider additional needs for making materials accessible online? Will this collection require any of the following? Note where these processes would add meaning but may not be required.

<input type="checkbox"/> OCR	<input type="checkbox"/> Color or other correction
<input type="checkbox"/> Translation	

Notes:

Supply needs:

Add notes on all supplies needed to digitize this collection. Are there preservation needs first? Will your team need a camera and lights or a slide scanner? Review the [UCLA Library Toolkit](#) for a recommendation.

The collection is overall in good shape so there is less immediate intervention needed to preserve it or to digitize parts of it in the future.

Additional Notes:

Highlight things about the collection that make it difficult to use or understand in its current state.

Like the first collection surveyed, this collection would have to be relocated to the office of the Libya-based team in order to work with it. It is not practical to work on a collection in Tripoli, which is a few hours drive from the project headquarters in Jadu.

Sample Images:

