

# Digital Access and Preserving A Unique Collection in Humanities

Atifa Rawan\* and Yan Han\*\*

## Abstract

The University of Arizona Libraries (UAL), in partnership with the Afghanistan Centre at Kabul University (ACKU) received \$300,000 in 2007 from the National Endowment for Humanities to collaborate on “Preserving and Creating Access to Unique Afghan Records, 1989-2008.” The purposes of this project are: (a) to catalog, and create metadata for ACKU’s collection, (b) to digitize and provide access to these unique materials related to Afghan history, culture, and political events during Afghanistan’s most challenging historical periods; (c) to improve digitization and preservation infrastructure in Afghanistan. This project is committed to providing electronic access and preservation to an important, one-of-a-kind collection of scholarly and grey literature housed at ACKU. Nancy Dupree, ACKU founder and internationally recognized expert on the history, art, archaeology, and people of Afghanistan, has built and continues to expand the most extensive collection of unpublished or limited copies of Afghan resources, including endangered Jihad publications. The ACKU Permanent Collection consists of 45,000 documents covering over 17,000 titles in Dari, Pashto, and various Western languages. It is the largest and most comprehensive repository in Afghanistan providing coverage of political, economic, and religious sectors of development, as well as literature, music, and cultural heritage. The number of ACKU users has increased dramatically over the past few years. Initially the number of users was 100 per month, but this has grown to 800 per month in 2009. Users include local students and university faculty, local and international researchers studying Afghanistan, journalists and aid workers, as well as international organizations conducting major surveys and research on Afghanistan such as the United Nations Development Program, Asia Foundation, and the International Criminal Court based in The Hague.

The UAL working team directors, Atifa Rawan and Yan Han, have visited ACKU and trained ACKU staff in cataloging and digitization. The digitization process includes selecting/preparing documents, registering records, scanning documents, ingesting digital

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images through a digitization management system, providing quality control, and building up structural metadata. To date, the approximately 4,000 re-cataloged titles have been scanned, totaling 250,000 pages. National/international standards and guidelines for scanning, cataloging, and creating metadata (e.g., TIFF, Quality control, structural metadata, MARC, Dublin Core) are employed. Over time, ACKU staff has been trained in standardized cataloging, metadata creation, and digitization. The preservation infrastructure can be a resource for all universities in Afghanistan. One of the aims of the project is to make the entire collection available online, so that users worldwide, as well as users in Kabul, can access the contents of the collection for free. View examples of digitized PDFs of documents from the ACKU Permanent Collection at: [http://www.uair.arizona.edu/holdings/collection?r=uadc://azu\\_nehafghan/](http://www.uair.arizona.edu/holdings/collection?r=uadc://azu_nehafghan/)

# 阿富汗特藏檔案的保存與數位化

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## 摘要

亞利桑那州立大學圖書館（UAL）與喀布爾大學阿富汗中心（ACKU）合作推展「1989-2008 特殊阿富汗檔案之保存與使用」計畫，並於 2007 年共同從美國國家人文研究基金會獲得 30 萬美金之經費。本計畫之主要目的為：(1) 為阿富汗中心之收藏做編目並整理其詮釋資料（metadata）；(2) 將阿富汗歷史上最艱鉅的時期之歷史、文化及政治事件相關資料數位化並供人使用；(3) 改善阿富汗數位化與保存相關之基礎建設。

國際知名的歷史、藝術、考古與民族學專家 Nancy Dupree 不僅創設喀布爾大學的阿富汗中心，也建立阿富汗最大的綜合資料庫，擁有許多未出版或限量資料的珍貴收藏。該中心的永久收藏包括了含 17,000 個標題的 45,000 份文件，語言包含阿富汗官方語言及若干西方語言，並橫跨了政治、經濟、宗教、文化等多方面資料。該中心的使用者近年來大幅增加，至 2009 年已從最初的每月 100 人增為每月 800 人，包含了本地學術界，以及來自聯合國開發計畫、亞洲協會、國際特赦組織等國際組織的各界人士。

亞利桑那州立大學圖書館工作團隊主持人 Atifa Rawan 與 Yan Han 已拜訪阿富汗中心，並授與其中心工作人員編目與數位化之專業訓練。數位化過程包括了文件的篩選與準備、資料登錄、文件掃描、透過數位化管理系統擷取數位圖片、品質管控與建立結構性詮釋資料。至今已有大約 4,000 件依照國內／國際標準與作業規範（如 TIFF、Quality control、structural metadata、MARC、Dublin Core 等）進行重新編目並完成掃描，共約 25 萬頁，並使用了。本計畫的目標之一為使阿富汗中心的所有典藏都能在線上供世界各地使用者免費使用。阿富汗中心已數位化 PDF 文件可於下列網址閱覽：

[http://www.uair.arizona.edu/holdings/collection?r=uadc://azu\\_nehafghan/](http://www.uair.arizona.edu/holdings/collection?r=uadc://azu_nehafghan/)

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