A WIDER-BASED UTILIZATION OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES:
A CASE-STUDY OF THE LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA

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I. A CONCEPT OF A UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

"Any discussion of the organization, administration and functions of the university library should be related to the institution whose objectives it is intended to advance." 1

"The role of the Library can be defined within the framework of the university's mission..." 2

"The academic Librarian must... be prepared to examine higher education as he would any phenomenon in order that he may better relate the Library to it and provide advocacy for the Library." 3

A whole host of such statements, exhortations and dicta obiter abound in library literature which leave us in no doubt that, in order to be relevant, a university library must be in harmony with the higher objectives and mission of its parent, the university.

The library's total overall perspective (which determines the direction of all the technical aspects of library administration such as collection-building, staff recruitment and training, technology applications for technical processing and information retrieval - all of which are essentially means to an end) is addressed to those targets that are in fact,

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1 Wilson and Tauber, p.19.
2 M.A. Gelfand, p.24.
3 'The academic environment', in M. Reynolds, p.xi.
pursued by the university itself; and which therefore reflect
the life, the soul, and the idea that is the university.

Within such a framework and a scheme of things, the
university library assumes a new dimension. It is:

... the central organ of the university - not merely
because, like the electric power station, it is
essential to the functioning of other departments,
but because in itself, it sums up all that is
essential in a concept of a university.¹

If this sentiment is to be taken at all seriously then, the
university librarian must first and foremost examine what is
the concept of a university.

II. THE CONCEPT OF A UNIVERSITY

The idea of a university, its curricula, its relation
to religion and society, its students – has been subjected to
much critical and perceptive analysis.

The function of the 'original universities – those that
emerged in twelfth-century Italy, Spain and France – addressed
themselves almost exclusively to the... training [of]
thelogians, and philosophers, doctors and lawyers...²

Even up to the 1870's, when 'higher education was in
the early stages of its long trend towards secularism' ³
Cardinal Newman, in his classic The Idea of a University
insisted that above all, 'a university could be made to serve

¹L. Jolley, 'The function of a university Library', in D. Gerard,
p.40.
²A.C. Edmonds, p.518.
Christianity. Erudite as he was, one would be hard put to accept, in toto Newman's hypotheses of, for example, the central place of theology within the realm of knowledge and therefore its importance within university curricula.

Since then, the rightful place of the humanities, of philosophy, of technology, etc. within the university curricula has been cogently argued by one or the other savant, depending on his specialization and inclination.

Latter-day concepts have tended to disagree with the 'liberal' approach of Newman. That in fact, the pursuit of knowledge as an end in itself is insufficient, and indeed irresponsible; that certain economies and societies cannot afford this approach. This gave rise to what has been termed the functionalist view of universities, that they must in fact exist to satisfy their 'nation's needs', such as to produce trained manpower, improve needed technology, or whatever. However, authors such as Minogue, warn against past experience being repeated:

Dominant churches have sought to subdue universities to a doctrine, and governments have been eager to control their teaching and membership.

On the surface it would seem that there is more disagreement than there is consensus as to what a university is and what it should do. Therefore the university library looking for guidelines as to their behaviour and role would superficially seem doomed to an eternal state of flux and

1Idem, p.x.
indecision, as changes of curricula, and of relative importance between subjects within the curriculum makes for a very thin line between dynamism and dilemma.

To think this would be to miss the point altogether. True, over the years, changes have occurred, relating to what courses a university should teach; and therefore, the relative importance of faculties/departments within the structure of the university; and who should form the student body.

Over the years, however, there has also been a distinct and remarkable congruence of opinion relating to what a university is; the ideals it should be committed to; its ambiance; and its soul - that 'is-ness' that forms its 'northern star', its constants - no matter what its curricula, who its student body and whatever its chronological and social milieu.

Some Constant Values

Idealistically, for Cardinal Newman, a university is

... the high protecting power of all knowledge and science, of fact and principle, of inquiry and discovery, of experiment and speculation; it maps out the territory of the intellect and sees that there is neither encroachment nor surrender on any side.

And in its devotion to the universality of its teaching and research, 'nothing is too vast, nothing too subtle, nothing too distant, nothing too minute, nothing too discursive, nothing too exact, to engage its attention.'

2Ibid., p.344.
That great example of a university, Oxford, was described by Matthew Arnold as 'the home of lost causes and forsaken beliefs and unpopular names, and impossible loyalties'.

'The University', as Karl Jaspers sees it, 'is an institution characterised simply by loyalty to the idea of truth, no matter how awkward its intellectual or social consequences'. And, although admittedly, it is 'impossible to put readily into words what truth is and how it is acquired', the relentless methodology and indeed, of requirement, set forth by Newman: of unceasing inquiry, speculation, discovery; based upon all that is considered fact - must be adhered to, if a university is to possess 'an atmosphere of honest pursuit of knowledge', and justify its definition through the ages as being 'a community of scholars and students engaged in the task of seeking a truth'. In its activities, the teaching, research and publication or dissemination of its efforts are inseparably linked. In short, it seeks, as a basic prerequisite, ceaselessly and fearlessly to abolish ignorance and push back the perimeters of knowledge that confronts it at any given point in time.

1 E.M. Obeler, p.14, quoting Matthew Arnold.
2 O.L. Zangwill in his preface to Karl Jaspers, Idea of the University, p.13.
3 Karl Jaspers, p.20.
4 U.A. Aziz, 'The university', p.5.
5 Karl Jaspers, p.19; N.E. Fehl, p.5; etc.
III. THE LONG- AND SHORT-TERM PERSPECTIVE OF THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

The University Library, thus, is situated on hallowed ground. To do justice to its heritage, to be part of its heritage, it too must learn to adopt these ideals for its own. With obvious modifications:

(i) it should also attempt to strive for universality

(ii) it must foster research and inquiry and adopt those methods for its own

(iii) to seek ceaselessly for truth and excellence, no matter how inconvenient, uncomfortable and awkward the search may prove, or how much hard work it may entail.1

1 This aspect of say, applying survey and other research methodology to library operations lies outside the scope of this paper. The University of Malaya Library however has attempted this in respect of some operations. Among others: a student reader survey was carried out in January 1976 leading to provision of certain facilities; a loans file survey was carried out in 1979 leading to reorganization of the loans file; and a year-long survey on use of professional services by users after office hours was carried out in 1977/1978 which led to changes in night-duty hours being effected.

2 This aspect too lies outside the direct scope of this paper. However, the Library followed this dictum in 1976; and again in 1981. (i) In 1976, the Library realized, in horror, that a backlog in cataloguing involving about 33,000 volumes existed. A special project to clear this was undertaken between 16 February - 30 June 1976: resulting in 26,664 volumes being cleared. A total of nearly 50,000 volumes were cleared in that year. (ii) Recently, the Library, in the face of increasing book losses, refused to wallow in ignorance any further. Between 27 February - 16 March, it inventoried over 750,000 items; and has been able, by the end of March 1981 to produce a preliminary report on library losses. Both these projects, together with various others, have been, to say the very least, inconvenient, uncomfortable and awkward, and entailed much tedious and unremitting work.
To arrive at this perspective it behoves the university librarian not only to examine what the shorter-run functions of his university are, but also to attempt to understand that unique spirit, often nebulous, that identifies a university, for which in the longer run, it is remembered and revered. This then becomes the guiding principle for library administration and policy for the long term.

It is against this conceptual background, and the real environment, that the wider-based utilization of the university library should be examined.

IV. THE BASIC ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

According to Wilson and Tauber:

The essentials that are fundamental to successful operation of the library and the coordination of its program with the teaching and research program of the university may be presented under eight heads: (1) resources for instruction, research and extension; (2) a competent library staff; (3) organization of materials for use; (4) adequate space and equipment; (5) integration of the library with administrative and educational policies; (6) integration of the library with community, state, regional, national, and international library resources; (7) adequate financial support; and (8) a workable policy of library government.

In short, any discussion of a library's performance or utilization, can be related, basically:

(i) to its collections, and other physical infrastructures, as inanimate resources;

(ii) to its staff, as animate resources;

Wilson and Tauber, p. 19.
(iii) to its policies, as a reflection of library administration's views on how it intends to utilize its resources (i) + (ii), either in combination or individually to fulfill user needs; and

(iv) to its services; which is a manifestation of how efficiently or otherwise library policies have been implemented.

V. FOCUS OF THIS PAPER

It is not the intention of this paper to catalogue all the services and functions of the University of Malaya Library. Rather, bearing in mind:

(i) what has been established as the *sine qua non* of a university's ideals, and therefore of its library's,

(ii) what has been established as its basic role within the university;

a few projects of the Library's are described. These projects are, hopefully, examples of how the Library, in seeking to reach out for a wider-based utilization of its total resources, have attempted to maintain faith with these ideals.

Admittedly, not all these projects have been successful. Some have succeeded better than others; others, it seems to me, have failed altogether. But all this is in the nature of experimentation, inquiry and strife that marks the spirit and essence of a university tradition.

VI. THE PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSALITY AND ITS APPLICATION TO GENERAL COLLECTION-BUILDING

There is extant a print showing the main bookstacks of Leiden University Library in 1610. Of the 22 bookcases in the print, six are devoted to theology, five to law, four to history, two to philosophy, two to letters, two to medicine and one to mathematics.

The 300 years and more that have elapsed since have seen drastic changes in the fields that now form the subject of academic inquiry. Not only have whole new disciplines appeared but the relative importance of one to the others has also changed. In addition, new formats of research materials now abound.

The basic tenets of university library acquisitions policy have, however, remained unchanged. By virtue of that fundamental difference that distinguishes a university from other institutions of higher education (such as institutes, schools, academies, or colleges) university libraries through the ages have continued to seek to acquire materials in all branches of knowledge.

For the University of Malaya Library too, this ideal has been adhered to. Thus, though no department of philosophy yet exists, no course in fine arts formally taught and no music lectures form any part of the curriculum, the Library probably has the biggest collection in the country, of music scores; works on painting, art and sculpture; and the works of major philosophers; though in absolute terms these collections are relatively small. Even for those courses that are taught, for example, English literature, which today tends towards modern literature, literature from 'emergent' cultures and literature of the Commonwealth, this trend has not precluded the acquisition of works of Seneca, Plautus, Aeschylus and Sophocles and of many other authors from a less remote period.
From time to time, detractors have arisen, fully armed with arguments, economic, political or worse, against the acquisition of any materials not directly related to course teaching. From observations set forth in Sections I to III, it can be easily seen why such arguments must firmly be resisted. For a university library to even begin to do justice to its heritage, a basic collection of materials, no matter how modest, must exist for any single subject that conceivably be of interest to anyone.¹

How is this related to the question of a wide-based utilization of the library? The answer is simply that with a wider-based collection, wider interest-needs of readers are satisfied. No one can predict the needs of readers in a truly scholarly environment. In the last year reader queries directed to this writer alone, were received for materials relating to: the prophecies of Nostradamus; the manner in which Roman and Greek plays were staged; the history of freemasonry; the use of musical instruments in the medieval ages and the Renaissance; to the most recent and modern of subjects such as the taxonomy of the machrobrachium rosenbergii; in situ land development; and military strategy as researched by the Rand Corporation; to cite but a very few examples. The general collection of a university library therefore must always attempt to meet inquiry needs; sometimes hard at the heels of requests; but at other times, ranging far ahead to anticipate wants.

¹This, however, in no way presents an argument for complete self-sufficiency of the library. It is at any rate, an impossibility.
VII. THE SPIRIT OF RESEARCH AND THE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

It is however, in its special collections: of national literary works; of the special subject law and medical collections; of the special language - Chinese and Tamil - collections, that the University of Malaya Library takes special pride. For it is from a combination of these collections and the professional staff in charge of them that a very broad base of reference service has emanated. This has consolidated the role of reference services within the range of services given by the Library, and has brought much closer together to the Library a wide circle of that community of scholars of many varied interests that make up the users of a university library. As it is impossible within this paper to consider all the special collections or even all the activities in any one of them, only a few examples are described.

For a nouvelle arrivée of just barely 22 years, it has not been easy for the University of Malaya Library to try to even begin to capture some of the country's most important documents. The most logical strategy therefore is to try to tap the efforts of those who were collecting even before the Library came into being, so that if they were persuaded to part with their collections to the Library, by way of gift or sale, they would have been, in a sense, collecting on behalf of the Library. In this the Library has been remarkably fortunate and today count amongst its treasured collections, quite a few substantial personal donations, together with several smaller, though no less rare and unique, items.
Early Collections of Za'ba and Ramani

One of the Library's earliest gifts, and which has remained its most valuable in terms of resource, and sentiment, has been the personal collection of Zainal Abidin bin Ahmad or 'Za'ba'. Acknowledged as Malaysia's foremost pendîta (scholar) his contributions to Malay literature, Islam, education and the socio-economic fields, have been described in the most glowing terms by his peers. Numbering over 3,000 items, consisting of books, periodicals and personal papers, this collection was presented by Za'ba just before his death in 1965, and the collection was moved to the Library in 1974.1

In 1970, Malaysia lost a great legal mind with the passing away of R. Ramani; who besides having had a long association with the Malaysian bar, had also served as Malaysia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations and President of the Security Council. Throughout his lifetime, he had amassed a considerable collection of legal documents and materials. The family kindly allowed the Library to acquire this collection of about 1,900 volumes. Together with the Justice Sharma Collection (of 519 volumes) and the much smaller Oehlers Collection which had been acquired earlier, they have enhanced the importance and relevance of the Law Library collection into which they have been integrated.

Later Collections of Al-Ahmadi, Ibrahim Yakob and Mohamed Sopiee

Since then, the Library has steadily pursued this objective of obtaining other personal collections. In 1979, it was

1For the circumstances of the gift, and details of the collection see the introductory remarks by Prof. Ungku A. Aziz in the catalogue of the Za'ba collection, Kolekai Za'ba, Kuala Lumpur, University of Malaya Library, 1976, 194 pp.
fortunate to purchase three small collections of materials on the peranakan in Malaysia. In 1980 it received a collection of very old and valuable works from the Al-Ahmadi family in Kelantan. In the same year, the valuable personal collection of one of Malaysia's most controversial Malay nationalists and political figures, Ibrahim Yakob, was received from his widow.

The Library has just been given another collection, that will certainly be one of prime importance, by Datuk Mohamed Sopiee. His long involvement with, and current sustained interest in, the political development of the country; his love for books and his own prolific contributions in the form of articles and pamphlets over a very significant part in the history of the country, will make his donation an attraction to many students of the political process in Malaysia.

Over the years therefore, the Library has managed to acquire by gift, and at other times, by purchase, much valuable source material, which had they not been tracked down, would surely have been lost to posterity. The availability of sufficient funds to enable any opportunity to acquire immediately through purchase cannot be downplayed. However, quite often, far more important is a keeping fast to an ideal of persistent hard work and inquiry that may prove to be as effective. Following are two such examples.

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1 Chinese immigrants who had absorbed the indigenous way of life and speech.

2 For details of this gift, see Koleksi Ibrahim Yakob, Kuala Lumpur, Library, University of Malaya, 1981, 41 pp.
(i) Personal Files of Haji Mohd. Yusof bin Ahmad of Linggi, Negeri Sembilan

Datuk Haji Mohd. Yusof bin Ahmad was Za'ba's brother. Born in 1900, in Kuala Pilah, Negeri Sembilan, Haji Mohd. was himself a prolific writer. Under several pen-names he produced throughout the 1920's through to the 1930's, a wealth of short stories, articles, critical works that have added considerably to the sum total of this country's literature.¹

In 1979, a year before his death, the University of Malaya Library offered through a mutual friend (himself a user of this Library), to arrange and annotate for Datuk Yusof, his files of correspondence containing hundreds of letters, newspaper cuttings, pamphlets and other miscellaneous bits and pieces of memorabilia. In exchange, it was agreed that a copy of those letters of historical importance that could be released would be made for the Library to keep. A team of four professional staff² took three weeks of part-time work in-between daily work routines, to sort out the files. Each item was sorted out and placed in perspective. All letters were sorted by the person it was exchanged with, each one being placed in correct chronological order and annotated. An index was made; the volumes titled. When this work was presented back to Datuk Yusof, he took a decision to give the total collection to the Library and to keep a copy instead.

¹See Abdul Latif Bakar, in Budiman, 1 March 1981, p.10.

²Two staff from the National Collection Division, one from Circulation Division, and one from Cataloguing Division.
After his death in December 1980, the family very kindly donated another 51 files of documents to the Library, which are being processed. All materials are available to scholars, and already, two scholars have begun working on this material with a view towards submitting higher-degree theses from their research. To even widen further the base of reference to these materials, the Library has provided a copy to the National Archives for their circle of users.

(ii) The *Khutbah* (Friday Sermons) of Sheikh Abu Bakar Al Ash'ari

Born in Penang in 1905, Sheikh Abu Bakar Al Ash'ari was educated successively at the Chowrasta Malay School, Anglo-Chinese School and Madrasah Al-Masyhur in Penang; and received further education in religious studies in Cairo.

He returned to Malaya and subsequently taught at the Madrasah Alawiyah, Arus, Perlis, and was the Imam of Alawiyah Mosque for about 30 years. He was a noted teacher and religious leader and throughout his life, was known for his original expositions, and respected as a writer.

The *khutbah* of Uztaz Abu Bakar came to the notice of this Library, again through a mutual friend, yet another valued user of the Library, in 1978, nearly a decade after the death of the Uztaz. The Head of the National Collection Division contacted the family in May 1978, and they agreed to the Library keeping a copy of the *khutbah* for research purposes in June of that year. This collection of *khutbah* had been delivered over a period of 30 years. They proved to be in fairly fragile condition, and could not withstand photocopying.
Though put together, they were in great chronological disorder. Again the professional staff of the Library volunteered to sort out the sermons and listed them. They were then microfiched for preservation. The originals, bound by the Library into 13 volumes, were returned to the family, in July 1978. A set of these fiches has been given to the National Archives for an even wider dissemination of its use to scholars.

Wider-based Utilization of Special Collections

As a matter of policy the Library will make microfiche copies of any item requested by any library anywhere, for research purposes of their own circle of users.

Some of these special collections have been described here at some length for two reasons. It is certain that many amongst the participants to this Conference will wish to know about them; and this will in time lead to the collections' wider utilization.

Secondly, it has been demonstrated very clearly in this Library that the acquisition of collections such as these has always resulted, almost immediately, in the awakening of scholarly interest leading onwards to research and inquiry into the works collected, together with the life and times of the donor/authors.

There is no doubt that the special library collections of the University of Malaya Library are themselves extensions of a wide-based resource; and their utilization is in turn a wider-based utilization of the Library. In all, the exercise
of investigation by library officers; tracking down of the
collections; processing them as a labour of love; and making
them available to researchers, are all in the best traditions
of professional librarianship.

VIII. STAFF PROFESSIONALISM AND WIDER-BASED UTILIZATION

The professional staff of a university library is perhaps
its most important resource. A well-trained body of people
(better still if they are also well-experienced) tend to imbue
each other with the confidence they need to tackle the jobs
demanded of them. Involvement in a range of professional
activities reduces boredom inherent in daily routine work.

But more important, if staff ability can be stretched to their
fullest, it would mean that not only the library, and its users,
but society and the profession are able to utilize this
important resource. It is from this standpoint that the
professional staff of the University of Malaya Library - their
qualifications and skills, their involvement in the profession
and the society at large - is examined.

Academic and Professional Qualifications

The Library has 37 posts for professional staff of which
32 have been filled. All professional staff in the Library
have to be university graduates. All but two have library
associateships/diplomas/degrees from the UK, US or Australia.
Postgraduate qualifications possessed by various staff include
masters degrees in library science, economics, history and
law. In the last five years nine staff have been sent to
obtain their basic professional or post-professional qualifi-
cations, and another five or six more are scheduled to leave
within the next two years. Two staff are pursuing higher
degrees in economics and sociology on a part-time basis.

Language Skills

In addition, all professional staff are encouraged to
acquire language skills. All staff are expected to be
proficient in English and Malay. Over the last five years,
however, the Library has adopted a conscious policy of
encouraging staff, as a team, to increase their language
skills. Considerable progress has been made. The Library
is now able to deal with materials in the following
languages, besides English and Malay: Arabic, Chinese,
Dutch, French, German, Japanese and Tamil. Staff have also
either just taken up, signed up for, or evinced interest in,
courses in Tagalog, Thai, Russian and Spanish. In these
language courses, a policy of wider coverage is encouraged;
a clustering together of staff over any one single foreign
language is discouraged.

In addition, staff are also encouraged to follow courses
on other 'languages' - computer languages - Fortran and
Cobol, to prepare them for the days of computerization that
now loom ahead.

What is all this supposed to prove, or to achieve,
especially in relation to a wider-based utilization of the
university library?

The most obvious advantages, of course, relate to
technical processing and the alleviating of backlogs of
foreign language books which otherwise would have been
acquired to no avail. This has direct bearing on the wider-based utilization of more types of materials by library users. More important, however, is that one is able to hark back to those traditions of excellence, of the pursuit of knowledge for self-advancement, propounded by a university; and the Library, in adopting these ideals, commits itself to upholding both scholastic and professional excellence of its staff.

Working Experience

The Library has been even more fortunate in that it possesses amongst its staff many of long experience: four heads of divisions each have over 20 years of experience; and the remaining four with well over a dozen years' of experience each. In addition, some ten of its other library officers have put in about a decade of service each. This has meant that library services have tended to be consistent, and of a high standard throughout. As Breillat has put it:

Progress on these lines is possible, however, only if there is continuity in the staff responsible for such public collections and in the general policy pursued. The advantages of keeping a library as long as possible in the same hands cannot be over-emphasized. It is the only way of ensuring that the librarian will be fully acquainted with his book stock, aware of its scope and its deficiencies, and thus prepared to seize every opportunity that may present itself to fill in a gap or complete a series. It is also the only basis upon which useful personal and official relationships can be maintained and developed.

1Breillat, p.19. Though Breillat made this remark in connection with collections in municipal libraries, this is certainly also very true of any aspect of reader services and technical work in a library.
Extramural Activities

Within the last few years, every single professional staff has been sponsored to attend workshops, seminars, conferences and study tours (both national and international); most have undertaken indexing and bibliographical projects or other activities related to library activity such as mounting book exhibitions, giving library orientation lectures, and so on. Various staff have also written articles or presented papers to conferences, here or abroad.

The expertise of staff have been recognized and the Library takes pride in allowing members to be associated with societies, working groups, committees, etc. which contribute to the well-being and advancement, not only of the profession, but of society and man as a civilized, knowing being. Among the many associations and working groups with which staff have been associated or are represented are the following:

1. National Science Council Committee on Medical Research Subcommittee on Information and Publication (based in Washington).


3. W.H.O. Advisory Committee on Medical Research, Subcommittee on Information.

4. Executive Committee for Selangor Society for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled; and Editorial Board of their Newsletter.


1 'Extramural' being used as in the original meaning of the word: extra-muros.

8. Board of Studies for the Establishment of a Postgraduate School of Librarianship and Archival Studies.

9. Ad Hoc Committee on the Microfilm Bill, Micrographic Association of Malaysia (PERMIKMA).

10. Working Committee to Study Legal Drafting for a National Information System.


12. Executive Committee of the Malaysian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies.

13. Board of Directors, University of Malaya Cooperative Bookshop.

14. Advisory Board for the Setting up of a Public Library for Petaling Jaya.

In addition, several other staff serve as the Library Association of Malaysia's representatives to boards of various state public libraries, and in the committees and subcommittees of the Association. Nearly all staff members are also members of the Library Association of Malaysia, and also of the Library Association which grants them their associateship. In one capacity or another most staff have helped in, or organized, seminars, workshops and conferences, at national and international levels.

**Attachment to Faculties/Departments**

Since 1976, professional staff who are interested have volunteered to serve as 'liaison and reference personnel' with any academic department of their choice. Under this scheme, the professional is encouraged to go to the department concerned, meet with its staff, and generally discuss library problems and disseminate information on library activities and projects on
an informal basis. They help academic members of their chosen department with professional queries; they keep track of book orders, and sometimes process on a 'rush' basis books urgently needed, on request. Where they are unable to cope alone, they liaise with their fellow professionals to sort out problems.

This project has only had limited success. Much has depended on the initiative of the professional staff concerned, but many academic departments also have waxed and waned in their enthusiasm. Despite this, however, many problems have been floated up. For successful 'partnerships' the scheme has proved attractive from both sides, as academic staff feel they have at least one person in the Library that they can go to with all types of queries and problems.

Professional staff too are in this way forced to get to know their own colleagues better in discussing problems they are not able to handle, and obtain a better sense of perspective of what other library departments do. Finally, the reference base is widened, as one and all are caught up in the process of dispensing information. All in all, a wider-based utilization of this resource of staff is achieved.

IX. LIBRARY OUTREACH AND THE ACADEMIC CONNECTION

All academic libraries perform their basic function of supporting teaching and research by the mere acquisition, processing and circulating of books, periodicals and other materials, as efficiently as possible. Research curiosity is further satisfied with the library retrieving information in answer to individual queries.
In the last five years, the University of Malaya Library has experimented with broadening the base of this fundamental activity. This has been done by launching bibliographical projects which are directly related to (i) proposed new coursework and/or (ii) newly-identified fields of research activity and (iii) an ad hoc expression of academic interest, as the organization of conferences, seminars or workshops. To minimize wastage of time and energy, to maintain academic credibility, and to ensure the relevance of such projects, a close involvement in the library projects by the academic interests concerned is necessary, and so far, has been enthusiastically given. Below are cited a few examples.

**Linking of Bibliographical to Teaching Activity**

In June 1976, the Faculty of Arts planned to launch a new study programme for the 1976/77 session called the Southeast Asian Studies programme to be offered to second-year, and then to third-year students in the Faculty a year later. In addition to various existing courses being offered from various departments, the programme package was to offer three completely new courses specially designed for the programme, entitled 'Introduction to Southeast Asia'; 'Southeast Asia Literature' and 'Southeast Asian Drama'.

In support of this programme, the Library prepared, within a month, a bibliography the objectives of which were, specifically (a) to bring to the attention of the academic community both the available and recent materials on these topics; and
(b) to aid the students of the new course, by allowing them to
know the extent of the literature even before the course
started and to locate the materials quickly and easily when
they finally enrolled for the course.

The preparation and arrangement of the bibliography
benefited greatly from the invaluable help and advice rendered
by two academic members who were involved with the academic
programme.

As further supportive measures, the Library
(a) undertook an extensive 'search-and acquire' programme,
   prior to, and during, the preparation of the bibliography.
(b) it launched a 'rush programme' to put newly-acquired
   Southeast Asian materials on the shelves as a matter of
   priority; and,
(c) a separate new series of accessions listings was started,
   which detailed all new acquisition on Southeast Asia.

All three measures have been adopted till today in
support of the continuing Southeast Asian programme; and both
the Bibliography and especially the continuing Accessions List
on Southeast Asia have been well-received. 1

Subsequent efforts in this bibliography tradition include
bibliographies on traditional medicine, 2 archaeology, 3 and
Malay grammar. 4 The last effort has been particularly

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1 For further details of the project, the participating
   librarians, the scope and focus of the project, see the
   'Introductory Note' to Bibliography on Literature, Drama and
   Dance in Southeast Asia, Kuala Lumpur, Library, University of

2 Teh Kang Hai, Tradition and Medicine in Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur,
   University of Malaya Library, 1977, 29 pp. This has been
   updated and expanded upon in a supplement by Monica Kuak
   Sim Joo, in 1981.

3 Monica Kuak Sim Joo and Che Puteh Ismail, Archaeology in Malaysia

4 Che Puteh Ismail and Nik Safiah Karim, Bibliografi Tatabahagia
   Bahasa Melayu, Kuala Lumpur, University of Malaya Library,
Gratifying as it represents the joint efforts of a librarian (as compiler) and an academic staff (as the exponent on the subject).

(ii) Linking of Bibliographical to Research Projects

In February 1979 the Library was approached by the Research Project Team (The Malaysian component) at the Faculty of Economics and Administration, University of Malaya, conducting a two-year IDRC-sponsored regional study on rural financial markets, to compile a working bibliography for this project. The bibliography was conceived of as being a rapidly-compiled, tentative effort: a quick literature search to indicate initially the existence (or lack of) materials on the subject. The other two country components of this regional project, i.e. Korea and the Philippines, would also produce similar listings for their countries to enable an exchange of information to take place.

Undertaken again over a period of a month, the resultant Bibliography followed the scope of the research project outlined by the Project Team in their Research Proposal. Throughout, the Library Bibliographical Team was encouraged by, and received support from, various members of the Research Team who also helped supply entries they had located. As before, a 'search-and-acquire' methodology was adopted, funding being made available by the Faculty of Economics and Administration for purchasing materials located. The Bibliographical Team was gratified by the enthusiastic response which greeted the final Bibliography, which was tendered to the Research Team for their use in May 1979.

For further details on this project, see the 'Introductory Note' to Financial Institutions and the Rural Market: with Special Reference to Malaysia: A Background Bibliography compiled by nineteen librarians of the Library, University of Malaya, for the Regional Project on Rural Financial Markets, Kuala Lumpur, Library, University of Malaya, 1979.
Subsequent projects have included (a) a bibliography-on-card, established for the research project HAWA (Haul Wanita), which researches into all aspects of women migrant factory workers in Malaysia; (b) a similar 'card-bibliography' launched early this year for another research project on Johore, and (c) a bibliography on rice cultivation soon to be published, a joint effort between a librarian and an academic staff. Both these two research projects are massive and comprehensive: and have a much longer time-span than other research projects. As a result, the end bibliographies are not expected to be published till after the completion of the project reports. In the interim, all academic members of the project teams have recourse to the 'card-bibliography' into which new entries are being continuously added when they are located.

(iii) Linking Bibliographical and Library Activity to Ad Hoc Academic Interests

From time to time, various academic groups and/or professional people with an academic orientation express their interest in a specific subject or topic by holding seminars, workshops, conferences or congresses, with this specific interest focus.

The Library supports any of these 'happenings' in various ways:

(a) A bibliography could be compiled and submitted as a background paper to the conference, etc. for the use of its participants. The following examples may be cited:


(b) Book exhibitions could be held at the Conference venue, throughout the period of the Conference. This was done for both the SOMIPLAN Seminar and the Orang Asli Seminar cited above.

(c) The Library could offer its premises to allow conference organizers to hold various lectures in a seminar series there. This has been done for quite a few talks, seminars etc. held by the Department of Malay Studies throughout 1979-80.

(d) The Library could also offer its staff to help in the organizing of such conferences, etc. In this way library staff have helped the University's Language Centre mount their very successful programme on Audio Visual Teaching Materials (in 1977); contributed to various similar efforts in the Faculties of Economics and Administration 1977-80; and Arts. Currently the library staff are also committed to helping the Faculty of Science in an international conference on Avicenne or Avicenna (Ibn Sina) in June 1981.

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1 This bibliography compiled for the Colloquium on the Aetiology of Poverty organized by the Persatuan Ekonomi Malaysia (Malaysian Economic Association) marked the maiden bibliographical effort by the library staff. Other bibliographical projects have followed, thick and fast, at the heels of this listing.

2 As many of the items relevant to the Symposium had been acquired. specially for the exhibition, the listing was fairly comprehensive.

3 Like that for the Symposium, items were specially tracked down for this Seminar.
(e) Finally participants to such conferences, seminars, etc. on campus could be allowed access to the library collections; given professional help; library tours, for the period they are in the university. The latest example of this type of facility was extended to the participants of the Second Southeast Asian Conference on Mathematical Education in late April 1981.

(iv) Library Publications and Academic Programmes

In 1980, the Library brought out in print, an 800-page *Catalogue of the Malay Collection of the Library*. Between 1979-1980, the Department of Malay Studies, set up in 1959, held a series of talks, seminars, lectures, cultural presentations, as part of their twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations, to bring into sharper focus the significant progress made in both teaching and research in these important fields.

The Library, from 1979, undertook a year-long project, to collocate, edit and present entries of their 10,000 item-collection on all aspects of Malay language and literature, in readily accessible book form, to mark these twenty-five years of teaching and research in Malay studies.

This culmination of the various bibliographical activities and publications of the library staff was warmly received, and has been felt to be an adequate contribution towards a wider-based utilization of perhaps the most important collection of materials in this Library. It has served to bring to the attention of individual scholars as well as research libraries, locally and abroad, the access that they can gain to this collection of the Library.

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1 For details see: Katalog Koleksi Melayu: Catalogue of the Malay Collection, Kuala Lumpur, University of Malaya Library, 1980.
'Politics', - the art of persuading people that they want what you want - has always been a part of library life, especially of academic library life.¹

The reverse is as true: and university librarians must ever remember, that for them to be relevant in any sense of the word, they must as often be persuaded that they want what their users want.

In constantly exhibiting their collections, or sub-collections, by rigorous identification of user-needs and providing as quickly as possible, specifically-tailored bibliographical tools to fulfill these needs, a wider base of user-needs are reached. In adopting the ideals of inquiry and excellence in the preparation of these tools, university libraries and librarians are better able to satisfy the same ideals, but targeted towards teaching and research, on the part of their academic users.

X. ANOTHER DIMENSION OF WIDER-BASED UTILIZATION: SPECIAL SERVICES TO SPECIAL USER-GROUPS

At a gift-presentation recently,² the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Malaya, Royal Professor Ungku A. Aziz, remarked that an indication of how civilized a society was lies in their attitudes and behaviour towards their disabled members. By extension this remark applies to a library, if it counts the handicapped amongst its users. In the event, any discussion of a library's wider-based utilization then, must necessarily take into consideration library programmes to various groups with special library needs.

¹ W.H. Webb, 'Collection developments for the university and large research library: more and more versus less and less', in H. Poole, p.148.
² Presentation of 500 blank cassette tapes ceremony by the Association of British Women in Malaysia, to the University of Malaya, on 11 February 1980.
In trying to work towards a concerted programme to help the disabled, and incorporate these special services, the University of Malaya Library first started with library services for blind students of the university, who form the largest single group of the physically handicapped. These services are extended to any other of its users who are visually handicapped.

Library Services to the Visually-Handicapped

The University of Malaya has integrated the blind with the sighted since 1970, into its student body. To date, the university has graduated nine blind students, including three who are now teachers, and one masters student.

Until 1978, facilities were limited to acquiring a few titles in braille (a total of 12 titles amounting to 66 volumes); and carrel facilities to every blind student to allow him to have readers read texts to him in the Library.

In 1979, the Library's new Audio Division was initiated; and it was mooted that this new Division would service the programme for the blind.

In 1979 the Library was fortunate to be able to recruit a professional staff who had set up and organized library services for the educational technology unit in a sister-institution. The technical expertise of University of Malaya Library's own Chief Cataloguer proved invaluable in the setting up of the Audio Division itself. Together with enthusiastic support and cooperation of staff from the Cataloguing, Circulation, Acquisitions and National Collection divisions, the programme was launched. This consisted of the following:
(i) Taping of Required Core Texts

Faculties and departments where blind students were enrolled, were contacted to obtain titles of their core texts and recommended readings. Readers were found and these texts were taped for loan to students. A conscious policy of taping local materials is followed; and no text that is already taped elsewhere (especially by the American Recording for the Blind) is taped.

(ii) Borrowing from Other Libraries

From the beginning, the Library of Congress's Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped has been a constant source of help and inspiration. They have filled all requests for loans promptly and willingly.

In addition, membership forms to the cassette library of the American Recording for the Blind are available to blind users of the University of Malaya Library, and through this method they will be able to tap the vast resources of this Library.

(iii) Gifts from the Royal Institute for the Blind

Since 1980, University of Malaya Library has received copies of braille books donated, most generously, by the Royal Institute. These relate to literature, education, and light reading. Readers from the Association of British Women in Malaysia, individual well-wishers of the Library, and the Library's own staff, form the core of readers. More are getting interested in rendering this very useful service to the blind.

See Appendix IIA for a list of titles taped. Some sample titles of texts borrowed are listed in Appendix IIB.
fiction. So far, 934 volumes have been received and are being processed and located in such a way that the blind reader may browse before borrowing.

**Financing the Library Services Programme for the Blind**

Every year, there is only at most a handful of blind students; and so far there are only one or two other external users of the University of Malaya Library who are visually-handicapped. This very factor makes it easy for this group to be neglected; and simultaneously it makes it very difficult to divert large sums of money to this programme, or funds allocation may become distorted.

The University of Malaya Library programme has therefore largely sought to make use of facilities from libraries that are more affluent. The expenditure so far incurred have been minimal - direct overhead costs being in the region of about M$4,000: M$1,700 to purchase 6 cassette players so that cassettes taped in the United States which use a different configuration, can be played; and M$2,300 for a cassette duplicator that makes copies of texts recorded locally for which there is no copyright infringement, for requesting blind students only. Recurrent costs will be on cost of tapes bought for the purpose. However, it is very clear that the whole project could not have started, or continue, without a fund of goodwill, and volunteer support, all of which so far has cost the Library nothing at all.
Library Services to the Physically Handicapped

Every now and then, the student body may include one or two physically-disabled. So far, the only library concession has been a ramp at the entrance of the Library; and a book delivery service on request.

From 1981, however, things should look up. A library staff is to be sent away especially to be trained in the offering of library services to the disabled. When she returns, she will initiate all such services, with help from the other professionals who have been involved in the programmes so far. To her and her team, all handicapped users will be referred.

A collection of materials is being slowly built up (see Appendix IIIC) which is hoped will provide (a) inspiration to the disabled to carry on; (b) guidance to them towards self-improvement and (c) permit library staff to be more aware of the provision of such services.

A Basic Policy

In the provision of library services to such special groups, the Library must not confuse sympathy with pity; or aid, with molly-coddling. In the same way that a library merely provides, say, bilingual dictionaries in English and French to a reader who does not read French, but does not embarrass him with pity over his deficiency in French, there is basically no need to gush over the physically-handicapped user.

However, there is a responsible need to ensure every available

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Miss Bathmavathi Krishnan, herself confined to a wheelchair, and yet one of University of Malaya Library's most lively and resourceful librarians, will leave for England in September 1981 to undertake this course.
facility: to those who cannot reach the topmost shelf; who cannot climb stairs; who cannot see. The provision of services from one's own library; and from the resources of others, certainly make for a wider-based utilization of a library.

XI. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the chronology of libraries, the University of Malaya Library is still an infant in swaddling clothes. There is therefore still time for experimentation; and some mistakes may still be forgiven.

University library administration, as many will agree, is not all roses. Often, in order to obtain support from its library committee for more funding and posts, the library must commit itself to many new projects and functions. Armed with this support, it goes before doleful finance committees that proceed to halve requests for funds; then onwards to staff justification committees that reduce all requests to nothing; then onwards to sympathetic equipment committees that have insufficient funds because they too had their requests halved by the finance committee; then finally back to the enthusiastic library committee which has in no way forgotten the initial new projects and proposed services!

These kafkaesque experiences are not unique to any library administration but serve to remind their administrators that, in the midst of all their idealism, they have to operate within the realms of reality. Within this reality, however, the possibility remains for every library to push back the
perimeters of its normal day-to-day routine services, so that it is able to offer, as economically as possible and within its own limits, more services, more varied services and to more types of users, over longer periods of time.
APPENDIX I: SOME BASIC INFORMATION ON THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA LIBRARY

1. **Founded:** 1959

2. **Composition and holdings:** The Library system consists of the Main Library, with about 600,000 volumes; and two special subject libraries: the Law Library (50,000 vols.) and the Medical Library (100,000 vols.) The Main Library houses the various special collections e.g. the National preservation collection (20,000 vols.); the undergraduate teaching collection (20,000 vols.); the Chinese collection (50,000 vols.); the Tamil collection (10,000 vols.); the art collection (5,000 vols.); the rare and restricted book collection (2,000 vols.); Braille books (1,000 vols.).

3. **Non-book collections:** Include Microfilms (5,400 titles/10,000 reels); microfiche (8,000 titles); records and phono discs (1,000); cassettes (3,000).

4. **Serial titles:** Over 10,000 of which about 5,000 are on current subscription, divided between the Main Library (3,300); the Medical Library (1,500) and the Law Library (200).

5. **Funding:** About $1 mil. for serial subscriptions; M$2 mil. for books.

6. **Staff:** 37 professional; 200 non-professional.

7. **Publications:** Include bibliographies; library occasional paper series; indexes to laws; besides 4 accessions lists series and other ad hoc publications on librarianship.

8. **Current on-going bibliographical projects:** Ten

9. **Library membership:** Approximately 15,000 per year of which: 10,000 are student members; 2,000 are staff and researchers; 3,000 are external individual members (from the ranks of alumni, the bureaucracy, embassies; private sector; other universities and ordinary members of the public having nothing at all to do with the university, or teaching or research).

10. **Circulation:** Over half a million recorded charges, per annum. However, interlibrary loans, internal long loans to departments, loans for within library premises reading from closed collections are not included.

11. **Opening hours:** For three-quarters of the year, during sessions, the whole library system is open for seven days a week, including weekends and public holidays from 8 a.m. to 11.30 p.m. During the long vacations, library hours are from 8 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. except for Sundays and public holidays when it is closed.
APPENDIX II: PROGRAMME FOR THE BLIND

IIA: TITLES OF BOOKS TAPED BY UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA LIBRARY

(i) For Faculty of Arts


(ii) For Faculty of Economics and Administration


(iii) For Faculty of Education


(iv) For Faculty of Law


* An asterisk indicates the title is being taped.
APPENDIX IIB: SAMPLES OF TITLES BORROWED FROM LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, DIVISION FOR THE BLIND AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

(i) On Blindness and Physical Handicaps
2. Gilbert, Arlene E., *You can do it from a Wheelchair*.

(ii) On Political Science

(iii) Fiction
1. Hemingway, Ernest. *Across the River and into the Trees*.
2. Lawrence, D.H. *Four Short Novels*.
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1. ABDUL AZIZ, Ungku, The University, Text of a talk given in Penang, December 1964.

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15. The LIBRARY as a Community Information Center, Papers presented at an institute conducted by the University of Illinois Library School, 29 September-2 October 1957, Champaign, 1959.


Other Materials: Related and Cited


