

**COLLOQUIUM ON ACADEMIC LIBRARY INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR
SOUTHEAST ASIAN SCHOLARSHIP
(3 - 5 NOVEMBER 1997 : KUALA LUMPUR)**

A Report

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The two and half day Colloquium was organised by the University of Malaya Library to commemorate the opening of the Library's New Wing. The Colloquium received generous sponsorship from the Toyota Foundation and the Japan Foundation Asia Center. Donations were also received from a number of local and foreign companies.

The main objectives of the Colloquium were :

1. To establish an effective working relationship among the university libraries, university presses and schools of library and information science in the region.
2. To facilitate and promote the free flow and exchange of academic information resources among the universities in the region.
3. To contribute towards the systematic development of Southeast Asian collections in university libraries.

Participants (inclusive of speakers and observers) totalling 125 came from Australia, Cambodia, England, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, the United States and Vietnam. The major participants were from Gadjah Mada University, University of Indonesia, University of Malaya, University of the Philippines Diliman and Thammasat University which had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for academic exchange and cooperation in March 1996. The presence of scholars, library and information professionals provided both a regional as well as an international perspective to a largely Southeast Asian regional issue on scholarship and dissemination of scholarly information.

A total of 30 papers were presented at the following 7 sessions:

1. Scholarly Publishing

2. Information Seeking Strategies in Research
3. University Presses
4. Documentation of Current Research in Universities
5. Human Resource Development
6. Resource Sharing : Access and Collection Development
7. Resource Sharing : Networking and IT .

The first session on **Scholarly Publishing** was a meeting of minds on knowledge creation, scholarly book trade and library acquisitions. The paper that set the tone for the Colloquium was presented by Professor Dr. Shamsul Amri Baharuddin from the National University of Malaysia. He spoke on the urgency and importance of indigenous knowledge in *Knowledge Creation, the Social Science and Scholarship on Southeast Asia*. In the same session, Mrs. Lim U Wen Lena (Select Books, Singapore) discussed some general characteristics of scholarly publishing in Southeast Asian universities, problems faced by scholarly publishers and ways of overcoming some of these problems. Ms. Yasuko Kitano discussed the acquisition of Southeast Asian scholarly publications as practised in the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University.

The second session focused on the library's clientele - the scholars and researchers - to find out about their **information seeking strategies in research**. This is highly pertinent since librarians need to understand the actual information needs of their clients to plan and provide relevant services to fulfil these needs. Dr. Paul H. Kratoska (National University of Singapore) presented a very practical and provoking paper on *Cross-cultural studies in Southeast Asia*. Professor Muhammad Kamal Hassan (Malaysian Visiting Professor in Georgetown University,

U.S.A.) also presented his personal experience and observations on *Gathering information on Islam and modernisation in Southeast Asia*. A common area of Southeast Asian studies - *migrant labour* - and the problems of gathering information for this study in the Philippines was shared by Dr. Maruja Milagros B. Asis (University of the Philippines Diliman).

University Presses formed the main theme of the third session. The heads of the university presses of the University of Malaya, the University of Indonesia, Gadjah Mada University, the University of the Philippines and Thammasat University presented state of the art reports on their presses, including both their achievements and problems. Ms. Laura L. Samson of the University of the Philippines Press painted an interesting picture of the dynamics of her press and how sheer hard work and determination helped to rejuvenate a dying press. These presses were highlighted in particular because their Universities have signed a MoU with each other.

In the fourth session, speakers from Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia discussed issues on **documentation of current research** in their countries. Altogether five papers were presented. The first paper by Professor Dato' Dr. Khoo Kay Kim (University of Malaya) was intended to have a researcher relate his experience in obtaining information for research on Southeast Asia. The other four speakers described comprehensively how documentation of research was done in their respective countries or institutions.

Human Resource Development was the topic of the fifth session and papers were presented by three academics from the library schools and one from the chief librarian, University of Malaya. Associate Professors Herminia H. Santos and Josephine C. Sison of the Institute of Library Science, University of the Philippines, presented a joint paper entitled *Collaboration in Postgraduate Librarianship*. The first part of the paper delved into the experience of the Institute of Library Science, University of the Philippines in implementing a regional programme in the early 1980s aimed at training library professionals from Southeast Asia, and eventually to extend this programme to South and East Asia as well. The second section looks at current initiatives of UNESCO in the region and

its effort to upgrade human resource development, in particular library professional development. Mr. Zulfikar Zen from the Department of Library Science, University of Indonesia, gave an indepth discussion on various types of library science degree programmes, both undergraduate and postgraduate courses offered in Indonesia. The Thai scenario was delivered by Ms. Supaporn Patharakorn of Thammasat University who described the various programmes offered by the library schools in Thailand. Finally Dr. Zaiton Osman (University of Malaya) spoke on the potential of library exchange programmes as a tool of human resource development for the library profession, in particular the exchange and sharing of expertise amongst Southeast Asian librarians such as language expertise for cataloguing and classification of library materials.

The sixth and seventh sessions looked at **resource sharing** in libraries. Resource sharing through access and collection development and providing access to library collections through document supply and exchange, supply and exchange of data records were discussed in the sixth session. Mrs. Belen B. Angeles (University of the Philippines Library) described the various special collections held in her library while Ms. Margaret Nicolson explained the origins of the extensive Southeast Asian collection in the Brynmor Jones Library in the University of Hull. Mr. Dady Rachmananta (National Library of Indonesia) explained the role of the National Library in supporting academic library resources in Indonesia. Fellow Indonesian librarians, Ms Nawang Purwanti described the situation in Gadjah Mada University Library while Mr. Mohamad Aries (University of Indonesia) spoke on the role of Discipline Service Centers in the provision of information and the difficulties faced by the Central Library in coordinating the various centers in the university set up.

The objective of the session on **Resource sharing through networking and IT** was to invite discussion on regional networking through the sharing of existing national databases and networks. National networks and databases have been developed by the MoU universities and other institutions in their countries, but are still not fully developed, and may not be widely accessible and known to their MoU partners because of technical limitations. Dr. Matthew

Ciolek (Australian National University) gave a detailed account of collaborative strategies and efforts to provide Internet linkages to Southeast Asian scholarly networks.

The highlight of the Colloquium was the **Forum on Regionalism within Globalization: the Future of Southeast Asian Scholarship** in which four distinguished speakers gave their views. While the Forum was being held, three Roundtable sessions were concurrently held where the five MoU partners met to discuss three major areas of cooperation - depository system for the publications of the five university presses, resource sharing of unique collections and data records and librarians exchange programmes.

Roundtable Decisions and Formulation of Strategies for Implementation

The decisions made at the Roundtable sessions by the five MoU partners were presented and discussed by the participants. These decisions would be submitted to the management of the respective MoU universities for implementation. Nevertheless, with the signing of the Roundtable decisions by the respective librarians and university presses, the Colloquium has achieved the main objective of fostering interlibrary cooperation between the five universities through the following measures:

I. Depository System

Each university press will offer gratis five titles from its list of publications annually to all MoU partners. The university libraries may choose any five titles from the lists. The presses will hand over the titles to the respective libraries for forwarding to the other partners.

II. Librarians Exchange Programmes

Creation of biodata of the MoU partners

UM Library will collect the necessary information from the MoU institutions and subsequently provide it to MoU partners and the participants of the Colloquium.

Creation of a directory and a database on the competencies of professional staff

The database is planned to be ready by the end of March 1998 and to be accessible to MoU partners and worldwide.

Establishment of a Document Delivery Unit for Southeast Asian scholarly publications

A Document Delivery Unit for Southeast Asian scholarly publications will be set up in each MoU institution for processing requests for Southeast Asian materials and fulfilling such requests for texts, and articles from journals or books.

Workshop on Bibliographic Standards

The objective of the Workshop, which may be held in any of the MoU countries, would be to formulate basic standards for cataloguing Southeast Asian materials.

III. Resource Sharing

Document supply

MoU partners agree to supply upon request copies in any format of unique materials (e.g. theses, manuscripts, rare books) which may be required for study and research by the respective academic communities. Such copies will be supplied subject to existing institutional rules and regulations.

Gift and Exchange

MoU partners agree to offer as gift or exchange university calendars, faculty publications, library publications and other publications to each other.

Data Records

MoU partners agree to share data records of their unique collections in the form of exchanging bibliographic records/catalogue entries.

Colloquium Proceedings

Volume one of the Proceedings has been published and volume two is expected to be ready in early 1998.

Website

The University of Malaya Library is setting up a **UMfSEA Website** (URL : <http://www.umlib.um.edu.my/umsea/htm>) as a forum for Southeast Asian scholarly information which should be ready by early 1998. Any contributions from MoU partners and interested scholars and librarians will be warmly welcomed.