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MALAYSIANA COLLECTION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA LIBRARY

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ABSTRACT

Malaysiana collection at the University of Malaya is defined as: (i) Books about Malaysia published locally or overseas, (ii) Books/Conference papers/Journal articles written by Malaysian and (iii) Books/Journals/Conference proceedings published in Malaysia regardless of the contents. The collection development adheres to materials which are scholarly and academic in nature. Whilst the acquiring of books is particularly in the areas of Malay language, literature and culture, journal articles and conference papers follow a much wider scope. The University of Malaya with collections published as early as the 17th Century has always been the prime spot for researchers dwelling in local content from both within the country and from overseas. This paper will discuss the Malaysiana information resources at the University of Malaya Library and its accessibility to the researchers.

Keywords: Malaysiana; Local collection; Accessibility; University of Malaya

INTRODUCTION

The Malaysiana collection at the University of Malaya Library grew alongside the collection of the library which has its history in Singapore about a century ago. It dates back to pre independence publications including the era of the Dutch, British and Portuguese in the country. The definition of Malaysiana in the early days included materials about Singapore and also those published there. The reason being, Singapore was part of Malaysia until 1964. The current definition of Malaysiana is :

- i. Books/Journal articles/Conference papers about Malaysia published locally or overseas,
- ii. Books/Journal articles/Conference papers written by a Malaysian, and

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- iii. Books/Journals published in Malaysia and Conference/Seminars held in Malaysia.

BACKGROUND

The collection development of Malaysiana materials at the University of Malaya Library was and is still one of the fundamental policies of all branch and special libraries in the network. Books, book chapters, journal articles, conference papers and newspaper cuttings in the areas of Malay language, literature and culture have always been acquired. Official government publications were actively collected when UM was the depository body for local publications. The Za'ba Memorial Library or *Perpustakaan Peringatan Za'ba*, popularly known as PPZ was formed in 1976 and is one of the three branch libraries in the network. The main function is to acquire at least one copy of Malaysiana materials and preserve it. Although copies of the same title can be found in the other branch and special libraries, the PPZ collection is complete. Students and researchers from within and outside the University are allowed access to the collection but within limits. There are no borrowing facilities here. Users can browse within the building and upon request can apply for a 10% photocopy of the material, provided it is approved by the officer-on-duty. This leeway however was taken off when there were traces of vandalism and also wear and tear of the materials.

In the early days before the policy of Malaysiana was formulated, the Library had unique materials which include handwritten documents of the Malay States such as : *Sha'ir Agung, Hikayat Charang Misa Kembar Sari Ratu, Hikayat emas Jelolok, Hikayat Badrul Mu'in, Ganja Mara, Hikayat Jinatur Jayeng Kusuma, Misa Parbu Jaya* and *Sha'ir Shamsul Alam*. Old Malay documents from countries such as Britain, Holland and Germany were also obtained in microform format. The library also had about 500 LP records of old Malay songs which are now in the care of the Malay Ethnographic Museum at the Malay Studies Academy in UM. About 336 records by famous local artistes such as D.J.Dave and *Seniwati* Sharifah Aini were donated by the Radio Television Malaysia. Recordings of Ghazal songs performed by Orkes Hamzah Dolmat at the library studio are available in audio cassettes and video recordings. Tables 1 and 2 shows the University of Malaya Library's Malaysiana collection as in 2010.

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Table 1: Malaysiana Collection

Type	No of Titles
Books	59,148
Conference Papers	71,278
Government Publications	4,557
Malaysian Journals	1,113
Non Print	115
Total	

Table 2: Special and Personal Collections

Type	No. of Titles
Special Collections	
Dutch Collection	1,016
Peranakan Collection	71
Manuscripts	326
Personal Collections	
Ibrahim Yaakob Collection	707
Mohd Taib Collection	1,768
Pintado Collection	122
Swift Collection	1,204
Ungku Aziz Collection	2,282
Total	

MALAYSIANA COLLECTION AT THE UM LIBRARY

1. Manuscripts

The manuscript collection consists of originals as well as titles which have been converted into microfilm/microfiche. There are about 326 manuscripts and most of them are Malay manuscripts handwritten in the Jawi script. Some of them date back to as far back as the 14th Century.

2. Peranakan Collection

Peranakan ethnic refers to the Chinese in the Malay peninsula who spoke the Malay language but retain some of the culture and religion of their ancestors. Their costumes are similar to the Malays in the Malay peninsula. The library during the era of Mr Beda Lim and Mrs Khoo Siew Mun managed to procure two big personal collections from the descendants of the Peranakan ethnic group. Some of the unique collection includes *Chrita dahalu-kala bernama Cheong Moh Inn atau Hong Hor muka biru di zaman Choon Chew Liat Kok Buay* published in romanised Malay in 1938, *Chrita dahulu-kala ber-nama Chin*

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Suat Buay Mak-tiri Siang Loh pada zaman Beng Teaw published in 1899 and *Panton dondang saying Baba-Baba Peranakan* published in 1916.

3. UM Archives

Established in the 1980's, the aim was to place under one roof all the University's publications such as the Annual Reports, Calendars, Handbooks, Inaugural Speeches, Souvenir Programs, Convocation Materials, Speeches of the Chancellor/Vice Chancellors, newspaper clippings (UM in the News), College/Student Activities, Booklets, Examination Papers and last but not least the photographs (UM Memory). UM in the News and UM Memory have been digitized and are available via the Library's homepage.

4. Personal Collections

These comprise of collections donated or acquired from prominent scholars or individuals such as the late Tan Sri Zainal Abidin Ahmad, Royal Professor Dr Ungku Abdul Aziz, Ibrahim Ya'kob, Priest Pintado, Professor M.G.Swift and Professor Mohd. Taib Osman.

i. Za'ba Collection

The late Pendeta Tan Sri Zainal Abidin Ahmad was born in the village of Bukit Kerdas on 16th September 1895 (died 23rd October 1973) and was a famous religious scholar and the only one in his village who could read and write Jawi, a system of writing that uses Malay and Arabic characters. He has taught the Malay language at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and returned to be a senior lecturer at the University of Malaya. He was the first Professor of Malay Studies in the University. He was given the title *Tan Sri* and later *Pendeta* for his contributions and upgrading of the Malay language. His collection was donated to the University of Malaya on 16 October 1965. It consists of materials pertaining to the Malay language and literature, Arab language and other related items on Islamic studies, politics, history and education, in addition to his letter correspondences. Most of these materials were published as early as 1908. His personal and official correspondence reveals the lifestyle and culture during the early days in the country and his viewpoints regarding the current issues then. Some of the outstanding unique titles include *Kitab Rahsia Ejaan Jawi* (1929), *Kamus Buku Katan P.B.M.P.B Diraja Johor* (1936), *Kitab Kata-kata Melayu, Kata-kata Serumpun Dalam Bahasa Melayu* (1957), *Easy Malay Vocabulary* (1929) and *Loghat Empat Bahasa Arab, Parsi, Urdu dan Melayu* (1908).

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- ii. Ungku Aziz Collection
Royal Professor Dr Ungku Aziz is an internationally renowned economist serving in the committees of UNESCO, FAO, ILO and in the ASEAN region. He was also the third and longest serving Vice Chancellor of the University of Malaya from 1965 until 1988 (24 years). He was the first Malay to become a professor and vice chancellor in the country. The collection consists of a copy of everything written by him and also his own collection.
- iii. Ibrahim Ya'kob Collection
Ibrahim Ya'kob is a Malay nationalist whose collection was published during the second world war from the 1940s. Most of the materials cover the history and politics of Indonesia, Malaysia, Russia and China and are in languages such as Malay, Indonesian, English and Russian.
- iv. Pintado Portuguese Collection
Father Emanuel Joaquim Pintado was a priest at St. Peter's Church in Malacca during the 19th century. His collection consists of books on the overseas Portuguese. The collection describes the activities carried out by the Portuguese during their reign in Malacca, Africa, India, Asia and Far East.
- v. M.G.Swift Collection
Professor Michael Godfrey Swift or Mohamad Yusof Abdullah married a local and was attached to the University of Malaya in Singapore from 1957 until 1960. He was one of the well known social anthropologist in the country. One of his valuable contributions was the *Malay Peasant Society* published in 1965 is still considered a classic literature on social anthropology. His collected works entitled *Social Anthropology of the Malays : Collected Essays* is still referred to. This personal collection was donated by his family.
- vi. Mohd Taib Collection
Professor Emeritus Dato' Dr. Mohd Taib Osman was the fifth Vice Chancellor of the University of Malaya and also the Dean of the Academy of Malay Studies from 1991 to 1994. His collection consists of works in the areas of social sciences and humanities.

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5. Dutch Collection

The Dutch Collection consists of materials on the history, culture, arts, literature and languages of the Malay Archipelago during the Dutch era in Malacca from 1641 until 1824. Data from the materials can be used to visualise the local history during that period. Some of the handwritten documents about Malacca during Dutch rule have been microfilmed. As early as the 18th Century, the Dutch have published books on literature, grammar and dictionaries in the Malay language. One of the outstanding book is the *WNT* which is a 40 voluminous Dutch dictionary. Others include *Buku Tatabahasa Bahasa Melayu* and *Kamus Belanda-Melayu dan Melayu-Belanda*.

6. Microforms Collection

The Library has a rich collection of microforms not available elsewhere in the country and sometimes in the region. It dates back to the 17th Century and has records on the history of the country and Southeast Asia during and before the colonial times. It includes historical sources on the Straits Settlements, Federated Malay States, pre-independence politics and government, records from the Colonial Office and Public Records Office in Great Britain. In addition to historical records, the collection also consists of newspapers, both local and foreign such as the *Straits Times* which was the preceding title of the present *New Straits Times*.

NON ROMANISED MALAYSIANA MATERIALS

The Library also has Malaysiana materials in non-Roman scripts such as Arabic, Korean, Japanese, Chinese and Tamil. The definition of Malaysiana is consistently adhered to except that these collections are not in the Malay or the English language. There are about 5,400 Korean/Japanese/Chinese documents, 2,300 Arabic documents and 1,800 Tamil Malaysiana titles.

ACCESSIBILITY OF MALAYSIANA MATERIALS TO RESEARCHERS

An information source that is most accessible is believed to be the one which requires the least effort to access. With the growing interest in digital sources as a result of its increasing accessibility, information sources which are not in digital format are in danger of being neglected by researchers. Malaysiana collections in the country, regardless of where it is located, should be made visible to researchers both locally and abroad. This is one way of ensuring our unique heritage collection is seen and used by many within and outside the country. In tandem with this, the University of Malaya Library has made efforts to set up digital initiatives and also to support and collaborate local digital initiatives set up by the Department of Library

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and Information Science at the University. Among the digital initiatives by the library are:

1. iMalaysiana Index (<http://www.umlib.um.edu.my>)
The iMalaysiana Index was initiated by the Library back in the 1980's because it was realized that there was a dire need to index local contents for the ease of use for our local researchers. A special database was set up together with the online catalogue and was named INDXDB whilst the online catalogue was named UNIMAL. With the upgrading of the library system to a web-based online catalogue, it was renamed iMALAYSIANA. This index database is searchable via the library catalogue and is free for the public. All Malaysiana records identified are indexed with subject entries and input into the system. The database has more than 110,000 records which includes special subjects such as Medicine (1,800), Law (2,700), Dentistry (90), and Islamic Studies (400). These are unique records, most of which are not indexed by the international online databases.
2. UM in the news (<http://www.umlib.um.edu.my>)
This initiative started a year ago at the request of the University to gather news relating to the staff, students, alumni and the University itself that have appeared in local, regional and national newspapers. News identified are scanned and uploaded with the assignment of simple metadata entries. The four major languages of the country, namely Malay, English, Mandarin and Tamil are covered. Although newspaper clippings regarding the University has always been collected by the library, it had not been digitized. With the setting up of this database, the Library has taken this digital initiative as an opportunity to scan old newspaper clippings which were collected over the years and kept in bound volumes.
3. Institutional Repositories (<http://eprints.um.edu.my>)
E prints@UM is a major digital initiative set up to preserve local contents of the academics in the University. The open source digital software, Eprint is used for this purpose. It is administered and managed by the Information System Division at the Library. Policies regarding the copyright issues have been formulated. The uploading of documents is left to the academics and hence, a slow progress. The Library on its part uploads full text conference papers which are linked to the bibliographic records in the library catalogue.

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Among the digital initiatives set up by the Department of Library and Information Science based at the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology which the library supports by having links in its homepage, identifying titles to be included, scanning, and providing metadata tags are as follows:

1. Electronic Journals of the UM (EJUM) (<http://ejum.fsktm.um.edu.my>)
This is an electronic initiative undertaken in 1996 to provide an avenue for full-text electronic journal publishing at the University. It was also to make local research more accessible to students and researchers. Editing and refereeing process of article contributions are electronically managed. Users are provided with efficient and varied search and retrieval options. There are now about thirteen (13) journals which are from various faculties. Two of the titles are indexed in ISI-WOS (*Malaysian Journal of Computer Science* and *Malaysian Journal of Library & Information Science*) and one title is indexed in SCOPUS (*International Journal of Mechanical and Materials Engineering*). Articles from these journals can also be harvested using the Google crawler. Surveys reveal that about 41.8% of users access these journals while making searches on Google or Yahoo (Zainab, 2002). The Library also provides links via its portal.
2. MyManuskrip (<http://mymanuskrip.fsktm.um.edu.my>)
About 99 manuscripts held at the Library have been digitized and made available via the Library's interactive portal. The open source digital software, Greenstone is used (Mohd Hilmi, 2007) and this is a collaborative effort of the University of Malaya, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka and others. The digital version retains the originality and ownership is retained through the use of watermark.
3. Malaysian Abstracting & Indexing System (MyAIS)
(<http://myais.fsktm.um.edu.my>)
MyAIS an open access system for abstracts and indexes of articles published in refereed scholarly Malaysian journals. In some cases, this system also provides full-text access to scholarly articles in journals as well as conference proceedings published in Malaysia or abroad. At the moment, MyAIS relies on the voluntary contribution from Malaysian academics, academic and professional publishers. This is a non-profit making project that attempts to serve Malaysian educational and research community with information about what has been published in Malaysian refereed journals in the various disciplines.

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4. Digital Dissertations (<http://dspace.fsktm.um.edu.my>)

The DSpace@UM Project preserves born digital theses and dissertations and the aim is to increase the visibility of the University's research and to digitally preserve the University's intellectual output. It is open access and accessibility is mostly full text with limitations related to embargo and copyright issues.

FUTURE PLANS

The library has to upgrade its digital initiatives to increase the number of records in them. A number of roadshows to the faculties have been conducted to promote Eprint with the objective of alerting the academics to hasten the uploading of their documents. The academics however are citing lack of time and copyright issues as the reasons for their reluctance to upload. For the Library to upload on behalf of the academics is just one of the future plans. The other plan is to work alongside the publishers to overcome copyright issues. The Library has to review the traditional functions of divisions and also deployment of staff to incorporate new issues emerging as a result of these digital initiatives. The Library staff too have to be trained and the recruitment of new staff have to reflect the growing need for IT savvy personnel.

The Library has also to rejuvenate the collaboration and support to the Department of Library and Information Science. MyAIS which is gaining national recognition contains mainly index and abstracts of journals which are mostly available at the Library. These journals have to be scanned to allow full text accessibility. The Library has procured a scanner which is will be used to scan scholarly articles from these journals. Another plan in the pipeline is to digitize the Malaysiana microforms collections which could be the only source available worldwide.

CONCLUSION

A library with rich local contents collection will encourage the local community to make use of the library services (Greyling, 2010). The University of Malaya Library is equipped with an avalanche of local contents which are historical, cultural and linguistic materials all locked up in written, pictorial and audio formats. Libraries have a responsibility to preserve these treasures which reflect individuals and libraries endeavors that had an impact on culture and society at the national, regional and local levels (Lloyd, 2007). In addition to preservation, libraries also should allow free accessibility and make its treasures visible. This is pertinent in this borderless world so as not to become obscured from the numerous information sources online and information overload.

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