DEVELOPMENT OF CHINESE LIBRARIES IN 20TH CENTURY SINGAPORE

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ABSTRACT

By the late 19th century, the Chinese community had surpassed other races in Singapore to make up more than 70 per cent of the nation's population. Majority of the Chinese during the 19th and 20th century was not highly educated nor well-to-do. Yet, the first "modern" library that was established in Singapore was beyond the means of the Chinese mass as it was not only expensive to access, it was also primarily a pro-English library that catered to the leisure and scholarly needs of the Europeans. Thus, the question of whether there were any institutions established to provide reading and research materials to the Chinese community arose.

This dissertation is a study of the Chinese Libraries built in Singapore during the 20th century. This paper aimed to understand the types of Chinese Libraries available through the examination of the collection of, membership of, cultural activities organised by and reputation of these libraries. Though the lens of important political, social, cultural and economic events, the paper looked at factors that not only led to the emergence of these libraries but also influenced and helped shaped these libraries.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

HEI   Higher Education Institution

KMT   Kuomintang (Nationalist Party of China)

LIS   Library and Information Science

Nantah   Nanyang University

NAS   National Archives of Singapore

NLB   National Library Board

NTU   Nanyang Technological University

NUS   National University of Singapore

OPAC   Online public access catalogue

Simp.   Simplified

SAP   Special Assistance Plan

TMH   Tongmenghui (Chinese United League)

Trad.   Traditional

UCL   United Chinese Library

WWII   Second World War

YCK   Yio Chu Kang

Chapter 1: Introduction

The library throughout time has actually had a sort of constancy in its role and function, a commitment to sustaining culture despite, and perhaps because of, changes occurring all around.

John P. Wilkin (2015)

1.1 Overview

Libraries have long been regarded as social and cultural institutions; they not only play significant roles in human communities but also form integral parts of society. It is believed that "modern" libraries in the Straits Settlements, which comprised of Singapore, Penang and Malacca, were introduced by the British in the early 19th century (Lim, 1970; Mittermaier, 2007). Singapore Library was the first public library in Singapore (Makepeace, Brooke and Braddell, 1991). It officially opened in 1845 and had its roots in the Singapore Institution Library, one of the initiatives of Sir Stamford Raffles (Lim, 2010; Tan, 2018). It was worth to note that the Singapore Library was run and managed by the headmaster of the Singapore Institution who was a Caucasian (Makepeace, Brooke and Braddell, 1991); and all of the initial 34 shareholders were Europeans who were able to afford entrance money established at thirty dollars initially and subsequently at forty dollars as well as monthly subscription fee of two dollars and fifty cents (Makepeace, Brooke and Braddell, 1991; Lim, 2010). Yet, since the late 19th century more than 70 per cent of Singapore's population is made up of Chinese (Lim, 2010). For instance, in 1911, there were 219,577 Chinese among a population of 303,321 people (Makepeace, Brooke and Braddell, 1991). Furthermore, many of the Chinese were not English educated. In 1947, only a mere 10 per cent of the total population of one million people were literate in English (Lim, 2010). Thus, the following questions arose: In Singapore, a predominately Chinese society, what kinds of libraries exist to serve the reading, literacy and education needs of the Chinese? What roles do these libraries play? How do these libraries operate? How have these libraries evolved and changed throughout the years?

1.2 Research Problem and Objectives

Scholarly research on libraries that cater to the needs of the Chinese is scarce. Firstly, there is a lack of research that traces the history of Chinese Libraries in Singapore. The few studies that trace the history of Chinese Libraries in Singapore often researched and studied the libraries in their own context. For instance, the history of Chinese Reading Rooms is often studied in the context of revolution. More commonly, information about Chinese Libraries sits in newspaper reports or grey literature. Secondly, there is a lack of updated studies. In 1970, Edward Lim Huck Tee published a book which discussed the major libraries in West Malaysia and Singapore from pre-colonisation to 1970. In his relatively comprehensive study, Lim traced the history of the University of Singapore's Chinese Library and Nanyang University's Library. More than thirty years later, German scholar Bernhard Mittermaier published a study on libraries in Singapore; however, his focus was on current trends in present-day academic and specialised libraries in Singapore. Hence, it could be concluded that since the publication of Edward's book, there has yet to be another major work that brings the history of libraries in Singapore to date.

Hence, the aim of this research is to investigate and examine Chinese Libraries in Singapore in the 20th century by systematically bringing together these isolated studies and grey literature to address the following questions:

1. What are the types of Chinese Libraries established?
2. Why did these Chinese Libraries emerge?
3. What are the roles played by Chinese Libraries in the lives of Singaporeans?

1.3 Structure of the dissertation

Chapter 2 addressed the methodological approach chosen for this study. The principal sources relied on were newspaper articles which supplemented the absence of scholarly materials. Also, the use of the historical research method provided a systematic approach to discovering unrevealed past events to reconstruct the history of Chinese Libraries in Singapore. Chapter 3 offered a review of the Singapore's society and the development of the Singapore Library (later the Raffles Library, National Library) in the 19th and 20th century to provide a context to the discussion of the emergence of Chinese Libraries in Singapore in

Chapter 4. Chapter 4 began with defining the term "Chinese Libraries" which set the boundary for discussion. Following that, an extensive discussion and analysis of the collection of, membership of, cultural activities hosted by and reputation of Chinese Libraries are included. Lastly, Chapter 5 summarised findings discussed in earlier chapters and included an attempt to answer the research question based on the findings in a thematic analysis. A brief examination of the limitations and possible future research are also covered in this chapter.

Before diving into the discussion proper, it is necessary to clarify the names and terms used in this paper. The Chinese names of personnel, organisations, systems, etc., mentioned in this paper were transliterated into Hanyu pinyin, "the Romanised version for Mandarin" (Bokhorst-Heng and Wee, 2017, p.326) if no original names (often dialect transliterated for Chinese terms used outside of Mainland China, e.g. Singapore, Taiwan, etc.) or official English translations were provided in sources. Appendix 1 has been created to provide a cross-reference between Chinese terms and their respective commonly used Romanised forms.

Chapter 2: Methodology

2.1 Research Approach

In view that the purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the development of Chinese Libraries in Singapore during the 20th century, a historical research approach was chosen for this research. The historical research method was selected as the preferred way to conduct the research because of the following reasons:

- Historical research was one of the most commonly applied methods in the study of Library and Information Science (LIS) (Schlacter and Thomison, 1974 cited in Chu, 2015; Schlacter and Thomison, 1982 cited in Chu, 2015; Järvelin and Vakkari, 1990 cited in Järvelin and Vakkari, 1993; Kumpulainen, 1991; Cheng, 1996; Tuomaala, Järvelin and Vakkari, 2014) and it had a commanding position in LIS research until the 1980s (Feehan et al, 1987 cited in Chu and Ke, 2017; Järvelin and Vakkari, 1990 cited in Chu and Ke, 2017).
- Historical research is a systematic approach of discovering unrevealed past events to understand the association between events, to clarify and respond to any questions and doubts, and to forge a connection between past and present (Berg, 2001; Lundy, 2008).
- Historical research helps in the building of knowledge about librarianship (Busha and Harter, 1980 cited in Bhatt and Bhatt, 1994) which is the objective of this research.

Many scholars (Grigg, 1991; Smith and Lux, 1993; Mason et al., 1997; Golder, 2000; Lundy, 2008) have documented the steps of conducting historical research. Even though each of these processes differs depending on the fields of study, a common procedure found in these studies is the discovery, location and collection of data. Collection of data from both primary and secondary sources is essential as using data from both sources not only provides a comprehensive study of historical events but also maintains the balance between original, first-hand accounts and information and secondary interpretations.

2.2 Data Collection

Aligning to the chosen research approach, the principal data collection for this study relied on studying existing scholarship and examining both primary and secondary resources published in English and Chinese; in particular, a robust examination of four main categories of information sources, published scholarships, grey literature, websites and newspapers were carried out.

2.2.1 Published Scholarships

Edward Lim Huck Tee's *Libraries in West Malaysia and Singapore: a short history* is a relatively comprehensive work that not only provided an overview of various types of libraries in Malaysia and Singapore, such as public libraries, special libraries, educational libraries, etc., but also acted as an important reference to other relevant scholarships, primary sources and grey literature. Similarly, Bernhard Mittermaier's *Libraries in Singapore* elaborated on the various libraries in modern-day Singapore with a chapter dedicated to the history of librarianship in Singapore. Luyt (2008, 2009, 2012, 2018), Lin and Luyt (2014) and Lim (2009, 2010) provided a thorough discussion of the roles played by the Singapore Library, Raffles Library, Raffles National Library and National Library over the years; whereas Butwell (1953), Gopinathan (1989), Wong (2000, 2005), Goh and Tan (2008) gave a good outline of the development in university education in Singapore which provided context in the discussion of the merger of the Nanyang University's Library and the University of Singapore's Libraries.

In addition to publications that focused on libraries in Singapore and the above-mentioned sources, reference was also made to Freedman (1960), Png (1969), Wang (1988), Makepeace, Brooke and Braddell (1991), Hill and Lian (1995), Pereira (1997), Gupta (2006), Lim (2008) and Wee (2010) to gain a better understanding of Singapore society in relation to ethnic composition, language, culture, education, sense of identity, etc. Jones (1971), Euster (1995), Harris (1999), Feather and Sturges (2003), Brophy (2005), Brophy (2007) and Pressley (2009) offered great discussions and definitions of public libraries, academic libraries, factors influencing libraries, etc.

2.2.2 Grey Literature

The National Archives of Singapore (NAS), the official site for housing "government files, private memoirs, historical maps and photographs to oral history interviews and audio-visual materials" (National Archives of Singapore, 2018), was particular useful in the retrieval of institutional documents, such as the annual reports of the University of Malaya, University of Singapore, etc. In addition to the NAS online portal, the Dong nan ya hua ren li shi wen xian (Historical documents of Chinese in South-east Asia) portal created by the National University of Singapore's (NUS) Chinese Library provided access to Nantah's List of Graduates, annual report, University Calendar and other valuable first-hand documentation. Whereas, the Internet Archive, a non-profit organisation that "is building a digital library of Internet sites and other cultural artefacts in digital form" (About the Internet Archive, n.d.), held digital versions of published works which included departmental reports of the Straits Settlement. Taking into consideration the practicality of reviewing these grey literature in a limited given time period, focus and priorities were given to the examination of contents that were not available in other resource formats.

2.2.3 Websites

Consultations of various organisations' websites have also been made to gather current information relevant to the organisations. For instance, the "About Us" or "History" webpages of the China Cultural Center (this is the main website which uses the American spelling) and China Cultural Centre (this is the website for the Singapore branch which uses the British spelling), NAS, National Library Board (NLB), Nanyang Technological University (NTU) were referred to. In addition, the Singapore Infopedia website, "an electronic encyclopedia on Singapore published by the National Library Board (NLB)" (National Library Board, n.d.), not only acted as an introduction and overview to various topics, but it also enabled backwards chaining by providing reference to other sources.

2.2.4 Newspapers

Newspapers are important in re-enacting history, especially in situations when there are insufficient documents from the institutions being studied (Abbas, 2017). For the purpose of this project, the online archive *NewspaperSG*, which includes digitised newspapers

published since 1827, was extremely useful in searching for newspaper reports on the chosen Chinese Libraries as it provided access to information of over 200 newspaper titles (National Library Board, 2019III). As it was not feasible to browse through all 200 titles, the decision has been made to search the Chinese newspapers *Nanyang Siang Pau* and *Sin Chew Jit Poh* for articles published before 15 March 1983; whereas, the Chinese newspaper *Lianhe Zaobao* was searched for articles published after 16 March 1983. The English newspaper *The Straits Times* was searched for English articles. Reference to other newspaper titles was made where appropriate to supplement information from the above-mentioned titles. These four newspaper titles were selected because of their popularity and the abundance of reports on the chosen Chinese Libraries. *Nanyang Siang Pau* and *Sin Chew Jit Poh* which were run by Mr Tan Kah Kee and Mr Aw Boon Haw respectively were the most dominant Chinese newspapers in Singapore after the 1920s (Wong et al., 2015). After the merger of *Nanyang Siang Pau* and *Sin Chew Jit Poh* in 1982 to form the Singapore News and Publications Ltd., Lianhe Zaobao, was formally released on 16 March 1983 to replace the two former widely circulated newspapers (Singapore Monitor, 1983). Since then, Lianhe Zaobao has been the key Chinese newspaper in Singapore (Ang, 2007). With respect to the Straits Times, similarly, it was also selected as it is the "oldest and longest running newspaper" in Singapore that has a relatively high circulation rate (ibid, p.12).

Table 1: Extract of search log

Search Log						
Keyword	Remarks	Newspaper	Filters			Results
			Content Type	Period (From)	Period (To)	
Nanyang University						
(Trad.) 南大圖書館	Nan da tu shu guan =	Nanyang Siang Pau	Article	1/1/1953	31/12/1980	3319
(Simp.) 南大图书馆	the Chinese name of	Nanyang Siang Pau	Article	1/1/1953	31/12/1980	1294
(Trad.) 南大圖書館	Nanyang University	Sin Chew Jit Poh	Article	1/1/1953	31/12/1980	0
(Simp.) 南大图书馆	Library	Sin Chew Jit Poh	Article	1/1/1953	31/12/1980	468
Nanyang University Library	-	The Straits Times	Article	1/1/1953	31/12/1980	249
Nantah Library	-	The Straits Times	Article	1/1/1953	31/12/1980	60
University of Malaya, later known as University of Singapore						
(Trad.) 星大圖書館	Xing da tu shu guan =	Nanyang Siang Pau	Article	1/1/1962	31/12/1980	2077
(Simp.) 星大图书馆	the Chinese name of	Nanyang Siang Pau	Article	1/1/1962	31/12/1980	1301
(Trad.) 星大圖書館	University of Singapore	Sin Chew Jit Poh	Article	1/1/1962	31/12/1980	0
(Simp.) 星大图书馆	Library	Sin Chew Jit Poh	Article	1/1/1962	31/12/1980	596
(Trad.) 新大圖書館	Xin da tu shu guan =	Nanyang Siang Pau	Article	1/1/1962	31/12/1980	2271
(Simp.) 新大图书馆	the Chinese name of	Nanyang Siang Pau	Article	1/1/1962	31/12/1980	2454
(Trad.) 新大圖書館	University of Singapore	Sin Chew Jit Poh	Article	1/1/1962	31/12/1980	0
(Simp.) 新大图书馆	Library	Sin Chew Jit Poh	Article	1/1/1962	31/12/1980	811
(Trad.) 國大圖書館	Guo da tu shu guan =	Nanyang Siang Pau	Article	1/1/1981	15/3/1983	0
(Simp.) 国大图书馆	the Chinese name of	Nanyang Siang Pau	Article	1/1/1981	15/3/1983	1160
(Trad.) 國大圖書館	National University of	Sin Chew Jit Poh	Article	1/1/1981	15/3/1983	0
(Simp.) 国大图书馆	Singapore (NUS)	Sin Chew Jit Poh	Article	1/1/1981	15/3/1983	1306
(Trad.) 國大圖書館	Library	Lianhe Zaobao	Article	16/3/1983	31/12/1999	3
(Simp.) 国大图书馆		Lianhe Zaobao	Article	16/3/1983	31/12/1999	10,719
University of Malaya Library	-	The Straits Times	Article	1/1/1953	31/12/1961	173
University of Singapore Library	-	The Straits Times	Article	1/1/1962	31/12/1980	375
Sintah Library	-	The Straits Times	Article	1/1/1962	31/12/1980	1
NUS Library	-	The Straits Times	Article	1/1/1981	31/12/1999	387

Table 1 showed the various search strategies employed to locate relevant newspapers about Chinese Libraries in Singapore. Both traditional (Trad.) and simplified (Simp.) Chinese characters were used in searching as the former was the preferred characters in Singapore before 1969 and the latter was introduced and promoted post-1969 (Shang and Zhao, 2016). Currently, the Chinese translation of Singapore is 新加坡; previously, 星 (xing) and 新 (xin) were used interchangeably. Hence, both characters were taken into consideration and used in the above searches.

Chapter 3: Literature Review and Analysis – Background

Prior to reviewing the different types of Chinese Libraries and discussing their emergence, it is essential to provide a context to the discussion of the emergence of Chinese Libraries in Singapore in the 20th century. This section offered an overview of the library scene in Singapore leading from the 19th century to the 20th century by discussing the library scene back then in relation to Singapore's political, social, cultural and economic background. In addition to the provision of a background to Singapore's society in the 19th and 20th century, the main aims of this section are two-fold. Firstly, to illustrate the various events and factors that not only contributed to the emergence of Chinese Libraries but also helped to shape the identity and role of these libraries. Secondly, this section highlighted the collection of, membership of, cultural activities organised by and reputation of the Singapore Library (later the Raffles Library, National Library and National Library Board) over the years which act as the basis for the comparison between the former and the identified Chinese Libraries in Chapter 4.

3.1 Singapore Population in the 19th and 20th Century

Before the arrival of the British in the 19th century, Singapore was just a small fishing village in the southern part of the Malay Peninsula (Lim, 2008, 2009, 2010). With the arrival of the British and their establishment of a settlement, Chinese, Indian and Netherlands East Indies migrants settled in Singapore (Saw, 1969 cited in Lim, 2010) and the Chinese, Malays, Indians and the Eurasians came to be regarded as the four "founding races" of Singapore (Hill and Lian, 1995, p.103). The term "Eurasians" was initially initiated by the ruling British colonial masters to describe a community of mainly English-speaking (Braga-Blake, 1992 cited in Wee, 2010) "descendants of Europeans and Asians" (Pereira, 1997, p.8). The Chinese in Singapore were mainly made up of migrants from five dialect groups, namely Cantonese, Hokkien, Teochew, Hakka, Hainanese, and locally born Straits Chinese (Siah, 1848 cited in Freedman, 1960), who were descendants of Chinese fathers and local Malay mothers (Png, 1969). As time passed, the Chinese population grew from 56.2 per cent of the population in 1871 to 71.8 per cent in 1901 and the percentage has since maintained at approximately 70 per cent (Lim, 2010). Compared to the Chinese population, the European and Eurasian communities decreased from a mere 2 per cent and 2.2 per cent respectively

in 1871 to 0.9 per cent and 0.6 per cent respectively in 1970 (Lim, 2010). Although few in numbers, the European and Eurasian communities have always taken on prominent and professional roles in Singapore due to their command of and proficiency in the English language (Wee, 2010) and also the reservation of management roles and positions for the colonisers themselves (Rappa, 2000 cited in Wee, 2010). Hence, it was not surprising to note that when the first Public Library, the Singapore Library, was established, its main objectives were to meet the reference needs of English literate scholars as well as serve the leisure reading needs of European elites and their families (Luyt, 2008, 2009, 2012).

3.2 Development of Singapore's First "Modern" Library, the 1840s – 1990s

According to Lim (2009, 2010), the history of the first Public Library in pre-war Singapore could be roughly divided into three phases: School Library (1823-1844), Proprietary Library (1844-1874) and Government Library and Museum (1874-1941). This paper focused on the second and third phases because it was only in 1844 that a meeting was held to convert the school library into a public library (Lim, 1970; Lim, 2009, 2010). In the initial years after the Second World War (WWII), the library remained a Government Library and Museum. In 1958, it took on the status of a National Library when the Raffles National Library Ordinance came into effect in April (Lim, 1970). Since then, the library "ceased to charge subscriptions and became a truly public library" (ibid, p.81). Two years later, the Library was renamed National Library (ibid; Nasir and Goh, 2018). In 1995, a statutory body NLB was formed and the National Library came under its management (Sim, 2015).

The 1950s saw the introduction of new developments and improvements in the Public Library sector which included a rebranding campaign to make it "less English" (The Singapore Free Press, 1959, p.1), the establishment of part-time library branches as well as an increase in acquisition of non-European languages volumes, etc. Sub-sections 3.2.1 to 3.2.4 covered the literature review and analysis of the Public Library's collection, membership, cultural activities organised and reputation over the years whereas section 4.4 provided a detailed literature review and analysis of the Yio Chu Kang Chinese branch library established by the Raffles Library in 1956.

3.2.1 Collection

Prior to the outbreak of WWII, the pro-European attitude adopted by public institutions, such as the Singapore Library (and later the Raffles Library), was also reflected in the collection and collection policies. When the Singapore Library was established in 1844, books were loaned from the Singapore Institution and European gentlemen to set up the Library's initial collection (Singapore Library, 1845). Subsequently, books, periodicals and newspapers were acquired from England and India (ibid). Although the books donated by the gentlemen spanned over a wide variety of subjects, they were mainly written in the English language. Illustrated in Table 2 were some donations of books by shareholders and members of the Committee.

Table 2: Selection of donations to the Singapore Library

Fiction	Non-fiction
Black Dwarf	Chambers' Dictionary of Science
Chronicles of the Canongate	Edinburgh Practice of Medicine
Heart of Mid Lothian	Malcolm's Central India
Old Mortality	Six months in China by Lord Jocelyn
Praise of Paris	Smith's Wealth of Nations
The Frogs and their King	Southey's Life of Nelson
Waverley Novels	Tytler's Universal History

Note: Book titles were as indicated in the annual report published in 1845
Source: Singapore Library (1845)

The Raffles Library began its operation with 3,000 volumes of which much of its collection was inherited from the Singapore Library (Raffles Library and Museum, 1905; Raffles Library and Museum, 1911; Lim, 1970); thus suggesting that the collection was mainly in English unless in circumstances of rare manuscripts and materials covering regional history (Lim, 2009; Luyt, 2009). It was only much later in the 1950s that new collection development policies were implemented to meet the needs of the greater mass. In 1953, a renown philanthropist, Mr Lee Kong Chian, offered a sum of $375,000 through the Lee Foundation he founded to the building of a new library building on the terms that the Raffles Library should be free for everyone to access and books on vernacular languages should be acquired and collected (Lim, 1970; Luyt, 2009; Lim, 2010). Following this, in 1955, a sum more than $65,000 was spent to purchase books in Chinese, Malay and Tamil in order to set up an Oriental section (The Straits Times, 1955II) which was opened for the public to borrow

vernacular books the next year (Lim, 2010). In 1960, the Library had a collection of 14,000 Chinese books (The Singapore Free Press, 1960) which greatly grew in later years. In 1977, it was reported that the Library purchased an estimated 25,000 Chinese books annually from the region (The Straits Times, 1977). After NLB was established, the acquisition of new Chinese resources grew steadily over the years; eventually, in 1999, the Chinese collection grew to a third of the English collection with more than a million of Chinese books and 59,790 Chinese serials (National Library Board, 1999). Although, still relatively lesser than the English collection, the numbers of Chinese materials at the once English-oriented Library has grown significantly.

3.2.2 Membership

Despite terming itself "a Public Institution of the greatest general utility" (Singapore Library, 1845, p.5), the Singapore Library was in fact a Proprietary Library that charged first-class members (shareholders) an entrance money of thirty dollars (which was increased to forty dollars the next year) and a monthly subscription of two dollars and fifty cents (Lim, 1970; Makepeace, Brooke and Braddell, 1991; Lim, 2009, 2010). Second-class and third-class members, which consist of military officers and temporary residents respectively, were required to pay a monthly subscription fee of two dollars and fifty cents (ibid). Hence, it did not come as a surprise when members of the Committee of Management and all 31 shareholders are Europeans as exemplified in Table 3.

Table 3: Committee members and shareholders of the Singapore Library in 1845

Committee of Management	
President: The Hon'ble Col. Butterworth, C.B. (Governor of the Straits Settlements)	
Vice-President: The Hon'ble T. Church, Esqre (Resident Councillor)	
Chairman: W. Napier, Esqre	
Secretary: J.C. Smith, Esqre	
Treasurer: W.H. Read, Esqre	
Members: L. Fraser, Esqre; R. McEwen, Esqre; A. Logan, Esqre; C.A. Dyce, Esqre; H.C. Caldwell (Esqre)	
Shareholders	
Hon. Col. Butterworth, C.B.	G. Bain (Esqre)
Hon. T. Church Esqre.	J. Guthrie (Esqre)
Capt. Stevenson	T.R. Kerr (Esqre)
W. Napier (Esqre)	R.P. Saul (Esqre)
W.R. George (Esqre)	J. Purvis (Esqre)
H.C. Caldwell (Esqre)	T. Dunman (Esqre)
L. Fraser (Esqre)	A. Logan (Esqre)
J.P. Cumming (Esqre)	J.R. Logan (Esqre)
M.F. Davidson (Esqre)	J. Myrtle (Esqre)
J.C. Drysdale (Esqre)	W.H. Read (Esqre)
Frommurze Sorabjee (Esqre)	R. McEwen (Esqre)
C.A. Dyce (Esqre)	Joaqm. D,Almeida (Esqre)
T.O. Crane (Esqre)	G. McMicking (Esqre)
R. Little (Esqre)	E.J. Gilman (Esqre)
M.J. Martin (Esqre)	J.C. Smith (Esqre)
Capt. S. Congalton	

Sources: Singapore Library (1845); Makepeace, Brooke and Braddell (1991)

Throughout the second and third phases of its history, the number of non-European members remained low. In 1921, there were only 135 Asian members (inclusive of Eurasians, Chinese, Indians, Malay and Others), of which 59 were Chinese, as compared to 577 European members; in 1931, although the number of Asian members rose to 350, of which 196 were Chinese, the number of European members was still much higher at 986 (Lim, 2009, 2010).

The Library's high subscription fee was one of the main factors that made Singapore Library (later renamed Raffles Library) "unfriendly" towards the locals (Lim, 1970; Luyt, 2008). Although the annual subscription fee fluctuated, it remained a substantial sum at twenty dollars for first-class and six dollars for second-class in 1874 (Raffles Library and Museum, 1875; Seet, 1983 cited in Chan, 2014). The subscription fee was slightly reduced to twelve dollars for first-class and four dollars for second-class in 1901 (Straits Settlements, 1903); but it eventually rose to sixteen dollars for first-class, twelve dollars for second-class and six dollars for third-class in 1921 (The Straits Times, 1920). Taking into consideration that the average wage for a rickshaw man was merely forty cents daily in 1893 (Warren, 1985), or one dollar daily for a coal coolie in 1908 (ibid), or twelve dollars and forty cents monthly for a rubber plantation worker in 1920 (Kaur, 2014); it was evident that the subscription fee was way above the wage of an average labourer. Even for an average Chinese clerk who had an estimated monthly expenditure of one hundred forty-five dollars and sixty-six cents in 1914, the cost of the first-class annual subscription fee was similar to that of the monthly sum spent on clothing for a family unit of 4.10 (Gooding, 1922).

Another factor that contributed to the low numbers of non-European members was the prejudicial attitude of the colonial masters against the local Asian population (Luyt, 2008, 2009). The approaches undertaken by the colonial masters in handling the issue of race and maintaining their elitism in society was to separate the locals from the Europeans and to limit the non-Europeans in social gatherings and places of social interaction (Luyt, 2008). As pointed out by Luyt (2008), this was evident in the Raffles Museum's implementation of new opening hours in 1878 that separated the accessing time of locals and Europeans:

…the rule has been adopted of reserving from 10 A.M. to 1.30 P.M. for natives, coolies, &c., and from 2 P.M. to 5 P.M. for European and other respectable visitors and ladies (The Straits Times, 1878, p.4).

Singapore officially came under the rule of the Japanese in 1942 when the British surrendered their colony following their defeat in the Battle of Singapore. During the Japanese Occupation of Singapore, not much was known about the status of the Raffles Library as the Library was closed to the public (Hornidge and Kurfürst, 2010; Lim, 2010) and no annual reports were released in that period (Lim, 1970). Post-WWII saw an increase in the numbers of Asian members, which eventually outnumbered the Europeans for the first time in the history of the Raffles Library (The Straits Times, 1946; The Singapore Free Press, 1947). When the Raffles National Library Ordinance (No. 31 of 1957) came into effect in 1958, not only was the Library renamed as the Raffles National Library, the Library was also "transformed into an inclusive community" when it became free to the entire population (Luyt, 2014, p.664). Although library memberships were no longer recorded based on nationalities or races, it was evident that the phenomenon of the Chinese forming the bulk of the members continued throughout the 20th century as they were the major ethnic group in Singapore (Table 4).

Table 4: Ethnic composition of Singapore in the 20th century

Year	Chinese	Malays	Indians	Others	Total
1901	164,041 (72.1%)	35,988 (15.8%)	17,047 (7.8%)	9,768 (4.3%)	226,842 (100%)
1911	219,577 (72.4%)	41,806 (13.8%)	27,755 (9.2%)	14,183 (4.7%)	303,321 (100%)
1921	315,151 (75.3%)	53,595 (12.8%)	32,314 (7.7%)	17,298 (4.2%)	418,358 (100%)
1931	418,640 (75.1%)	65,014 (11.7%)	50,811 (9.1%)	23,280 (4.2%)	557,745 (100%)
1947	729,473 (77.8%)	113,803 (12.1%)	71,927 (7.7%)	22,941 (2.4%)	938,144 (100%)
1957	1,090,596 (75.4%)	197,059 (13.6%)	129,510 (9.0%)	28,764 (2.0%)	1,445,929 (100%)
1970	1,579,866 (76.2%)	311,379 (15.0%)	145,169 (7.0%)	38,093 (1.8%)	2,074,507 (100%)
1980	1,856,237 (76.9%)	351,508 (14.6%)	154,632 (6.4%)	51,568 (2.1%)	2,413,945 (100%)
1990	2,252,700 (74.7%)	408,000 (13.5%)	229,500 (7.6%)	126,200 (4.2%)	3,016,400 (100%)

Sources: Adapted from Saw (2012, p.29)

3.2.3 Cultural Activities

Since its establishment, the Public Library's only objective was to provide patrons who were able to afford the high subscription fees and read English with access to reading resources to fulfil their recreational needs and/or research and scholarly needs. Annual reports from the Singapore Library published for the period 1844 to 1860 were available for access. These annual reports summarised the operation of the Library over the years, covering aspects such as loan procedure, opening hours, management committee, subscription fee, promotion of new collections, rules and regulations, etc. However, neither the above-mentioned annual reports nor newspapers published during that period mentioned about the Library organising cultural activities such as exhibitions, talks, workshops, etc., that could help to promote learning or promote and preserve culture. Hence, it could be assumed that the Library's focus was on collection building and provision rather than hosting cultural activities.

During the early post-war period up till the 1960s, there was more frequent publicity of cultural activities organised or hosted by the Library. A variety of exhibitions, events and programmes such as British book design exhibition (The Straits Times, 1957II), English Children's books display (The Straits Times, 1955IV), book display on child welfare (The Singapore Free Press, 1958), German book display (The Straits Times, 1957IV), art show (The Straits Times, 1955II), stamp display (The Straits Times, 1955III), etc., were hosted over the years. Thus, it could be said that great improvements and changes took placed and the Library came to see itself as not just a provider of books and serials but also recognised that learning could take place not just in the form of reading. However, as illustrated, few or none were conducted in Mandarin or were relevant to Chinese culture.

 It was only from the 1970s onwards that the organisation and hosting of Chinese cultural activities became abundant and frequent. Advertisements in the newspapers showed that these activities were diverse, including Chinese debate (New Nation, 1972) as well as talks and exhibitions which spanned over a range of topics like Chinese calligraphy and painting (The Straits Times, 1971III), Chinese opera (The Straits Times, 1972I), Chinese chess (The Straits Times, 1972II), Chinese music (New Nation, 1974), Sinology (The Straits Times, 1975),

Chinese herbs and medicine (The Straits Times, 1981), Chinese drama (The Straits Times, 1983), etc.

3.2.4 Reputation

Since its establishment, the Public Library had been praised as "one of the finest in the Far East" (Malayan Saturday Post, 1927, p.20); yet it was also regarded as "a place where colonists could go to rest and recuperate from the rigours of an alien environment" (Kenny, 1995 cited in Luyt, 2018, p.4) and often criticised of colonial elitism, exclusivity, racist, class prejudice and negligence of the natives. Despite new leadership and improvements along the years, the Library was still being labelled as a "European library" in post-war Singapore because of its focus on the English-educated population (Lim, 1970, p.77). Following the landslide victory of the People's Action Party (PAP) in 1959, the new Singapore government revealed its intention of diffusing a sense of belonging to the nation's multiracial and multicultural population (Turnbull, 2009 cited in Lin and Luyt, 2014). One such projects were the revamping of the Raffles National Library to make it "more reflective and representative of the people of this country" (The Singapore Free Press, 1959, p.1). Since then, interactions with the Public Libraries were no longer "forbidden" for the locals nor restricted to selective racial groups or social classes. Similarly, through the evolution of the Library, not only were the reading and cultural needs of the Chinese met, but the unfriendly pre-war labels of the Library were also replaced because of its role of "creating a sense of community" (Lin and Luyt, 2014, p.671).

3.2.5 Summary

Findings from the literature review showed that the Singapore Library underwent a huge evolution not just in term of name change (from Singapore Library to Raffles Library, National Library), but also in terms of collection, membership, cultural activities organised and identity. In its early days, it was extremely pro-Western which led to the "exclusion" of the Chinese from books and knowledge; this, in turn, laid the stage for the emergence of Chinese Reading Rooms, which provide leisure reading for the general population, as well as the rich Chinese collection in academic libraries, which aim to build and preserve Chinese publications. Along with the change in name, the Library went from a Subscription Library to a Public Library, National Library and eventually a statutory board was established to

manage the National Library and Public Libraries; it also transformed from a mere provider of books and journals to a provider of knowledge through the organisation of various outreach activities.

Chapter 4: Literature Review and Analysis – Chinese Libraries

This chapter began by giving a definition to Chinese Libraries to lay the foundation for further discussion in the paper. Subsequently, the chapter reviewed the five Chinese Libraries identified for the purpose of this paper. These Libraries were examined according to the following topics, collection, membership, cultural activities and reputation.

4.1 Defining Chinese Libraries

Before diving deeper into the topic of Chinese Libraries in Singapore, it is first useful to define the term "Chinese Library" and to set a boundary around this term. There is no official or authorised definition of Chinese Libraries and no pre-existing scholarly research that describes the term "Chinese Library". Hence, references to scholarly studies on Asian Academic Libraries were made to provide the author with a better understanding of how to define a Chinese Library. Chinese Libraries in Singapore could include Academic Libraries, Public Libraries and Private Libraries. For the purpose of this paper the term "Chinese Library" referred to:

- Libraries in academic settings that are recognised as Specialised Libraries with a collection that covers Chinese literature, Chinese history, Chinese philosophy, Chinese linguistics, etc. (NUS, n.d.I) and more importantly, the collection is used to serve students and faculty members from the Chinese Department (Kamada, 2002).
- Libraries with a mission to develop an understanding, interest and appreciation of Chinese culture (National Library Board, 2019II) through the organisation of programmes, events and activities as well as building and providing access to a collection that covers a variety of subjects, ranging from classical literature to modern and contemporary literature; from art to history, etc. (China Cultural Centre, n.d.).

Table 5 illustrated a list of libraries identified to be Chinese Libraries based on the above definitions. However, due to various limitations and constraints, a thorough study to trace every Chinese Library in Singapore is made impossible; hence, the following conditions were applied:

- Libraries that was founded or established during the 20th century. This time period was chosen because of two main reasons: a. the availability of relevant resources; b. huge developments in various aspects, such as technology, politics, education, social, etc., occurred in Singapore during this period which greatly impacted the operation of local libraries.

- Libraries with a substantial collection; hence, small School Libraries that only cater to a small audience group were not considered.

- Libraries that have a relatively huge significance or impact in Singapore's history.

Based on the above definitions and conditions, this paper has identified the following five major Chinese Libraries: United Chinese Library (UCL), University of Malaya's Chinese Library (the university was later renamed University of Singapore), Nanyang University's Library (Nantah), Raffles Library – Yio Chu Kang Village part-time branch library (YCK) and NUS Chinese Library. The significance of each of these selected libraries would be discussed in their respective sections.

Table 5: List of Chinese Libraries in Singapore

Year of establishment	Libraries	Remarks
1903	Sin Chew Reading Room	The first Chinese Reading Room to be established in Singapore.
1900-10s	Tung Teh (also known as United Chinese Library, UCL), Chih Tung, Tung Wen, Ping Min, Ai Chun, Lo Ying, Yang Chih and Kuan Nan	During this period, more than 50 Chinese Reading Rooms were established in Singapore and Malaya; among which the UCL was the most famous.
1939	Popular Book Company's Library	Established by a bookstore, it aimed to provide space and materials for the needs of the Chinese.
1953	University of Malaya's Chinese Library	It was the first Chinese Academic Library to be established in Singapore.
1956	Nanyang University's Library	Nanyang University was the first Chinese university to be established in Singapore. The Library had a Chinese language collection that covered a wide range of disciplines.
1956	Raffles Library – Yio Chu Kang Village part-time branch library	It was the first Chinese Library set up by the Raffles Library amidst their rebranding campaign.
1980	National University of Singapore's Chinese Library	It was a product of the merger of the University of Singapore's Chinese Library and Nanyang University's Library.
2003	Wang Gungwu Library	Professor Wang Gungwu donated more than 30,000 volumes to Nanyang Technological University's Chinese Heritage Centre. The centre was renamed Wang Gungwu Library to recognise Professor Wang's contribution.
2008	Nanyang Technological University's Chinese Library	The University converted the exiting Humanities and Social Sciences Library into a Chinese Library to accommodate the growing Chinese collection.
2013	library@Chinatown	Located in a shopping mall, it was the first Chinese Arts and Culture Library to be co-founded by NLB and the community.
2015	China Cultural Centre's Library	The centre was established as part of an "All-Round Cooperative Partnership" between Singapore and China. The Library houses a substantial Chinese collection of classical, modern and contemporary literature.

Sources: The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser (1939); The Straits Times (1956I); Lim (1970); The Straits Times (1980II); Ching (2011); Gwee (2014); National Library Board (2019II); China Cultural Centre (n.d.); https://blogs.ntu.edu.sg/lib-chn/about (n.d.); https://blogs.ntu.edu.sg/lib-wgwl/wgwl/ (n.d.)

4.2 Precedents: Chinese Reading Rooms, the 1900s

The early 20th century saw an increase in Chinese students in English-medium schools as compared to the situation in the 19th century where "English-medium education was essentially for European and Eurasian boys and girls" (Gupta, 1996 cited in Gupta, 2006, p.373). Despite the rise in enrolment in English-medium schools, the main bulk of the keen supporters consisted mainly of the Straits Chinese and the Cantonese (Bloom, 1986 cited in Gupta, 2006). According to the 1921 Census, even though they formed 54.7 per cent of the English-speaking community, only 6 per cent of the Chinese community were able to converse in English (Nathan, 1922 cited in Gupta, 2006). Yet, it was evident in the previous sub-sections that in its early days, the Singapore Library (and later the Raffles Library) was arguably a European-oriented library which aligned to the general pro-European policy of neglecting the natives (Lim, 1970). In other words, the Library was unable to provide access or fulfil the casual reading needs of the general population. Hence, during this period many Vernacular Libraries were established to provide reading materials for those who were excluded from the Singapore Library due to English illiteracy or high subscription and membership costs (ibid). In particular, the Chinese, who have always been "a self-reliant community" started building Reading Rooms on their own to meet the reading needs of their community instead of anticipating and relying on the government to satisfy their demands and needs (ibid, p.16). The first Chinese Reading Room was founded in 1903 (Ching, 2011). Subsequently, many other Chinese Reading Rooms such as Tung Teh (also known as United Chinese Library), Chih Tung, Tung Wen, Ping Min, Ai Chun, Lo Ying, Yang Chih and Kuan Nan were established by the different dialect groups (ibid) to function like "public librar[ies] to promote reading and the learning of current affairs" (Huang, 2011, p.88). It was believed that "between 1908 and 1911, more than fifty reading clubs were established throughout Singapore and Malaya" (Huang, 1955 and Yen, 1976 cited in Tan, 1986, p.75).

The following sub-sections would present findings relevant to the collection of, membership of, cultural activities organised by and reputation of UCL.

4.2.1 United Chinese Library

UCL, "the most famous of the reading club[s]" (Tan, 1986, p.75), had a strong collection of Chinese books, paintings and calligraphies which benefited the public (Lee, 2015). More importantly, UCL's significance lies in its connection with Dr Sun Yat Sen and the role it played in revolutionary propaganda (ibid). Established and founded by Teochew, such as Teo Eng Hock, Zhao Diaoxi and Zhang Rennan, UCL's ultimate objective behind its provision of reading materials and cultural events was to

> publicise and promote the evolutionary cause, recruit like-minded comrades and to provide assistance to Dr Sun in his revolutionary efforts, as well as to the Northern Expedition (北伐统一) and the Eight-Year Anti-Japanese War (八年抗战) (Lee, 2015, p.7).

Founded in 1910, the UCL which registered as Thong Tek Che Poh Soh (the Teochew pronunciation of the Chinese characters 同德书报社), was officially approved by the colonial government in 1911 (Lee, 2015). In the same year, it moved to Armenian Street and was given its English name "United Chinese Library" by Dr Sun (ibid). In 1998, during the general meeting, it was agreed upon that the Hanyu pinyin version 'Tong de shu bao she' would replace the Teochew spelling (Tong de shu bao she, 2015II). UCL suffered multiple setbacks due to external factors which included stricter regulations implemented by the colonial government in the 1920s, destructions during the Japanese attack, etc.; these resulted in declining collections and disruption of library services (Tong de shu bao she, 2015I). It was only until the late 1970s that a Library Committee was set up to look into the reconstruction and redevelopment of the Library and the Library's collection (ibid).

4.2.1.1 Collection

Besides from upholding to its name and responsibility as a library, newspapers and publications were the main tools and resources utilised by the UCL to reach out to the general mass; hence, UCL invested much time, effort and money to build up a rich collection through many channels, such as obtaining funding and donations from members, direct acquisition by UCL, requests to specific individuals and organisations for donations by means of invitation letters, etc. (Tong de shu bao she, 2015I). Publications, especially revolutionary newspapers and magazines were greatly welcomed (ibid). In addition to works that evolved

around or promoted revolutionary ideas, UCL also housed a vast and diverse collection on current affairs. This was illustrated by UCL's subscription to 26 types of periodicals and 24 types of newspapers in the 1920s (Tong de shu bao she, 2015I). According to UCL's publication regarding its founding and history (ibid), after years of hard work, by 1941, UCL's collection was estimated to be more than 50,000 volumes, including precious volumes of the Twenty-Four History, "a collection of historical books covering a period from 3000 B.C. to the Ming Dynasty in the 17th century" (Gao, 2008, p.258), the Siku Quanshu (Complete Library of the Four Treasuries), a compilation of Chinese scholarship collated during the reign of the Qing dynasty Qianlong Emperor (Tan, 1989), manuscripts, documents relevant to the revolution as well as literary and historical works, etc. Unfortunately, these treasures were destroyed during the Japanese Occupation (Tong de shu bao she, 2015I).

Despite intentions and interests from the executive committee of UCL to restore their collection after the war, they were faced with various obstacles along the way, such as financial difficulties and loss of manpower due to civil wars in China (ibid). Even though a Library Committee was established in 1977, UCL only had a small collection of 1,000 volumes by late 1986/early 1987 (Wu Xin Hui, 1987). It was only after UCL relocated to its new location at Cantonment that it was able to break free from the awkward situation of being a library without books (The Straits Times, 1957III; Tong de shu bao she, 2015I). The move to Cantonment saw UCL's expansion in collection which included the following areas: scholarly works "on the life and thoughts on Dr Sun" (Tan, 1978I, p.38), "Chinese newspapers from Hongkong, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore" (ibid), Chinese works on classics, literature, philosophy, science and arts (Wu Xin Hui, 1987) as well as English materials to cultivate bilingual talents and recruit new members who were educated in English (Tong de shu bao she, 2015I).

4.2.1.2 Membership

As of present, there are no formal recordings of readers or users who accessed UCL's collection over the years, which made the study of UCL's impact on the reading needs of the Chinese population difficult. However, it is believed that UCL received over two hundred readers daily during its peak (Lee, 2015). These readers were largely made up of the public who were not registered members of UCL (Tong de shu bao she, 2015I). Of course, that is

not to say that registered members of the UCL did not use the reading facilities. As of the 1930s, members were only required to pay a one-dollar society fee as well as book fee and funeral mutual aid fee which were ten cents each (ibid). These fees were relatively much affordable for the general mass as compared to the absurd membership fee set by the Raffles Library which explained why "UCL's members came from all walks of life" (Lee, 2015, p.8). As stated in Lee's preface in UCL's 105th anniversary special issue (2015, p.8),

> UCL's members came from all walks of life. There were businessmen such as Li Juncheng [Lee Choon Seng] (李俊承), Li Guangqian [Lee Kong Chian] (李光前), Zhang Yongfu [Teo Eng Hock] (张永福), Zhou Xianrui [Chew Hian Swee] (周献瑞), Chen Yanqian [Tan Ean Kiam] (陈延谦); there were Western- and Chinese-trained doctors; principals and teachers; and there were also editors and journalists; students; workers; hawkers and domestic helpers as well.

The backgrounds and profiles of UCL's registered members would likely be a good representation and reflection of non-members who utilised the Library. Taking into consideration there were no other Chinese Public Libraries or Libraries with substantial Chinese collection in Singapore before the 1950s and UCL's rich collection in current affairs, it was highly likely that the general Chinese mass visited UCL to access periodicals and newspapers to keep themselves up to date on happenings in China.

4.2.1.3 Cultural Activities

External factors such as suppression and restriction from the colonial governments, new changes and developments of political scenes in China and Singapore, helped to reshaped UCL, resulting in the redefining of roles, missions and objectives of the latter. In its early years, apart from being a "Public Library" that offered reading services, it was primarily a "revolutionary propaganda organisation, [which] served also as a cover for political activities for the Kuomintang (KMT) [Nationalist Party of China]" (Tan, 1986, p.75). These political activities included the promotion and propaganda of revolutionary ideas and thoughts as well as the recruitment of like-minded comrades (Lee, 2015; Tong de shu bao she, 2015l). However, in 1922, new rules and regulations were implemented by the Registrar of Societies to ensure that the UCL did not meddle with politics (Ching, 2011). Since then, UCL had evolved to become "an educational society" (Tan, 1986, p.75) and "a local society aimed

at promoting cultural activities and keeping its members in touch with one another" (Tan, 1978I, p.38).

Over the years, a range of cultural activities were organised and hosted by UCL; these activities included classes that promoted Chinese cultures, such as classes on Chinese painting and Mandarin drama (Tan, 1978I), Chinese calligraphy and painting exhibitions (Nanyang Siang Pau, 1941, 1946), talks and seminars relevant to Chinese language and culture (Nanyang Siang Pau, 1923, 1925). Furthermore, UCL played a key role in the preservation and refinement of Chinese customs and practices (Lee, 2015).

4.2.1.4 Reputation

Prior to the Japanese Occupation, there was no Chinese Public Library in Singapore and UCL was the largest Chinese Library, having a vast collection of books that was second to none (Tong de shu bao she, 2015I).

In addition to its reputation of being a Chinese Public Library and a Chinese cultural hub, UCL also had functions similar to that of Chinese associations like clan, district and dialect groups. With the arrival of Chinese immigrants in Nanyang, demand for Chinese associations grew to meet various community and personal needs (Carstens, 1975, p.1), which included

> building and management of temples, cemeteries, schools, medical institutions, and transit houses for members… housed and fed new immigrants, helped them find jobs and represented them in their relations with the wider community.

Similar to the above-mentioned functions, UCL was actively involved in the provision of job support. The Assistant Secretary of UCL, Mr Goh Seow Keang, mentioned in an interview that UCL took on the role of job agency prior to the Japanese Occupation by helping teachers from China to find employment in schools in the region (Tan, 1978I). Hence, it could be concluded that UCL was not just merely a library that public had access to; the initial ultimate goals of UCL, as well as the various activities of UCL over the years, were great illustrations of UCL's involvements and contributions to the Chinese society and well-being of the Chinese population.

4.3 Flourishment: Chinese Academic Libraries, the 1950s – 1980

Scholarly and research needs of Chinese scholars and students arose when classes were conducted in Chinese in the universities and no existing library collection was available to support such learning and teaching needs. Despite the collection of vernacular manuscripts that were available at the Raffles Library and the increase in the Oriental collection since the 1950s, the Singapore Library (and later the Raffles Library) was ultimately a Public Library. Being a Public Library, the core function was to provide resources suitable for the general population (Handa, 2011) rather than specific or specialised communities. Fiction, popular literature which was common in the Singapore Library (and later the Raffles Library) thus became inadequate for researchers, scholars, lecturers and students from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Hence, Academic Libraries which catered to the needs of these individuals were established. The following sub-sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 covered the collection of, membership of, cultural activities organised and reputation of the University of Malaya's Chinese Library and Nantah's Library respectively.

4.3.1 University of Malaya's Chinese Library

The establishment of the University of Malaya was a result of the amalgamation of the two earliest HEIs in Singapore. Following the Carr-Saunders Commission recommendation, King Edward VII College of Medicine and the Raffles College merged to form the University of Malaya which started in 1949 with three faculties: Arts, Science and Medicine (Lim, 1970; Gopinathan, 1989; Goh and Tan, 2008). In 1953, the Department of Chinese Studies was added to the Faculty of Arts as the sixth department following the Departments of English, Geography, History, Economics and Statistics and Mathematics which were established in 1949 (National University of Singapore, n.d.II). In the same year, the Chinese Library was formed to meet the needs of the department (Lim, 1970).

Subsequently, following the rapid development and expansion of the University, a division was set up in Kuala Lumpur which was called the University of Malaya, while the one at Singapore was renamed the University of Malaya in Singapore (The Straits Times, 1959I). In 1962, the University of Singapore was formed when the Singapore campus of the University of Malaya became an autonomous institution (Lim, 1970).

4.3.1.1 Collection

The University received a $775,000 fund which Dr Ho, the head of the Chinese Department, made use of to acquire resources that included 81,000 volumes costing $185,000 (The Straits Times, 1953). Illustrated in Table 6 were some of the titles available in the Library during the Financial Year of 1953/1954 (1 September 1953 to 31 August 1954).

Table 6: Portion of the collection at the Chinese Library of the University of Malaya (1953/1954)

Encyclopedia	Classics	History and Geography	Collectanea	Old editions of Manuscripts
Yuan-chien lei-han	Hunag-ch'ing ching-chieh and its supplement	Husi-tien	Szu-pu ts'ung-kan	Ming Edition of the Wen-yuan Ying hwa
Pei-wen yuen-fu		Huei-yaos	Szu-pu pei-yao	unpublished manuscript of the Chi-ching teng-yuan
Pien-tzu lei-pie		Kiu-t'ung	Szu-ku chuan-shu chen-peng	Shu-tzu-chih t'ung-chien c'ang-pien
Ching-chi tsuan-ku		General Gazetteer of China	Wan-yu wen-ku	
Ku-chin t'u-shu chi-ch'ng			Ts'ungshu chi-cheng	

Note: Spelling of the titles were as indicated in the annual report

Source: University of Malaya (1954)

As of its second year, a total of 100,000 volumes were acquired, of which 88,000 volumes had arrived in Singapore (Nanyang Siang Pau, 1954). According to articles published in *The Straits Times* (1957I) and *Nanyang Siang Pau* (1957), the Chinese Library published three volumes of catalogue which reflected the wide variety of subjects collected by the Library. With more than 130,000 volumes in 1957, the Library hosted titles in a wide range of subjects which were classified using the Harvard-Yenching system (Nanyang Siang Pau, 1957; Lim, 1970) developed by Dr Alfred Chiu Kaiming. According to the report published in *Nanyang Siang Pau* (1957), the collection at the Chinese Library was divided into nine categories, namely: Chinese classics, philosophy and religion, historical sciences, sociology, language and literature, fine and recreative arts, natural sciences, agriculture and technology, and bibliography. Other than the historical sciences category which accounted for more than 2,000 items, the remaining eight categories each accounted for 1,000 items; each category could be subdivided with numerals representing the sub-divisions (ibid). The Library's collection development focused on thread-bound classics, periodicals from various HEIs such as *Yenching Journal of Chinese Studies*, *Tsing Hua Journal [of Chinese Studies]*,

Lingnan Journal of Chinese Studies as well as periodicals on sinology published in Japan such as *Toyo Gakuho* and *Toho Gakuho* (Nanyang Siang Pau, 1957).

Since its establishment in 1953, the Chinese Library had maintained a collection of approximately 130,000 volumes for the next ten years. In 1966, *The Straits Times* reported that a substantial collection of 7,000 volumes of "rare and almost priceless" (The Straits Times, 1963) Chinese books would be added to the Library's collection. These volumes belonged to "Mr Koh Siow Nam, a well-known Singapore businessman" (The Straits Times, 1966II, p.9), who bequeathed his personal collection to the Library to "enable students in the Chinese faculty to study and do research in Chinese literature, history and philosophy" (The Straits Times, 1963, p.8). Two years before the merger with the Library at Nantah, the Chinese Library at the University of Singapore contained an estimated 140,000 volumes which spanned over both classical and modern literature as well as "local Chinese books, literature and newspapers" (Tan, 1978II, p.1).

4.3.1.2 Membership

The Chinese Department had a small cohort of only an average of 23 students for the period between 1954/1955 and 1960/1961 (Table 7) and a smaller number of teaching staff that never exceeded five members in an academic year (Table 8), yet these people formed the Chinese Library's main patron group.

Table 7: Chinese Language and Literature students enrolled between 1954/1955 and 1960/1961

Year	Number of Chinese Language and Literature Students
1954/1955	7 students
1955/1956	11 students
1956/1957	24 students
1957/1958	Principal Subjects: 19 students Subsidiary Subjects: 15 students
1958/1959	Principal Subjects: 13 students Subsidiary Subjects: 27 students
1959/1960	Principal Subjects: 15 students Subsidiary Subjects: 13 students
1960/1961	Principal Subjects: 15 students

Source: University of Malaya (1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960I, 1961)

Table 8: Teaching staff from the Department of Chinese between 1954/1955 and 1960/1961

Year	Teaching Staff of the Department of Chinese
1952/1953	Mr Ho K.C. appointed as Senior Lecturer
1953/1954	Dr Jou B. appointed as Lecturer
1954/1955	No indication
1955/1956	Mr Wang C. appointed as Lecturer
1956/1957	No indication
1957/1958	No indication
1958/1959	Mr Chao T. appointed as Lecturer
1959/1960	Dr Jou's contract terminated on 31 January 1960 Mr Lee T.H. appointed as Assistant Lecturer
1960/1961	No changes in staff

Source: University of Malaya (1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960I, 1961)

Despite letters from the public to have the Chinese Library opened to outsiders (The Straits Times, 1954) and requests from the media to have the Chinese Library opened to journalists and editors from the various newspapers in Singapore and Malaya, staff of secondary schools as well as academic staff and students from Nantah (Nanyang Siang Pau, 1957); the Library was never officially open to the public. In 1960, the University of Malaya compiled and published a library guide which not only provided a brief history of the Libraries (which consisted of the Main Library, Chinese Library and the Medical Faculty Library) but also laid out the rules and regulations of using the Libraries. The guide (University of Malaya, 1960II, p.6) stated that the University's academic staff as well as "students doing Pass Degree courses or Diploma courses…[and]…Higher Degrees courses" were allowed to borrow from the University's Libraries freely. Alumnus, staff from the Teachers' Training College and "librarians of recognised libraries" were also entitled to borrow from the University's Library provided that written permission was sought (ibid). In addition, students enrolled in the University of London (external degrees) were also authorised to "use the Library for reference purposes" provided that written permission was sought (ibid). Similarly, in 1978, two years before the merger with Nantah's Library, the Library's stand was still aligned to its membership policies set out in the early days. Mr Hui, the Chinese Librarian, emphasised in an interview that:

>......as the library is meant for the exclusive use of the undergraduates and academic staff in the varsity, it is not open for public use...... (Tan, 1978II, p.1).

4.3.1.3 Cultural Activities

The main objective of the Chinese Library at the University of Malaya (and later the University of Singapore) was to encourage and promote the study of Chinese arts and literature; however unlike its counterpart at Nantah or NUS, the approach taken by the University of Malaya's (and later the University of Singapore) management was to acquire and provide access to Chinese resources like manuscripts, books and journals. Taking into consideration that the sole purpose of the establishment of the Chinese Library was to serve only staff and students from the Department of Chinese and the firm stand taken by the Library to focus on students and staff rather than the general population; it was not surprising that no mention of cultural activities such as talks, seminars or exhibitions was found in the newspaper reports from that period as publicity and outreach were not the main priorities of the Library.

4.3.1.4 Reputation

The Library was regarded as "one of the finest and biggest Chinese Libraries in South East Asia" (The Straits Times, 1953, p.8) with one of the "most comprehensive bibliographical guide to the study of Chinese culture available outside China" (The Straits Times, 1957I, p.8). While the Chinese Library had a rich collection in Chinese culture, it also held firm to its position that the "University Library is not a public library" (New Nation, 1973, p.6). From the day it was established, the Chinese Library was clear in its roles and objectives which was to serve the students and staff of the university and to meet "the needs of the educational and research programme of the university" (The Straits Times, 1968, p.10). Furthermore, in 1954, despite multiple letters published in the various newspapers requesting that the Chinese Library to be open to the public, Mr Clark, the University Librarian rejected the idea by mentioning that statistics have shown that no students outside of the University had made any applications to use the Chinese Library (The Straits Times, 1954).

Undeniably, the Chinese Library indeed played an important role in the collection and preservation of valuable Chinese manuscripts and volumes which contributed to the scholarly research of the Chinese Department; yet, it was also questionable how active a role the Library played in the life of the general Chinese population considering its role and firm position in giving priority to its own staff and students.

4.3.2 Nanyang University's Library

Three years after the idea to construct a Chinese university in Singapore was proposed by Tan Lark Sye, the president of the Hokkien Huay Kuan (Butwell, 1953; Gopinathan, 1989; Wong 2000, 2005), in April 1956, Nanyang University (Nantah), a privately funded university with Chinese as the medium of teaching, commenced classes (Lim, 1970). The establishment of Nantah's is relatively important in Singapore's history as it was the first Chinese university in Singapore. With a growing number of students graduating from Chinese high schools in Malaya and tighter immigration restrictions in China, the need for a "university outside of China catering to high school graduates from the Chinese stream" arose (National Library Board, 2014).

The establishment of a Chinese university in post-colonial Singapore was not met without obstacles. Amid troubles like financial constraints (Gopinathan, 1989), recruitment issues (Gopinathan, 1989), political disapproval and oppression (Butwell, 1953; Wong, 2000), Nantah sought to provide an avenue of further education for Chinese educated Singaporeans as well as preserve Chinese culture and retain the independence of the Chinese-medium education system (Butwell, 1953; Gopinathan, 1989). Nantah had three Colleges, namely, College of Arts, College of Science and College of Commerce (Lim, 1970; Gopinathan, 1989). The College of Arts provided programmes in "Chinese Language and Literature, History and Geography, Modern Language and Literature, Economics, and Political Science"; while the College of Science provided programmes in "Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, and Biology"; and the College of Commerce provided programmes in "Business Administration, Accountancy, and Banking" (Europa Publications, 1961 cited in Lim, 1970, p.133). Although the Library at Nantah was never officially termed "Chinese Library" by relevant authorities, the Library was nevertheless a Chinese Library due to the nature of the university.

4.3.2.1 Collection

Having established a new university, one of the greatest concerns for the university's management arose – ensuring that sufficient resources were available to support the teaching and educational needs of academics and students. Thus, in 1954, the first principal of Nantah, Lin Yutang, mentioned that one million US dollars would be invested by the school for the purchase of library books (Nanyang Siang Pau, 1954). Of the 1 million, 400,000 had been allocated for resources for the College of Arts, 300,000 for the College of Commerce and an approximate 270,000 for the College of Science (ibid).

Unlike NUS where the head of the Chinese Department, Dr Ho, was responsible for the acquisition of resources in setting up the library; at Nantah, it was the newly appointed Head of Library, Dr Yen who made the purchase of more than 100,000 volumes from a Macau collector to establish Nantah's initial library collection (Nanyang Shiang Pao, 1955). A Library Committee consisting of the heads of the Department of Chinese Language and Literature, Department of History and Geography, Department of Mathematics and Department of Biology and the Library was established to review, acquire books and to draw up plans for the development of the Library and other related matters (Nanyang Siang Pau, 1956I). Despite the establishment of the Library Committee, there was a serious manpower shortage and the Library was not able to perform the complete process of classifying and cataloguing the books before the commencement of classes (ibid; Nanyang University, 1966III). It was in August and December 1956 that the Library engaged student helpers to participate in the organisation of the acquired library resources (Lang, 1957). Different classifying schemes were employed to catalogue the Chinese and English collections (Lang, 1957; Nanyang University, 196II; Lim, 1970). As there was no specific catalogue staff in-charge of the English collection, author card catalogues were purchased from the Library of Congress and the Dewey Decimal System was used in the classification process; on the other hand, the Chinese Library Classification System, an adaption of the Dewy Decimal System invented by Mr Liu Guojun, was used along with Wang Yunwu's Four Corner Method in assigning of class number and author number to form the call number (Lang, 1957). In 1957, Mr Wan Guoding's "Chinese Character Fundamental Stroke Organisation System" replaced

the previously adopted Wang's Method to resolve the lengthy call number issue (Lang, 1957).

By 1959, the library collection stood at 95,000 volumes, of which 63,000 volumes were Chinese (Nanyang Siang Pau, 1959). Within two years, the library collection grew to 120,000 volumes, inclusive of 35,000 volumes in the English language (Anuar, 1961 cited in Lim, 1970). However, according to another source, the figures reported differed slightly. Amid a report of Nantah published in the *Nanyang Siang Pau* in 1961, it was stated that Nantah had a current collection of 100,000 volumes, of which 45,000 were Chinese thread-bound volumes, 20,000 were Chinese paperback and 25,000 were English volumes. The remaining was made up of 6,000 volumes located in the reference and reading rooms, 510 types of periodicals and another 840 volumes donated by Dr Goh Lean Tuck. Despite the difference in figures, the bulk of the library collection was still prominently Chinese-based (Table 9). From the 1960s onwards, the direction in collection development shifted to a pro-English one. Between 1960 and 1980, frequent reports were published in *The Straits Times* (1966I, 1967, 1971I, 1971II, 1974, 1979) showing that substantial volumes of English materials were donated to the University Library by organisations such as the Australian High Commission, the United States Information Service, the British High Commission, the German Embassy, the Inter-University Council, the Indian High Commission, etc. In 1980, the collection at Nantah Library was no longer Chinese dominated, of the 300,000 volumes, half were English, and half were Chinese (Nanyang Siang Pau, 1980).

Table 9: Distribution of books in Nantah's library from 1956 to 1965

Year	Chinese Collection	English Collection	Total Collection
1956	28,280	7,800	36,080
1957	32,700	11,836	44,536
1958	43,650	21,006	64,656
1959	57,575	28,124	85,699
1960	67,950	33,362	101,312
1961	70,679	36,303	106,982
1962	73,415	40,824	114,239
1963	74,598	44,664	119,262
1964	75,841	46,836	122,677
1965	76,688	49,177	125,865

Source: Adapted from Nanyang University (1966III, p.327)

4.3.2.2 Membership

Unlike the University of Malaya (and later the University of Singapore) where the Chinese Library catered mainly to the needs of staff and students from the Department of Chinese; the Chinese collection at Nantah's Library provided access to resources that met the needs of various disciplines. In an academic staff meeting in 1961, the Vice-chancellor Chuang Chu Lin proposed to resume the teaching of Chinese to all students with effect from 1962 as he mentioned that Nantah was after all a Chinese University and it was only natural and right that students are proficient in the Chinese language (Chuang, 1962). It was finally decided that this initiative would initially be rolled out to students enrolled in the College of Arts as there was inadequate teaching staff from the Department of Chinese Language and Literature (ibid). Hence, it is only fair that when discussing the membership of the Library, the whole student population of Nantah rather than just students from the Department of Chinese Language and Literature should be taken into consideration.

Annual reports of Nantah indicated that, in general, there was a steady growth of staff (Table 10) and student (Table 11).

Table 10: Nantah faculty members for the period 1959 to 1976

Year	College			Other Unit	Grand Total
	Arts	Science	Commerce	Language Centre	
1959	43	33	19	-	95
1960	-	-	-	-	-
1961	-	-	-	-	-
1962	-	-	-	-	-
1963	54	52	38	-	144
1964	-	-	-	-	-
1965/66	65	67	38	-	170
1966/67	58	51	27	1	137
1967/68	39	37	25	13	114
1968/69	30	32	19	5	86
1969/70	37	39	17	15	108
1970/71	50	53	25	19	147
1971/72	55	62	28	20	165
1972/73 1973/74	63	52	30	24	169
1975/76	53	53	32	33	171

Source: Nanyang University (1959, 1963II, 1966II, 1967II, 1968II, 1969III, 1970III, 1971II, 1972, 1974II, 1976I)

Table 11: Nantah graduates for the period 1959 to 1975

Year	Undergraduate			Postgraduate	Grand Total
	Arts	Science	Commerce		
1959	201	132	104	-	437
1960	179	119	46	-	344
1961	194	146	45	-	385
1962	214	139	52	-	405
1963	140	164	128	-	432
1964	172	126	121	-	419
1965/66	147	167	154	-	468
1966/67	113	170	166	-	449
1967/68	93	137	103	-	333
1968/69 (old degree structure)	86	164	126	-	376
1968/69 (new degree structure)	89	84	84	-	257
1969/70 (old degree structure)	208	178	129	-	515
1969/70 (new degree structure)	6	27	8	-	41
1970/71	256	260	192	-	708
1971/72	-	-	-	-	0
1972/73	258	219	203	10	690
1973/74	262	195	276	11	744
1974/75	278	214	316	6	814

Source: Nanyang University (1960, 1961, 1962, 1963I, 1964, 1965I, 1966I, 1967I, 1968I, 1969I, 1969II, 1970I, 1970II, 1971I, 1973I, 1974I, 1975I)

Despite having a considerable staff and student population to cater to, the University might have opted for a different attitude from the University of Malaya (and later the University of Singapore) by opening the Library to the public. On 2 April 1956, a public wrote in to *Nanyang Siang Pau* expressing his joy on seeing a report by Nantah's Chancellor Zhang (Chang, 1956). The report mentioned that Nantah's library would soon be opened to the public and would be developed into a Singapore and Malayan Chinese Public Library in the near future (ibid). However, this piece of information could not be verified in other sources such as publications by Nantah or other newspaper articles. In spite of the lack of resources to support the above statement made by Chang (1956), it is worthy to note that unlike their counterparts at the University of Malaya (and later the University of Singapore), Nantah librarians have never openly commented that Nantah's Library should not be opened to the public or that Nantah registered students should be given priorities.

4.3.2.3 Chinese Cultural Events

Aligning to Nantah's mission of preserving and nurturing Chinese culture, the Library not only acquired, collected and preserved a rich collection of Chinese volumes and journals, it also adhered to the mission by working with both internal and external societies and organisations to showcase Chinese arts and culture. From newspapers reports published in both English and Chinese, it was evident that the Library hosted ancient Chinese paintings exhibitions (The Straits Times, 1959II), Chinese calligraphy and art exhibitions (Nanyang Siang Pau, 1977; New Nations, 1977) from time to time in an effort to play a part in the promotion of Chinese culture. It was not specifically mentioned whether such events were opened to the public, but it was believed that the public was encouraged to attend such events as these events were advertised in the newspapers prior to their openings.

4.3.2.4 Reputation

The Library was never officially named a Chinese Library, but it was clearly undeniable one due to the status of the university, the rich collection of Chinese volumes held at the Library as well as the Chinese cultural activities hosted at the Library. The entire collection of the Nantah's Library might not be as huge as that of the University of Malaya (and later the University of Singapore) nor did it had as comprehensive a collection as the latter in the study of Chinese culture; but, Nantah's Library had a substantial amount of books that spanned from history to economics, from education to chemistry, etc.

Similar to its counterpart at the University of Malaya (and later the University of Singapore), the Library at Nantah played an important role in the collection and preservation of Chinese resources which contributed to the scholarly research and teaching of the university. There were no comparable circulation figures between these two universities to indicate which had a higher loan of Chinese volumes. The circulation figures recorded in the University of Singapore's annual reports for the period 1975/76 to 1979/80 were inclusive of the Main Library and the various specialised libraries whereas the figures in Nantah's annual reports for the same period were divided into English and Chinese collections and sub-divided into categories such as humanities, social sciences and science/technology as well as patron groups like students, faculty, staff and external members. Table 12 showed the loan

statistics of the Chinese collection in Nantah's Library from the period 1972/73 to 1975/76. The table illustrated that although there was a decline in the loan of Chinese materials from internal members over the years which was explainable by the change of teaching medium from Chinese to English for all courses except those from the Department of Chinese Language and Literature; there was an increase in the loan of Chinese resources from external members. Even though there was an increase in usage by external members, it was also questionable how active a role the Library played in the life of the general Chinese population considering that most of the external members were alumnus or scholars.

Table 12: Circulation figures of Chinese collection at Nantah's library from 1972/73 to 1975/76

Year	Internal Members (students, faculty, staff)			External Members			Total
	Humanities	Social Sciences	Science/ Technology	Humanities	Social Sciences	Science/ Technology	
1972/73	12,796	11,658	3,201	169	154	48	28,026
1973/74	11,590	11,606	3,367	215	134	131	27,043
1974/75	10,398	8,069	2,185	515	333	146	21,646
1975/76	9,225	6,970	1,788	598	332	86	18,999

Source: Nanyang University (1973II, 1974III, 1975II, 1976II)

4.4 Rebranding: Raffles Library, the 1950s – 1960s

In addition to the flourishing of the Chinese Academic Libraries, the 1950s also saw the "expanding and modernising" of the Raffles Library (National Library Board, 2019I). As mentioned in Chapter 3, "[I]n 1956 a beginning was made in providing books for both adults and children in the vernacular languages in Singapore" (Lim, 2010, p.91). From 1959 onwards, the Public Library's "English atmosphere" (Luyt, 2018, p.3) was further reduced when the ruling party's pursuance of "multilingualism by adopting Malay, Chinese (Mandarin), Tamil and English as official languages" (Lim, 2010, p.93) was announced. Subsequently, in 1960 Mr Rajaratnam, the Minister of Culture, expressed the need for a multi-lingual library to address the needs of non-English speaking citizens:

...in Singapore you cannot create a truly National Library unless you take into consideration the fact that it has to cater to four language groups. You are in fact expected

to operate a multi-lingual library. In the past[,] the National Library was developed primarily as an English Library. Certainly[,] a great many of the non-English speaking section of the population regard it as such. They still constitute only a minority of those who go to the National Library (Rajaratnam, 1961, p.25 cited in Lim, 2010, p.93).

One of the most prominent initiatives during this period was the establishment of the YCK part-time branch library. The following sub-sections would discuss the collection of, membership of, cultural activities organised by and reputation of the YCK.

4.4.1 Raffles Library – Yio Chu Kang Village Part-time Branch

In 1953, the first part-time Branch Library was set up in Upper Serangoon to reach out to the greater population (Goh, 2018). Subsequently, the second and third Branch Libraries were established in Siglap and Joo Chiat respectively (ibid). In 1956, the first branch library located in a community centre was founded in YCK (Wong and Naidu, n.d.). YCK branch was also significant in another sense because "it [was] the first library of Chinese books to be made available by Raffles Library" (The Straits Times, 1956I). The Raffles Library received a large volume of Chinese books when a principal of one of the Chinese-medium schools in YCK passed on the bequest of Chinese books from the Malayan Public Library Association. Hence, the Raffles Library took the opportunity to set up a "Library for Chinese" (The Straits Times, 1956II). The first Chinese part-time Branch Library was established not only because of the above factor, but another strong influence was also the huge change that Raffles National Library was undergoing during the late 1950s. The YCK branch was established amidst Raffles National Library's campaign to rebrand itself as more inclusive rather than "predominantly an English one" (The Singapore Free Press, 1959). However, just four years after the first Chinese part-time Branch Library of the Raffles National Library was established, the Branch Library was closed in 1960 due to redevelopment needs of the Ministry of Labour and Law (Goh, 2018).

4.4.1.1 Collection

According to a news report by *The Straits Times* (1956, p.6), the YCK Branch Library "[had] about 1,000 Chinese and 500 English books dealing with all subjects, from modern fiction to classics". Whereas the *Nanyang Siang Pau* (1956III) reported that of the same year, the

Library has more than 1,000 Chinese books, which included bilingual dictionaries as well as novels like *Dream of the Red Chamber* and proses by Lu Xun, a leading author in modern Chinese literature, and more than 600 English books. Despite the small difference in the figures, these reports illustrated that the YCK was one of the initiatives of the Raffles Library to place greater emphasis on "the provision of books for the non-English reader whose hunger for the printed word has remained largely unsatisfied" (The Straits Times, 1957V, p.8). As part of Raffles Library's campaign to rebrand itself as a more inclusive and welcoming library for the general population of Singapore, by 1960, more than 6,000 volumes of Chinese books were acquired by the Library (Nanyang Siang Pau, 1960). These volumes which included Chinese translated works of Western literature like *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, *Sherlock Holmes,* etc.; Chinese fiction such as *Sunrise*, *The Wilderness*, etc. by playwright Cao Yu, China's Four Great Classical Novels, *Fortress Besieged* by Qian Zhongshu, *The Border Town* by Shen Cong Wen, *The "Torrents" Trilogy* by Ba Jin, etc.; Chinese non-fiction titles like *Zai Kang Zang Gao Yuan Shang (On the Kangzang Plateau)*, *Nan Yang Shi Gang Yao (Outline of Nanyang's History)*, *Wu Xian Dian Yuan Li (Principles of Radio Technology)*, etc., were available for loan at the Central Library at Stamford Road as well as Branch Libraries located at YCK, Serangoon, Joo Chiat, etc. (ibid).

4.4.1.2 Membership

Before the Raffles Library became free for the public to access and borrow reading materials on 1 April 1958 (Lim, 1970), the YCK Branch Library, which was divided into the adult and junior sections, was not freely available and accessible (Nanyang Siang Pau, 1956II). There were three classes of adult membership which entitled members to a loan quota of four books, two books and one book per transaction. The fees were a deposit of ten dollars and an annual fee of sixteen dollars, a deposit of five dollars and an annual fee of twelve dollars and a deposit of two dollars and fifty cents and an annual fee of six dollars respectively (ibid). As for junior members, an annual fee of two dollars entitled members to a loan quota of one book (ibid).

Based on statistics and data obtained from the 1947 and 1957 Census as well as the 1956 *Urban Incomes and Housing* report by Goh Kwee Swee, Buchanan's study of the economic

situation in post-war Singapore concluded that the majority of Chinese belonged to the working class which monthly incomes ranged from fifty dollars to four hundred dollars (Buchanan, 1972 cited in Koh, 2010). Taking into consideration the average earnings of the Chinese in the 1950s as well as the much lower junior membership fee, it became understandable why children, especially those from the school located opposite the Library (Harrod, 1957) formed the bulk of the hundred or so registered members at YCK Branch Library (Nanyang Siang Pau, 1956II). The trend of having more children members was aligned with that of the three other Branch Libraries previously established as adults have greater freedom and capabilities to travel to the Central Library located in town (Harrod, 1957). These Branch Libraries had a total membership of 223 adults and 1,116 children (ibid).

4.4.1.3 Cultural Activities

Located in a community centre, the YCK Branch Library served as an extension of the Central Library to provide books and reading materials to the population who lived outside of the town area. Rather than publicity such as hosting of cultural activities and events, the main objective and focus of Branch Libraries like YCK were "to make the books go to the people instead of the people coming to the books" (The Singapore Free Press, 1954I, p.7). Hence, it was not surprising that no mention of such activities was found in the newspaper reports and annual reports from that period.

4.4.1.4 Reputation

The YCK branch's existence was undeniably part of the Raffles Library's strategies to reconstruct and transform the pro-Western reputation and image of the Library into a more inclusive social space or community hub (Lin and Luyt, 2014) by reaching out and attempting to cater to the literary needs of the Chinese population living in rural areas. Thus, it could be concluded that the YCK Branch Library marked the "beginnings of awareness" (Luyt, 2012, p.141) by the Raffles Library that changes to policies, collection, access must be implemented and enforced to better fulfil the local population's needs and expectations.

Like the other part-time Branch Libraries and Mobile Libraries deployed by the Raffles Library from the late 1950s onwards, YCK Branch Library was well-received among children

(Lin and Luyt, 2014). Lin and Luyt (2014) went on to argue that these services were effective implementations by the Raffles Library to decentralised and meet the needs of the general mass. Similarly, Chan (2009) also mentioned the importance of part-time Branch Libraries in the provision of library services to school-going children who live in rural parts of the island. Despite being the first Chinese Library to be ever established by the Raffles Library, the significance and impact of the YCK Branch Library must not be exaggerated. No mentions of the opening hours of the YCK branch was found in any written records; however, a rough estimation of the opening hours of the YCK branch could be made from the reference of other part-time Branch Libraries. For instance, the Upper Serangoon branch operated from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays (The Singapore Free Press, 1954I), the Siglap branch opened from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays (The Singapore Free Press, 1954II), etc. Hence, it was likely that the YCK Branch Library had similar operating hours that only opened in the afternoons and evenings. Taking into account considerations such as the above-mentioned restricted opening hours, limited members and the fact that it was a short-lived library that operated for a mere four years, the ability and success of the YCK branch to meet and fulfil the "long[-]neglected information needs" (Lin and Luyt, 2014, p.669) of the Chinese were doubtful.

4.5 Unification and Transition: Chinese Academic Libraries, the 1980s – 1999

Fast forward to the 1980s and the library landscape in Singapore had greatly evolved with the new developments in technology and computer studies as well as new government initiatives. Computerisation of library systems began as early as the 1960s in libraries in the US and UK (Lai, 1990); but it was not until the 1970s that libraries in Singapore incorporated sophisticated computer systems into their daily operation (ibid).

> However, serious considerations to computerise the library operations were only taken in the 1970s, but with each library going its own way, carrying out investigations, feasibility studies, experiments and trials. The first significant attempt at computerisation was the trial project carried out by the Nanyang University Library in 1972 to computerise its serials checklist. In April 1973, the National Library called a meeting of the major libraries in Singapore to exchange information on proposals for computerisation and to explore the

possibilities of sharing computerised systems. However, libraries continued to go

independently in their investigations and efforts to computerise. (ibid, p.163)

Amidst this backdrop of computerisation and modernisation, Singapore welcomed the establishment of a "new" Chinese Academic Library through the merger of two HEIs. Below, the collection of, membership of, cultural activities organised by and reputation of this "new" library would be analysed.

4.5.1 National University of Singapore's Chinese Library

The Chinese Library at NUS was a product of the merger of the University of Singapore's Chinese Library and the Chinese collection of the Library at Nantah. In December 1979, a team led by Sir Frederick Dainton, Chancellor of Sheffield University, submitted a report known as the *Dainton Report* to the government of Singapore (Gopinathan, 1989; Goh and Tan, 2008). The report recommended the establishment of a single university instead of maintaining two different universities in order for Singapore to have a more efficient, effective and competitive further education institution (The Straits Times, 1980I). In regard to the library, Sir Dainton pointed out that having a unified university would reduce the chances of having "wasteful duplications of books and serials" (ibid, p.11). The recommendation was accepted by the Singapore government and in April 1980, the National University of Singapore Bill was passed (Singapore Parliament, 1980 cited in Kusolpalin, 2016) and the NUS was inaugurated on 8 August 1980 (National University of Singapore, 1981).

4.5.1.1 Collection

It is believed that the merger of the University of Singapore Library and the Nantah Library brought together a huge collection of a million volumes of library resources (The Straits Times, 1980II). In particular, the number of Chinese volumes of the combined collection at NUS was estimated to be 286,000 volumes (ibid). Apart from inheriting the Chinese collections from the University of Malaya, University of Singapore and Nantah, donations, gifts and bequests helped in building up the rich collection at the NUS Chinese Library (National University of Singapore, 2012).

1982 saw the establishment of the Singapore/Malaysia Collection (Chinese) which brought "together all relevant Chinese publications in one special reading area where they could be readily consulted" (National University of Singapore, 1983, p.125). This collection developed into the Southeast Asia Collection four years later (National University of Singapore, n.d.III). The Southeast Asia Special Collection was one of NUS's most magnificent projects of the Chinese Library and it included literature from Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia, books and periodicals on Singapore and Malaya Chinese history as well as historical materials on Southeast Asia Chinese society such as Chinese newspapers, special issues, etc. (Huang, 2006). In 1989, an important collection was added to the Chinese Library. Former Prime Minister, Mr Lee Kuan Yew donated a "complete 61-volume set of A Treasury Of Chinese Classics Of All Times" (Tan, 1989, p.5) and "a set of the Wen Yuan Ge Si Ku Quan Shu (Complete Library of the Four Treasuries) [also spelled as Siku Quanshu], worth $120,00, to the National University of Singapore" (The Straits Times, 1989, p.44). Both the 61 volumes and the 1,500 volumes of "comprehensive collection of Chinese writing in history" (ibid) were presented to Mr Lee by "Mr Lee Teng-hui, the president of Taiwan" (Tan, 1989, p.5). In 1992, the former Institute of East Asian Philosophies deposited 30,000 volumes of Chinese journals and books about philosophy which were eventually accepted into the Library's official collection (National University of Singapore, n.d.III). The constant strong collection development of the NUS Chinese Library was made possible by the generous annual donations of the Wan family since 1996 (National University of Singapore, 2016). Funding from the Wan family was used in the acquisition of the Siku Continuation Series, a 1800-volume set that "were destroyed, missed, or rejected in the Siku Quanshu, as well as works that were published between the Qianlong period to 1911" (Chow, 2014, p.18) and the Siku Quanshu Weishou Series, a 301-volume set compiled according to the Biography of Excluded titles in Siku Quanshu (ibid).

Besides building up the collection, the Chinese Library had also invested substantial time and effort in increasing the accessibility of its collection. This process of creating a more accessible collection was divided into stages and the first stage began in 1983/84. In that year, the classification and cataloguing process underwent massive changes, such as the use of simplified Chinese characters instead of traditional Chinese characters and the use of the Library of Congress classification system in place of the Harvard-Yenching system (National

University of Singapore, 1984). In addition, "Chinese resources were also computerised" and Hanyu pinyin was adopted (ibid, p.9). The Chinese Automation System which enabled cataloguing activities to be conducted "in both Chinese characters and Hanyu pinyin formats" was implemented in 1989/1990 (National University of Singapore, 1990, p.15). Subsequently, in 1996, the ChiLNC, the Chinese Library's online public access catalogue (OPAC) was introduced to provide "computerised Chinese language bibliographic data in Singapore" (National University of Singapore, 1996, p.29) and searching using Chinese characters (National University of Singapore, 1997).

4.5.1.2 Membership

Library membership was reported in the first three annual reports of NUS, showing that there was a steady increase in the number of internal and external members (Table 13). Unlike the Chinese collection at the Nantah Library which covered a wide breadth of subjects such as humanities, sciences, commerce, etc., the NUS Chinese Library housed a more Chinese culture focused collection which catered mainly to the needs of the Department of Chinese Studies. Thus, similar to the University of Malaya (and later the University of Singapore), the students and faculty of the Department of Chinese Studies were likely to be the main patron group of the NUS Chinese Library. According to a newspaper article published in *Lianhe Zaobao* (Lin, 1987), the Department of Chinese Studies offered 38 modules annually, of which 30 were taught in Mandarin. Students who are qualified in Chinese as a first language were required to select modules conducted in Mandarin (ibid). Statistics showed that from 1980/81 to 1986/1987 there was a general increase in the number of students who took classes offered by the Department of Chinese Studies (Table 14). The only occasion where there was a slight decrease in students with Chinese as the first language was in 1985/86; in 1986/97 the Department restricted the number of students with Chinese as a second language to accept 120 students with Chinese as the first language from the nine Special Assistance Plan (SAP) schools (ibid). SAP schools offered "English and Chinese at first-language level" in an attempt "to preserve the best traditions of the former Chinese community schools" (Kam and Gopinathan, 1999, p.112). Regarding the strength of the faculty, as of 1981, there were 19 staff (Nanyang Siang Pao, 1981).

However, the Chinese Library was not solely restricted to NUS faculty and students and it was also accessible to alumnus, other local tertiary institutions, international academic researchers, students enrolled in distance learning courses, public service institutions, research institutions and commercial companies on the basis of subscription (Huang, 2006).

Table 13: NUS Library membership in the early 1980s

Year	Internal Members (students, faculty, staff)	External Members	Total
1980/81	10,967	4,040	15,007
1981/82	13,787	4,828	18,615
1982/83	15,308	5,668	20,976

Source: National University of Singapore (1981, 1982, 1983)

Table 14: Number of students taking classes offered by the Department of Chinese Studies in the 1980s

Year	Chinese as first language	Chinese as second language	Total
1980/81	284	204	488
1984/85	Roughly 300	463	≈763
1985/86	246	609	855
1986/87	347	505	852

Source: Lin (1987)

4.5.1.3 Chinese Cultural Activities

The Chinese Library at NUS took on a more active role in the hosting and organisation of Chinese cultural activities as compared to both its predecessors. In 1984, as part of the celebration of the 25th year of Singapore's independence from the British colonial government, the Chinese Library and the Department of Chinese Studies co-organised an exhibition titled "Xin hua wen yi er shi wu nian" which displayed the Chinese artistic and literary development in Singapore from 1959 till 1984 (Lianhe Wanbao, 1984). The exhibition was advertised in the *Lianhe Wanbao*, a Chinese evening newspaper (Ang, 2007), to encourage public attendance.

In addition to exhibitions, the Chinese Library established a physical art gallery within the Library in 1997 to enhance the cultural atmosphere of the Library and to promote Chinese

arts and the collection of local calligraphy and paintings (National University of Singapore, 2013). Subsequently, these Chinese art pieces were digitised and displayed on the Chinese Library website so that art lovers who are not members of the NUS Library or who may not have access to the physical gallery would still have access to works of artists like Tan Kee Sek, Phua Cheng Phue, Fang Chiu Pit, Cho[o]ng Chee Pang, Lim Tze Peng, Leong Weng Kee, etc. (ibid).

4.5.1.4 Reputation

The establishment of the NUS Chinese Library due to the integration of the University of Singapore Chinese Library and the Chinese collection of Nantah Library brought about Singapore's only academic Chinese Library and the "strongest research collection … in the Chinese language" (National University of Singapore, 1981, p.111) in the 20th century. The Chinese Library had "the fourth largest Chinese language collection outside China and Taiwan, after the Library of Congress, the Harvard-Yenching Library and the Chinese University of Hong Kong Library" (National University of Singapore, 1996, p.29). As the Chinese Library strived "to become a regional information hub for Chinese studies" (ibid), it also contributed to Chinese cultural activities which helped the public to gain a better understanding of Chinese culture, literature, arts, history, etc. However, it must be noted that these outreach activities catered for the general Chinese population were by far few and rare as the priorities as well as ultimate goals and objectives of the Chinese Library were supporting teaching and research needs of the Department of Chinese Studies.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

This project studied the development of five identified Chinese Libraries in Singapore in the 20th century. A historical research approach, which involved the examination of a variety of sources such as scholarly research, grey literature, newspaper articles, websites etc, was the preferred methodology for this project. This approach was chosen as the most appropriate means to conduct this research as it provided a suitable opportunity for both the collection and examination of information (Toomey, 2013). Through the careful study of these resources, the paper aimed to paint a comprehensive picture of the development of Chinese Libraries in Singapore as well as provide a basis for future research in this area.

Following the summary of research findings of Chinese Libraries illustrated in chronological order in 5.1, sub-section 5.2 of this chapter focused on providing a discussion of how the three research questions were being addressed in the paper; whereas sub-sections 5.3 and 5.4 reflected the limitations of this paper and suggested recommendations for future research respectively.

5.1 Research Findings

An inspection of the literature illustrated that from the early 20th century to the present day, Chinese Libraries with different missions and collections existed and some of them continue to exist. These libraries may have changed venues, underwent mergers, suffered damages and destructions or may no longer exist today; but the history of these libraries could be categorised into three phases – Pre-war Singapore, Post-war Singapore and The New Millennium.

5.1.1 Pre-war Singapore, 1900 – 1945

Findings from the literature illustrated that by the 19th century, Singapore had a "modern" library that started out as a Proprietary Library; and over the years, that Library evolved to become a National Library. Despite the difference in nature and name (the Library was renamed a few times over the years), the Library performed the roles and functions of a Public Library. The Library, like other social and cultural institutions during the rule of the colonial government, was primarily pro-English. Prior to being a Government Library, the Library had a collection which was established by donations from its committee members

who were Europeans and acquisitions from England and India; after it was owned by the government, the collection remained primarily English. Thus, since the early 20th century, Chinese Libraries emerged. Chinese Reading Rooms, which could be considered as the earliest organisations in Singapore to provide space and resources to meet the literary needs of the Chinese mass, thrived in a society where the majority of the population had no other means or channels of accessing Chinese reading materials. Established during a time when China was undergoing political turmoil and instability, the establishment of these Reading Rooms were closely tied to the Tongmenghui (also known as the Chinese United League, TMH) which was later succeeded by the KMT and the Chinese Revolution of 1911. Many of these Reading Rooms ceased operation in the mid or late 1910s and 1920s due to financial difficulties, suppression from the ruling government and other various reasons. UCL, the most renown and longest surviving of the Reading Rooms, offered a rich collection of Chinese materials which comprised of periodicals, regional newspapers and literature to its members and the general mass. In addition to the role of a library, UCL could also be regarded as a hub for promoting Chinese culture by hosting and organising cultural activities and events. Even though the library collection suffered serious damages and destructions during the Japanese Occupation, it evolved throughout the 20th century to overcome various political, social and financial obstacles; and it eventually emerged as a cultural and educational society.

Subsequently, in the late 1930s, a library shelved with more than 4,000 volumes of "literature of old and new China", "newspapers, magazines and Chinese illustrated papers" were established by the Popular Book Company to provide free access to the Chinese (The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser, 1939, p.3). Sadly, other than the above-stated newspaper, the Library was not mentioned in other sources; thus, the Library was excluded from this project as more in-depth researches could not be conducted from a lack of resources.

5.1.2 Post-war Singapore, 1945 – 1999

Following the surrender of the British in February 1942, Singapore's history entered a period known as the Japanese Occupation. During this period, not much is known about libraries in general (Lim, 1970). Following the surrender of the Japanese, Singapore was returned to its

formal colonial master. Post-war Singapore was a time of changes not just politically, but also socially. In 1953, donations from the Lee Foundation provided the Raffles Library with the funding to establish a new building; however, this sum of money was offered on the condition that the Library build up on its vernacular collection. As part of its movement to remove its pro-English label, the Raffles Library established a part-time Branch Library at YCK in 1956. The YCK Library had a substantial collection of Chinese books which included Chinese classics, translation of Western literature, non-fiction, bilingual dictionaries; these volumes provided school-going children in that area access to reading materials and study tools. Similar to other part-time libraries initiated by the Raffles Library, the part-time libraries acted as platforms for people living in remote areas to access the resources and services of the Raffles Library; hence, memberships were mainly made up of children who unlike adults could not freely travel to the Central Library. The YCK library was short-lived and was in operation for less than a decade; however, the YCK was significant for being the first Chinese Branch Library to be established by the Raffles Library.

The 1950s was also a time when the Chinese Academic Libraries flourished as two Chinese Libraries were built within a span of fewer than five years. The Chinese Library at the University of Malaya (and later the University of Singapore) was founded to support the teaching needs of the new Department of Chinese, thus the acquisition and collection development directions focused on Chinese classics, philosophy and religion, historical sciences, sociology, language and literature, fine and recreative arts, natural sciences, agriculture and technology, and bibliography (Nanyang Siang Pau, 1957); whereas, the Library at the Chinese university Nantah had a Chinese collection that catered to various disciplines and subjects offered by the institution such as business, science, arts, etc. There was also a slight difference in the patron group between the two libraries. As reflected in the collection, it is not surprising to note that the Chinese Library at the University of Malaya (and later the University of Singapore) catered mainly to the faculty members and students at the Department of Chinese; whereas, Nantah's Library was designed to meet the needs of students and staff from different disciplines. The two libraries also held different stands with respect to providing access to the public. Throughout the years, the former insisted that the library was "not open for public use" (Tan, 1978II, p.1); while, the latter never openly commented that public access was denied or forbidden.

The steady growth of collection and memberships at both Academic Libraries continued into the 1970s until a new chapter in the history of Chinese Academic Libraries began in Singapore in 1980 when the University of Singapore and Nantah merged to form a unified library under the recommendation of Sir Dainton (The Straits Times, 1980I). Like the Chinese Library at the University of Singapore, the Department of Chinese was the main patron group served by the NUS's Chinese Library; hence, the collection housed at the Chinese Library was primarily Chinese classics with a new Southeast Asia Collection developed in 1986. The biggest difference between NUS's Chinese Library and its precedents was the incorporation of new technologies and the Internet in the provision of better systems to increase the accessibility of library resources. NUS's Chinese Library became Singapore's only Chinese Academic Library until another four Chinese Libraries were initiated in the new millennium.

5.1.2 The New Millennium, 2000 – 2019

A new university was inaugurated in 1991 when the Nanyang Technological Institute and National Institute of Education merged to form the NTU (Nanyang Technological University, n.d.). Sitting on the grounds of the former Nantah, NTU's Department of Library managed two Chinese Research and Academic Libraries – Wang Gungwu Library, which was initially the Chinese Heritage Centre that was renamed to commemorate Professor Wang's contribution (https://blogs.ntu.edu.sg/lib-wgwl/wgwl/, n.d.), and the Chinese Library, which was converted from the Humanities and Social Sciences Library to accommodate the growing Chinese collection and the needs of faculty and staff from the Chinese Studies discipline (https://blogs.ntu.edu.sg/lib-chn/about, n.d.). In addition to Research and Academic Libraries, new Chinese Libraries such as the library@Chinatown and China Cultural Centre's Library were also being initiated and constructed by the Singapore and China government respectively. The former, which made its way into Chinatown Point in 2013, was "the first themed, mall library on Chinese arts and culture that was co-developed with and managed" by NLB, local business and non-profit organisation (Gwee, 2015, p.3); the latter was "set up [in 2015 as part of the China Cultural Centre] to provide China-related information or data, to introduce Chinese culture and history as well as the status quo of modern social life in China" (China Cultural Center, 2015). These recent additions to the community of Chinese Libraries in Singapore were listed here to construct a fuller picture of

the development of Chinese Libraries in Singapore; they were not being studied in this project due to the objective, nature and focus of this project.

5.2 Research Questions

Chapter 4 of this paper presented the different types of Chinese Libraries in a narrative manner by illustrating the features and elements of these Libraries chronologically. This sub-section brought together the findings in a systematic manner and attempted to answer the three research questions raised by using a thematic approach.

5.2.1 Research Question 1: What are the types of Chinese Libraries established?

The earliest type of Chinese Library was Reading Rooms that functioned like clan, district and dialect groups. With the rise of trade in Nanyang, communities of Chinese migrants grew. Despite living, working and settling in Singapore for most of their lives, these Chinese were often "China-oriented in their political loyalty" (Png, 1969, p.95). Wang (1988, p.2) went further to elaborate that

> Before the Second World War [WWII], the question of Chineseness was thought to have been a simple one. All who thought of themselves as Chinese were Chinese. They were conscious of their family system, their place of origin in China (which usually determined their language group, or what we would call today their sub-ethnic group, as Hokkien, Cantonese, Hakka, Teochiu [Teochew], Hailam [Hainanese], etc.) and their ties with other Chinese whether in China or in other parts of the region. These factors had created a core of sentiment which could be strengthened and expanded by stories about the Chinese past and reasons for pride in a more or less abstract 'Great Tradition' of Chinese civiliz[s]ation.

Taking into consideration the pro-China mindset of the Chinese population and the contrasting pro-English governance of the ruling colonial masters; it was not surprising that one of the earliest types of Chinese Libraries in Singapore were Reading Rooms which not only served as providers of books but also cultural hubs and political hubs (in its earliest days). Reading Rooms like the UCL started out as a revolutionary promotion and recruitment tool of the TMH by the provision of reading materials of a certain nature. However, this function of the Reading Rooms was not long-lived as it was clamped down by

the government. Hence, over the years, the focus of UCL shifted to the rebuilding of its Library's collection as well as the promotion of Chinese culture.

The second type was Academic Libraries, which was also the most reputed and recognised type of Chinese Library both locally and internationally during the 20th and 21st centuries. Euster (1995) argued that the development of Academic Libraries was closely tied to the advancement of HEIs. Charles William Eliot, who served as the president of Harvard from 1869 to 1909 (Harvard, n.d.), expressed that "the library is the heart of the university" (Harvard University, 1875, p.39). Thus, it was foreseeable that the founding and establishment of new universities and relevant disciples in Singapore resulted in the emergence of Chinese Academic Libraries; although, strictly speaking, the NUS Chinese Library was not a library established from scratch like its predecessors, rather, it was a merger and combination of the best of both of its predecessors. As illustrated in the previous sections, despite being Academic Libraries, the three Academic Libraries discussed differ from each other in terms of collection, membership, cultural activities organised and even reputation. These differences are a great reflection of Brophy's (2005, p.1) argument that

> …the character of each library, and the types of service it emphasizes, are based upon the needs of a particular, well-defined group of users. It is not surprising, therefore, that the university library reflects its university… At the simplest level, these dependencies will be seen in the subject strengths of the parent institution. But more subtly, and perhaps more importantly, the nature and style of the library will reflect those of the institution.

The final type, which was also the most short-lived in Singapore, was the Public Library, specifically, Branch Library. Branch Libraries like the YCK were set up by the Raffles Library throughout Singapore and although small in size, collection and manpower, these Branch Libraries "[we]re, ideally, able to target the surrounding area's needs specifically" (Pressley, 2009, p.34). The YCK was not only a Branch Library of the Raffles Library, but it could also be regarded as a Specialised Public Library due to its focus on Chinese collection. Jones (1971, p.78) stated that specialised branches were formed by Public Libraries in a process of decentralisation:

> …it is true that public libraries are already in some degree discharging such functions, but in a piecemeal, pragmatic fashion, (reference library, local history collection, technical information service, and so on). These are 'exceptional', 'specialised' branches of the service.

5.2.2 Research Question 2: Why did these Chinese Libraries emerge?

Libraries are social and cultural institutions that affect the social habits and culture of the population through their collection, cultural activities, membership, rules and regulations, etc.; however, at the same time, the rise and decline of libraries are also heavily influenced by the society.

> Library historians, from the publication of Justus Lipsius's *Brief Outline of the History of Libraries* in the late 16th century to the work of contemporary scholars, have dedicated themselves to discovering not only ways in which libraries influence their coeval society, but also the ways in which society inhibits, encourages, or directs library growth (Harris, 1999, p.4).

Harris (1999) went on to categorise and summarise the influencing factors to be social, economic and political factors. Social factors included progressions of societies, advancements in education, etc.; economic factors included healthy economic growth of the nation, availability and affordability of published materials, etc.; political factors included political stability, supportive policies and encouragement from the government, etc. (ibid).

Findings from this project suggested that the factors which led to the emergence of Chinese Libraries in Singapore during different periods were much aligned with Harris's discovery. Internal factors such as social needs of the local Chinese and neglections from the colonial masters as well as external factors like the arrival of Dr Sun and the formation of the Singapore branch of the revolutionary league played important roles in the establishment of Chinese Reading Rooms. Reading Rooms such as the UCL sprang up during the early 1900s to provide reading materials and cultural activities among other functions as the Public Library did not cater to the information needs of the Chinese. Political influences not only led to the emergence of Reading Rooms but also facilitated and accelerated the evolution of UCL when the government no longer allowed societies such as UCL to promote and

encourage political and revolutionary ideologies. As Singapore progressed into the 1950s, social and political factors continued to serve as significant determinants in the development of libraries. Like the UCL, social factors like progression and development in society and the library sector as well as political support and policies from the ruling party, PAP, brought about the rebranding and decentralising campaign of the Raffles Library and along with it came the establishment of the first Chinese Branch Library. Social stability and progression, as well as advancement and diversity in education and scholarly research, welcomed the inauguration of Chinese Academic Libraries such as the Nantah Library and the University of Malaya Library which first appeared to meet the demands of teaching staff and students of their respective institutions. Unlike its predecessors, the NUS Chinese Library was founded due to the merger of the Libraries at Nantah and the University of Singapore which was mainly a result of political intervention.

Chinese Libraries like any other libraries or social and cultural institutions are not stagnant in nature; after their establishment, they continue to undergo constant evolution to meet the progression in society, advancement in technology and changes in politics (Brophy, 2007).

> The 'library' as a formal concept remains a constant; in its actuality it is protean: everchanging, versatile, regularly taking on new forms in response to ever-changing needs (Feather and Sturges, 2003, p.374).

In general, Chinese Libraries in Singapore have gone through tremendous changes throughout the years, especially since the introduction of new technologies and the Internet. This could be observed in the launch of more systematic approaches and methods to organise library resources in Chinese Libraries, such as computerisation to provide easier and better access. Of course, in addition to technological influences, other external factors such as political and social changes, like the implementation of the Hanyu pinyin policy and 'de-Westernisation' of the Raffles Library, also helped to shape the acquisition and cataloguing of Chinese resources. An internal change in the institution's mission or objectives could also affect the organisation and operation of Chinese Libraries, for instance, UCL's collection evolved from propaganda materials to research on Sun Yat Sun as the institution's overarching mission evolved from pro-revolutionary to preservation-based and research-based.

5.2.3 Research Question 3: What are the roles played by Chinese Libraries in the lives of Singaporeans?

Society's perspectives of the roles of libraries may have changed along the years, but generally, these roles are regarded to be

> …collecting and preserving valuable cultural artefacts, the provision of access to information sources, putting in place the infrastructure needed to enable people to access resources for themselves, or enabling people to develop the skills needed to be proficient information users… (Brophy, 2007, p.4).

This study found that despite the difference in their varied nature, the provision of a rich Chinese collection either in the form of lending or reference was a common role across the five libraries being studied. The Academic Libraries focused on resources that evolved around scholarly materials, Chinese classics, Chinese manuscripts, etc.; whereas YCK had a stronger collection in recreation reading, in particular, a junior collection as most of its patrons are school going students. UCL's acquisition and collection policies differed throughout the years, from revolutionary materials in its earliest day, to a vast collection of Chinese classics during its peak and finally to Sun Yat Sen relevant materials post-WWII.

Over the years, the provision of reading materials was no longer just the sole objective of libraries as libraries had evolved and improved, more services were offered; similarly, libraries were not resigned to become merely information hubs and have developed into cultural hubs. The promotion of Chinese culture through cultural events and activities was another important role of Chinese Libraries, especially the UCL and the NUS Chinese Library. These events and activities which targeted the general Chinese population took the forms of talks, classes, exhibitions, etc.

In addition to the above-mentioned roles, a core responsibility of UCL was to provide welcoming space and opportunities to bring together the Chinese in Singapore in order to perform and obtain other missions and objectives, such as recruitment of like-minded comrades in the early days and preservation of Chinese traditions and culture in its later years.

The impact and influence of the roles played by the Chinese Libraries varied according to the size of the collection, the size of the memberships, the services provided, the ease of accessing for the general Chinese population, etc.

5.3 Limitations

Although this paper attempted a thorough study of Chinese Libraries in Singapore, there were certain limitations, namely resources constraint, limitation of methodology and time constraint.

There were two main types of resources constraint encountered during the research process. Firstly, difficulties in access to old publications. Many primary sources were destroyed and thus no longer available, for instance, the bulk of the UCL's library collection and many original documents and records were either lost or damaged during WWII. For publications that survived, obtaining of such publications in "useable" formats is difficult as the digitisation technology "is not as reliable with old newspapers, with text often difficult to recognise either from fading or too much ink" (Abbas, 2017, 9.65). Furthermore, the issue of copyright has also prevented some of these publications to be freely and readily accessible. For example, newspapers articles from *Lianhe Zaobao*, *Lianhe Wanbao* and *The Straits Times* which were published after 1989 were subjected to copyright and thus not viewable from home and could only be accessed from the multimedia stations at NLB's libraries. Secondly, examining newspaper articles also proved to be difficult as they were not peer-reviewed and determining "whether the document 'is telling the truth' in what it says" (Wildemuth, 2009, p.160) could be challenging. These news articles could be biased or selective in its reporting due to influence from the ruling political parties or have higher entertainment value as compared to reliable facts (Solent Online Learning, n.d.). Hence, it has been decided that when analysing and evaluating these newspaper articles, triangulation was applied; in particular, comparison to grey literature and peer-reviewed articles would be made where appropriate.

Although the historical research approach was evaluated to be the most suitable methodology for the purpose of this study, it has its flaws. The study of documents as sources forms the core of the historical research approach which led to an amount of uncertainty as "the researcher cannot control what they cover, how they were created,

and/or whether they survive to be included in the study's data set" (Wildemuth, 2009, p.160). Thus, it could highly be possible that the researcher could not uncover any relevant sources or data to support his/her arguments. Similarly, when dealing with documents, uncertainty also lies in the understanding and interpretation of these documents (Wildemuth, 2009). Wildemuth (2009) argued that to be able to obtain an appropriate understanding of a document, the researcher must have sufficient knowledge of the subject. Hence, efforts have been made to consult scholarly researches on Singapore society to provide background knowledge on issues regarding ethnic composition, language, culture, education, sense of identity etc in 19th and 20th century Singapore.

Lastly, time constraint. The project must keep within the stipulated deadline; thus, making it impossible for the project to explore and study a longer historical period or cover every Chinese Library in Singapore. In order to ensure that this paper abides by the rules and regulations set up by the department, such as submission deadline, this project could only restrict to the study of five Chinese Libraries.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

This research covered the emergence and development of Chinese Libraries in Singapore in the 20th century and illustrated the varied roles played by these libraries. Some of the questions that arose from this project include: What are the other Chinese Libraries that existed in Singapore? How have Chinese Libraries continued to develop in the 21st century? Were there other primary or secondary resources available to help paint a more comprehensive picture of Chinese Libraries in Singapore? Thus, additional research could be conducted to look into these matters.

Another area that future researchers may consider is the examination of information sources not covered in this project. As mentioned, due to various constraints, only a small collection of grey literature and non-scholarly resources were reviewed. It would be helpful to gather and look into other sources such as oral history interviews, meeting minutes, etc. which could provide more insights or different perspectives.

Appendix 1: List of Chinese terms mentioned in the paper

Names Used in the Paper	Hanyu pinyin	Dialect Transliteration	English Translation and/or (Remarks)	Chinese Terms (in simplified Chinese)
Ai Chun (Reading Room)	ai qun (shu bao she)	Ai Chun	(Reading Room founded by the Foochow)	爱群 （书报社）
Alfred Chiu Kaiming	qiu kai ming	N.A.	(Chinese library pioneer who developed the Harvard-Yenching system)	裘开明
Aw Boon Haw	hu wen hu	Aw Boon Haw	(A businessman and philanthropist active in Southeast Asia)	胡文虎
Ba Jin	ba jin	N.A.	(Pen name of Chinese author Li Yaotang)	巴金 （李尧棠）
Cantonese	guang dong ren	N.A.	Cantonese. (People/descendants of people from the region of Guangdong province)	广东人
Cao Yu	cao yu	N.A.	(Pen name of Chinese playwright Wan Jiabao)	曹禺 （万家宝）
Chew Hian Swee	zhou xian rui	Chew Hian Swee	(Member of the UCL and Singapore branch of TMH)	周献瑞
Chih Tung (Reading Room)	zhi tong (shu bao she)	Chih Tung	(Reading Room founded by the Hakka)	志同 （书报社）
China Cultural Center/Centre	zhong guo wen hua zhong xin	N.A.	China Cultural Center/Centre. (Established by the Chinese government to promote cultural exchange)	中国文化中心
Chinese Heritage Centre	hua yi guan	N.A.	Chinese Heritage Centre. (An organisation that undertakes research on the Chinese communities around the world)	华裔馆
Chinese Library Classification System	zhong guo tu shu guan fen lei fa	N.A.	Chinese Library Classification System. (An adaption of the Dewy Decimal System invented by Mr Liu Guojun)	中国图书馆分类法
Choong Chee Pang	zhong zhi bang	Choong Chee Pang	(Singapore artist)	钟志邦
Chuang Chu Lin	zhuang zhu lin	Chuang Chu Lin	(Vice-chancellor of Nantah)	庄竹林
Dong nan ya hua ren li shi wen xian	dong nan ya hua ren li shi wen xian	N.A.	Historical documents of Chinese in South-east Asia	东南亚华人历史文献
Dream of the Red Chamber	hong lou meng	N.A.	Dream of the Red Chamber. (Also known as The Story of the Stone. It is one of China's Four Great Classical Novels)	红楼梦
Eight-Year Anti-Japanese War	ba nian kang zhan	N.A.	Eight-Year Anti-Japanese War. (Also known as Second Sino-Japanese War. Occurred from 1937 to 1945)	八年抗战
Fang Chiu Pit	fang qiu bi	Fang Chiu Pit	(Singapore artist)	方秋碧
Fortress Besieged	wei cheng	N.A.	Fortress Besieged. (Chinese novel written by Qian Zhongshu)	围城
Goh Kwee Swee	wu qing rui	Goh Kwee Swee	(Singapore politician)	吴庆瑞

Goh Lean Tuck	wu lian de	Goh Lean Tuck	(Penang born Chinese doctor)	伍连德
Hainanese	hai nan ren	N.A.	Hainanese. (People/descendants of people from the Hainan province)	海南人
Hakka	ke jia ren	N.A.	Hakka. (People/descendants of people from the Hakka-speaking regions in Southern China)	客家人
Hanyu pinyin	han yu pin yin	N.A.	(The Romanised version for Mandarin)	汉语拼音
Hokkien	fu jian ren	N.A.	Hokkien. (People/descendants of people from the region of Fujian province)	福建人
Hokkien Huay Kuan	fu jian hui guan	Hokkien Huay Kuan	(A clan association established by the Hokkien)	福建会馆
Koh Siow Nam	xu shao nan	Koh Siow Nam	(A businessman active in Singapore)	许绍南
Kuan Nan (Reading Room)	guan nan (shu bao she)	Kuan Nan	(Reading Room founded in the 1900s. Dialect group unknown)	冠南（书报社）
Kuomintang	guo min dang	N.A.	Nationalist Party of China	国民党
Lee Choon Seng	li jun cheng	Lee Choon Seng	(A businessman and philanthropist active in Singapore)	李俊承
Lee Kong Chian	li guang qian	Lee Kong Chian	(A businessman and philanthropist active in Singapore. Founder of the Lee Foundation)	李光前
Lee Teng-hui	li deng hui	Lee Teng-hui	(President of Taiwan from 1988 to 2000)	李登辉
Leong Weng Kee	liang rong ji	Leong Weng Kee	(Singapore artist)	梁荣基
Lianhe Wanbao	lian he wan bao	N.A.	United Evening News. (A Chinese evening newspaper published in Singapore)	联合晚报
Lianhe Zaobao	lian he zao bao	N.A.	United Morning Paper. (The translation for its full name would be Nanyang Sin Chew United Morning Paper)	联合早报 (This is the abbreviation for its full name 南洋·星洲联合早报)
Lim Tze Peng	lin zi ping	Lim Tze Peng	(Singapore artist)	林子平
Lingnan Journal of Chinese Studies	ling nan xue bao	N.A.	Lingnan Journal of Chinese Studies. (A scholarly journal published by Lingnan University)	岭南学报
Liu Guojun	liu guo jun	N.A.	(Chinese librarian who invented the Chinese Library Classification System)	刘国钧
Lo Ying (Reading Room)	le ying (shu bao she)	Lo Ying	(Reading Room founded in the 1900s. Dialect group unknown)	乐英 （书报社）
Lu Xun	lu xun	N.A.	(Pen name of Chinese author Zhou Shuren)	鲁迅 （周树人）
Ming dynasty	ming chao	N.A.	Ming dynasty. (Ruling dynasty of China from 14th century to 17th century	明朝
Nantah	nan da	N.A.	Nanyang University. (Nantah is a term of	南大 (This is the abbreviation for

				endearment to address the university)	its full name 南洋大学）
Nanyang	nan yang	N.A.	South ocean. (A Sino centric term referring to the Southeast Asia region)	南洋
Nanyang Siang Pau	nan yang shang bao	Nanyang Siang Pau	Nanyang Business Daily. (A newspaper run by Mr Tan Kah Kee)	南洋商报
Northern Expedition	bei fa tong yi	N.A.	Northern Expedition. (A military campaign launched by the KMT against warlords to unify China)	北伐统一
On the Kangzang Plateau	zai kang zang gao yuan shang	N.A.	On the Kangzang Plateau. (Chinese non-fiction)	在康藏高原上
Outline of Nanyang's History	nan yang shi gang yao	N.A.	Outline of Nanyang's History. (Chinese non-fiction)	南洋史纲要
Phua Cheng Phue	pan zheng pei	Phua Cheng Phue	(Singapore artist)	潘正培
Ping Ming (Reading Room)	ping min (shu bao she)	Ping Ming	(Reading Room founded by the Cantonese)	平民（书报社）
Principles of Radio Technology	wu xian dian yuan li	N.A.	Principles of Radio Technology. (Chinese non-fiction)	无线电原理
Qian Zhongshu	qian zhong shu	N.A.	(Chinese author)	钱钟书
Qianlong Emperor	qian long	N.A.	Qianlong Emperor. (Qing emperor who ruled China in the 18th century)	乾隆
Qing dynasty	qing chao	N.A.	Qing dynasty. (Ruling dynasty of China from 17th century to early 20th century)	清朝
Shen Congwen	shen cong wen	N.A.	(Chinese author)	沈从文
Siku Continuation Series	xu xiu si ku quan shu	N.A.	Siku Continuation Series. (A 1800-volume set that were destroyed, missed, or rejected in the Siku Quanshu, as well as works that were published between the Qianlong period to 1911)	续修四库全书
(Wen Yuan Ge) Siku Quanshu	(wen yuan ge) si ku quan shu	N.A.	Complete Library of the Four Treasuries. (A compilation of Chinese scholarship collated during the reign of the Qing dynasty emperor Qian Long)	（文渊阁）四库全书
Siku Quanshu Weishou Series	si ku wei shou shu ji kan	N.A.	Siku Quanshu Weishou Series. (A 301-volume set compiled according to the Biography of Excluded titles in Siku Quanshu)	四库未收书辑刊
Sin Chew Jit Poh	xing zhou ri bao	Sin Chew Jit Poh	Sin Chew Daily. (A newspaper run by Mr Aw Boon Haw)	星洲日报
Singapore	xin jia po/xing jia po	N.A.	Singapore. (A city state located in Southeast Asia)	新加坡/星加坡
Sun Yat Sen	sun yi xian	Sun Yat Sen	(Better known as Sun Zhongshan in Chinese, a politician involved in the overthrowing of the Qing dynasty in China)	孙逸仙（孙中山）

Sunrise	ri chu	N.A.	Sunrise. (Chinese play written by Cao Yu)	日出
Tan Ean Kiam	chen yan qian	Tan Ean Kiam	(A businessman and philanthropist active in Singapore)	陈延谦
Tan Kah Kee	chen jia geng	Tan Kah Kee	(A businessman and philanthropist active in China and Southeast Asia)	陈嘉庚
Tan Kee Sek	zeng ji ce	Tan Kee Sek	(Singapore artist)	曾纪策
Tan Lark Sye	chen liu shi	Tan Lark Sye	(A businessman and philanthropist active in Singapore)	陈六使
Teo Eng Hock	zhang yong fu	Teo Eng Hock	(Teochew merchant and founding member of the UCL and Singapore branch of TMH)	张永福
Teochew	chao zhou ren	N.A.	Teochew. (People/descendants of people from the region of the Chaoshan region of Guangdong province)	潮州人
The Border Town	bian cheng	N.A.	The Border Town. (Chinese novel written by Shen Congwen)	边城
The "Torrents" Trilogy	ji liu san bu qu	N.A.	The "Torrents" Trilogy. (A series of three Chinese novels written by Ba Jin)	激流三部曲
The Wilderness	yuan ye	N.A.	The Wilderness. (Chinese play written by Cao Yu)	原野
Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies	qing hua xue bao	N.A.	Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies. (A scholarly journal published by Tsinghua University)	清华学报
Tung Wen (Reading Room)	tong wen (shu bao she)	Tung Wen	(Reading Room founded by the Hainanese)	同文（书报社）
Twenty-Four History	er shi si shi	N.A.	Twenty-Four History. (A collection of historical books covering a period from 3000 B.C. to the Ming Dynasty in the 17th century)	二十四史
United Chinese Library	tong de shu bao she	Thong Tek Che Poh Soh	United Chinese Library. (Reading room established by the Teochew)	同德书报社
Wan Guoding's "Chinese Character Fundamental Stroke Organisation System"	wan guo ding han zi mu bi pai lie fa	N.A.	Wan Guoding's "Chinese Character Fundamental Stroke Organisation System". (One of the earliest solutions to Chinese characters sorting and indexing issues in China)	万国鼎汉字母笔排列法
Wang Gungwu	wang geng wu	Wang Gungwu	(A scholar on Chinese diaspora)	王赓武
Wang Yunwu's Four Corner Method	wang yun wu si jiao hao ma yan zi fa	N.A.	Wang Yunwu's Four Corner Method. (A character-input method for Chinese typing)	王云五四角号码检字法
Xin hua wen yi er shi wu nian	xin hua wen yi er shi wu nian	N.A.	(An exhibition organised by the NUS Chinese Library and Department of Chinese Studies)	新华文艺二十五年
Yang Chih (Reading Room)	yang zhi (shu bao she)	Yang Chih	(Reading Room founded in the 1900s. Dialect group unknown)	养智（书报社）

Yenching Journal of Chinese Studies	yan jing xue bao	N.A.	Yenching Journal of Chinese Studies. (A scholarly journal published by Yenching University)	燕京学报
Yio Chu Kang	yang cuo gang	Yio Chu Kang	(An area in northeast Singapore)	杨厝港
Zhang Rennan	zhang ren nan	N.A.	(Founding member of the UCL and Singapore branch of TMH)	张仁南
Zhao Diaoxi	zhao diao xi	N.A.	(Founding member of the UCL and Singapore branch of TMH)	赵钓溪

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