

# **In search of people memory: Newspapers of National Library of Indonesia**

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## **Abstract**

*Newspapers are regarded as resources documents which reflect the day by day account. They store away the happenings of current life as they occur, and keep important clues for the future as well as of the past. as a historical artifact is their adaptability to and reflection of their immediate environment.*

*National library of Indonesia (NLI) boasts one of the finest old newspaper collections in the country. There are bound newspapers which is more than 1000 titles of Indonesian language, regional and foreign languages such as Dutch, French, English, Arabic, Chinese and Japanese. It also has the oldest newspaper in 1812 as the flagship Library collection.*

*In searching people memory, a fast progress supported by technical innovation is a must. Thus preservation and access have been the library responsibilities. It's beautiful, If all the country history which have been taken only from history books, now they exist with more details about the characters and significant events that would later become an integral part of this nation trip, which is newspapers*

*Using a qualitative analysis, the paper attempts to review of some of the issues in newspaper access and preservation. It then describes how National Library of Indonesia digitization project was carried out, and offers an assessment of how successfully the project addresses preservation issue and efforts to bring the collection to the people. It also highlights how far academic and researchers take advantage of the collection. Old newspaper is the object of this research. I did not touch so much on current newspapers, but I focus mostly on old newspaper as being very rare through a series of interviews with newspapers librarians (bound, micro, audio visual, digital reprografi, and automation).*

*Finally, the research concludes that providing various opportunity to see what happeople memory.*

*Keywords: newspapers, people memory, national library, preservation, access.*

## **Introduction**

Newspapers are regarded as resources documents which reflect the day by day account of the thrilling, the dull, the romantic, the horrible, or events of the world about us. They store away the happenings of current life as they occur, and keep important clues for the future as well as of the past. National library of Indonesia boasts one of the finest old newspaper collections in the country. There are bound newspapers which is more than 1000 titles of Indonesian language, regional

and foreign languages such as Dutch, French, English, Arabic, Chinese and Japanese. It also has the oldest newspaper in 1812 as the flagship Library collection. For example, Sumatra Courant which is the oldest local newspaper in Sumatra.

In searching people memory, a fast progress supported by technical innovation is a must. Thus preservation and access have been the library responsibilities. It's beautiful, If all the country history which have been taken only from history books, now they exist with more details about the characters and significant events that would later become an integral part of this nation trip, which is newspapers

The paper attempts to review of some of the issues in newspaper access and preservation. It then describes how National Library of Indonesia digitization project was carried out, and offers an assessment of how successfully the project addresses preservation issue and efforts to bring the collection to the people. It also highlights how far academic and researchers take advantage of the collection.

Considering the importance of rare newspapers access, how NLI provide for this purpose, what they have been done to reach its mission regarding newspaper collection? Extensive research has been conducted on newspapers in National Library of Indonesia. (Mas Gani, 1978; Syukur Kholil, 1999; Tri Wiratno, 2001; Djodjor Situmeang, 2005; Wartini Santosa, 2005; Tri luki Cahyadini, 2006; Wati Kurniawati, 2010). While these studies have described and developed issues on newspapers in NLI, there is little empirical research on people's memory regarding the collection in this institution.

Newspapers library is identified as an example of the research capacity on people memory. As NLI shift towards a competitive digital environment, newspapers will be one of research topic. Newspapers can provide evidence of a research focus in term of space and time. That makes the collection becomes primary sources specifically related to writing the history.

With today's emphasis on preservation and access on library collection, NLI are faced with the challenges on how newspapers collection can be utilized by people at large, especially to stimulate people memory.

## **Literature Review**

Accountability for a national library improvement can be one of the theme of any state policies. Concept of preservation and access sets demanding accountability standards for national library, in which means national library accountable means to be recognized a kind of chain of understanding to be base library priorities for areas of the collection where there is a demonstrated imperative to digitize or will lose access. This related to the mission of National Library of Indonesia to bring collection to the people. When this happens, it doesn't mean to give right to community but this helps state for binding its citizen into a collective national identity. How national identity can be build?

In recent times, the field of memory studies has developed dramatically due to growing awareness that history is highly depend on the social, political, and technological environment within which the past is remembered. Ashplant have identified two principal paradigms within which war memory is studied. The first is a political paradigm where memory is a practice bound up with rituals of national

identification, and a key element in the symbolic repertoire available to the nation-state for binding its citizen into a collective national identity. So memory has made important contributions to the understanding of national memory. (Seaton, 2004) Memory is closely related with social environment and how we recollect things, we realize that the greatest number of memories come back to us when our parents, our friends, or other persons recall them to us.

Memory is social because every memory exists through its relation with what has been shared with others: language, symbols, events, and social and cultural context. As the past is made into story, memories are simplified and prepared, planned and rehearsed socially and individually (Mistral, 2004). Menurut sarjana A, bahwa memori manusia sangat tergantung dengan lingkungannya. Kalau lingkungannya baik, maka ingatannya dapat semakin baik. Begitu juga sebaliknya. Memories can also influence the ways future events are understood and managed. Memory studies provide a way of looking at historical reception, what people remember of history, the ways it is made useful in their lives.

One of important tools to raise people memory is reading the past, which means reading past newspapers. A document becomes significant through the subjective constituted practice of integrating a personal past into a collective communal remembering (Lloyd, 2006). A tradition and strong identity for an educational institution require time and sensitivity to cultural values. Newspapers provide links to a research or scholarly ethos or mnemonic communities (Josias, 2011). Newspapers are one of the best places to see Indonesia colonial era memories. In order to evaluate the longer-term development of the war as a media event, it can be use general historical chronologies.

Newspaper becomes high-demand resources in search of people memory, because the nature of newspapers in the this collection cover family births, funeral notices, and obituaries and other things. The reading of newspapers ignited memories from the past, and people began to recall where they were at the time. Newspapers were among the most important and powerful tool to raise people memory. Newspapers allow us to go back to the daily lives and social customs of our ancestors, coupled with family relationships (Forgatje, 2003). In some cases old newspapers are used to stimulate memories and make people share their experience, as reminiscence therapy.

Preserving newspapers enable us to reconstruct the past (Halbwachs, 2003). Ernst reminds us, the traces of the past exist as pollution and chemical contamination as much as any deliberately preserved material. History memory use physical traces as a means to reconstruct the past. How to bring the past to life, as a compensation for the loss of an authentic collective memory by creating a feeling of the immanence of the past in the present. Memory was thought of as leaving physical traces on the brain, which could then be inherited by successive generations (Crane, 2000).

In general, the things that you tend to forget most easily are the things that you feel do not matter as much. The things that you tend to remember most easily are the things that are important to you - for example, a special birthday. However, some people just seem to have a better memory than others, and some people are more forgetful than others.

Having to read or look newspaper will help us to preserve our memories. Memory can have a valuable place in local history.

Newspapers are considered rare, because of their ages, their languages, their publishers, and their city of publications, which are not many library in Indonesia has.

How can newspaper generate nationalism and cultivate citizens for the conscience of the nation. Newspapers are an important tool to directly express and disseminate information which has important historical value. The historical data is considered to have higher authenticity and explore the truth since its time and space explained (Ronghui Su, 2012).<sup>1</sup>

Why newspapers are so valuable for the research. Newspaper gives better understanding of the role of the past in public discourse on various occasion that ultimately benefit for making sense of complex social world. Since the nature of its news to cover local even, newspaper are regarded as an essential source for the local historian (Kammen, 2008).

We say that stimulate national historical memory of the community will be a good contribution to the national investment community identity, and means it is newspapers. To that end, efforts related to the preservation and access is very crucial conducted by NLI. We say that stimulate national historical memory of the community will be a good contribution to the national investment community identity, and means it is newspapers. To that end, efforts related to the preservation and access is very crucial conducted by NLI. Institution like NLI realizes that much of their national heritage, culture and history have been chronicled in newspapers. However, what about the availability of rare newspapers in the national library as a library of the most widely collected this type of source.

### **Brief history and preservation of newspaper**

Over 32 years of development and collection building, NLI have developed a rich and varied collection of periodicals, of which newspapers are a special part. As the mission of NLI is to guide, develop and make the most of all kinds of libraries; preserve references (printed and recorded) as nation's cultural achievements; and to provide library services to all.

Almost 70% of NLI collection is inherited from the collection of the Library of the National Museum of the collection pioneered since 1778 by Bataviaasch Genootshap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen. The acquisition of the newspaper collection in 1980 was the gift of PNM Another part of the collection are foreign newspapers of Dutch colonial. Indonesia's first newspaper was published in the 17th century with the name *Memorie De Nouvellers*, written in hand. Then in 1744, "*Bataviase Nouvelles*" was published. Thirty years later the government issued *Vendu Nieuws*. In Deandles Governor colonial era in 1810, *Bataviasche Koloniale Courant* was published. In 1811, the British occupied the Dutch East Indies, and replace it into the *Java Government Gazette* published by Dutch East Indies.

In 1913 the library was appointed as a deposit library holding for all printouts in Indonesia, and in 1948 the library was designated as a deposit library for

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<sup>1</sup> Ronghui Su. Inheriting Civilization and Serving Community : Preservation and Utilization of Local Newspapers in the Digital Process. <http://conference.ifla.org/ifla78>

publications of the United Nations and its branches (Dengah, 2006). As a deposit library, NLI has enormous newspapers from national and local newspaper.

Today the library holds more than 1900 titles of newspapers, from 1810 to the present. National and local newspapers in local and foreign languages are presented. From this newspaper can capture a precarious moment in Indonesia's history-some policies in Suharto's New Order. Up to now, the condition of the library collection need more attention to preservation efforts.

### **Preservation Efforts**

NLI prepares a systematic preservation plan for newspaper, which deal with complex preservation challenges on an ongoing basis. The priority of historical heritage preservation focus on collection related to Indonesia, which called Indonesiana (Rozak: 2006) Digitization activities are done without diminishing the commitment to preserve the physical form of newspaper collection. Digital versions possibly made as good as the original form of the collection. The priority of preservation is old newspapers, and collection with high demand. Several efforts have been done to provide the collection to the users, including binding, microfilming, and digitizing. The preservation projects also covers de-acidification and encapsulation, document repair, digitization, identification and assessment of damaged or damaging materials, the provision of a stable environment and appropriate controls.

### ***Binding***

Old newspaper binding has been done since the newspaper became National Museum Library collection. Now, it is done in binding room to easily make the collection organized and stored in a permanent basis (Wood, 2001). Up to now, there is bound newspapers services in 8<sup>th</sup> floor. It has 1707 titles/20000 volumes which are published in the period 1810 to 2002 in various languages including bahasa Indonesia, local languages, and foreign languages (Santosa, 2006).

From the statistics in 2011, the number of bound newspaper collections is 1,866 titles, 9825 bundle, 126.057 copies. The physical condition of the collection which published in the years 1800-1900 are very fragile, that is why the physical forms cannot be provided to the users. The entire collection published in 1800 has been transferred to microfilm and stored in specialized services department.

### ***Microfilming***

Regardless of its incapability for full-text search, its reading difficulties regarding headache, eyestrain, backache, microfilm remains the preservation medium and has been recognized as the preferred reformatting technology. It is also the basis of revolution in information availability.

The newspaper microfilm project began in NLI is about 1982. The project has replaced over three million pages of these deteriorating newspapers with microfilm copies. Up to now, there is 4000 reel microfilm for newspapers published in 1810 to 2002. 8000 of 12000 of NLI collection has been microfilmed, with focus on old and national newspaper. The newspapers means here is those which published before 1900. For the current newspaper, the project focuses on the collection which

used a lot by users, such as Rakyat Merdeka. For example, in 2011 the library microfilmed *Het Nieuws van den hag voor Nederlands-Indie* tahun 1903-1920 for 56 rolls. There are 400 titles of museum library collection and 7200 collection of NLI. In 2013, the target of microfilm section will produce 220 titles.

Microfilm process is the technically simple to ensure long term archival of important newspapers in a small space. One of scanners (zeutschel German 1998), which bought in 2005 is used to produce microfilm and at the same time it can be benefited with digitalization result. Scanning through this hybrid tools can ensure good quality, perfect archival, and avoidance of duplicate work. The library also has 2 other scanner for this project. The microfilm master is kept in special room which has low temperature, while the microfilm copies collection is placed in Audio Visual Room.

### ***Digitizing***

The digitization project undertaken in NLI aimed at addressing preservation historical newspaper, and expanding access to a wider community or reach out to the communities they serve. The main objectives are to digitise up to two million pages of Indonesia national, regional and local newspapers. The project which started since 2001, has successfully digitized about 9500 pages of old newspapers. While this year, NLI is planning to digitizes 10.000 pages old newspaper, 5000 pages of current newspaper.

Newspaper digitalization project is done at the digital transformation section, but then for digitizing newspaper are moving to microfilm section since sophisticated scanners including hybrid cameras to photograph and has enabled them to produce a newspaper microfilm and digital formats is available in this section. The project results in various things, including in 2007, Interpreting digital media magazines and newspapers for a long time as many as 100 titles. Pada tahun 2007, they digitize old newspaper and magazine for 100 titles. In 2008, the result is 80 titles. Generally NLI is successfully digitized its newspaper that is preservation issue.

### **Means of Access**

Library makes several efforts to enhance newspaper access. NLI provides bound newspaper services for rare collection. Today the newspaper collection is place in the 8th floor for binding newspaper. Almost all rare newspaper are bound. Use of rare collection is offered in 8th floor. The newspapers which published since the Dutch colonial administration are on the 8th floor, which is in the bound collection. To access the collection, users can benefit from these access means, including: Catalog which in the form of bound loose-leaf with 21X10 cm in size. The other one is catalog that is placed on the second floor C, Book catalog is available on a rare newspaper collection. Other references such as Bibliography of Indonesian Peoples and Culture.

Various index articles for rare newspapers are also available, including List of Articles on Puppet; variety of lists article titles from various Netherlands magazine publications, Tempo magazine Index in 1984-1985; Catalog published on the Japanese Occupation, Newspaper article Aceh Index; Index Article on General

Suharto; Catalog of Newspaper Museum Collections Library Center in 1810-1973; Newspapers Collection Catalogue PNRI 1810-1984; Economics Annotated Article, Index Newspapers Collection Bound Index, Annotated Article Index of Mohammad Hatta, Annotated Article Index of Soekarno.

Besides, the library also provides information retrieval services, and other consulting services and services related to the management of a rare collection of newspapers.

Library website is also become a mean of newspapers access. Revitalizing library services through: developing the e-library program (<http://pdni.pnri.go.id/>); developing 25 website templates for the provincial libraries (<http://perpusmitra.pnri.go.id>). digital program has not loads most of digital copies of historical newspaper onto the library website, to make them available to the general public over the internet.

To see digital newspaper, users can visit the website. It shows about 96 article from newspaper and magazines. Listed article is about Aceh. This is done at the time of the tsunami in Aceh in 2004. And to this day not many listings there are other articles in the web. The data include the article title, author, abstract, language, number of pages, type of articles, keywords, country, publication status, subject, sources, and date. (ie. Title: Parleментарia: Regional Atjeh as autonomous provinces).

Another one is that which called Pusaka Digital<sup>2</sup>. It can be reached from Pranala-Perpustakaan Digital Nasional Indonesia-Pusaka Indonesia. Dari koleksi digital ada drop down list, which includes articles, audio, books, photos, government policy, paintings, magazines, manuscripts, microfilm, standars and guides, maps, newspapers, video. It seems that they mix among content and formats. Terkait dengan surat kabar, we can reach from pranala- Perpustakaan Digital Nasional Indonesia-Pusaka Indonesia-koleksi digital-surat kabar. But still one title of newspaper which is Pikiran rakyat. If we go to micro department they have reason why Rakyat Merdeka is still digitize, because many people ask this newspaper regarding political isseus in the newspapers. But the inside is artichel in newspaper. For newspapers collections, the relationship between rare content and accessibility is crucial. It is through keyword searching that rare and antiquarian material is most easily discovered. The library also put articles from newspaper or magazines about Aceh consisting reviews and news from newspapers and magazines is due to the occurrence of Tsunami Aceh upon request.

Doing research in newspapers was exceedingly tedious

### **Taking Advantage of Newspapers Collection.**

Library collection will be very beneficial, when users can take advantage of it. NLI provide newspapers or articles on great people, other historical place like Batavia and some experiences during the colonial period.

The largest group to use the biographical materials of the national Library local history collection, as probably with all collections, are those seeking knowledge of certain issue, such as about the increasing to use advertisement, the

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development of school libraries in Indonesia, about political issues, crimes by school in Indonesia, etc. One man, a building school, became interested in great people who has a school in Netherland era which called it Tjong Hoa Hwe Koan (THHK). He wanted to find information on the people who established the school and photo of the school in the past.

Users, researchers may benefit from this searchable online images through the information that contained in the website of digital newspapers. However, the images put in the website are not as many as newspapers that have been digitized. Although information that may be found include articles about Batavia, or famous people in Indonesia, and double with discussion on that issues.

NLI seeks to maintain people memory with some prominent figures as the president and independence leader in its website. But they missed to include so many old newspaper story about the struggle to carve by these figures. So what can be enjoyed from <http://kepuustakaan-presiden.pnri.go.id> is not a lot.

The value to newspaper researchers is enhanced if newspaper indexes are available, but in the case of NLI they are not put in online environment.<sup>3</sup> Library users tend to choose the format which is in the physical newspaper.

Part of audio visual services for many newspapers serve if there is user group that came. If a digital source, such as digital newspapers depend on individual users. In newspaper articles, Search tool is available, but not many options. It seems like only basic search. There's also a download in other formats. But only in the form of bibliographic data.

Users prefer accessing digitized newspaper is not alway for simple search, but not many modes of interaction with these collections are provided. For example, using exploratory search search for looking at larger issues and events.

As the case with selection of articles that the librarian needs is quite good, but it doesn't make any flexsibility for them to use the articles. For example when Tsunami in Aceh happend, sources on that issue would appear. Libraries continue to gather historic materials important to those searching for families and social history.

The large coverage of information in newspaper enables various people to do research with their interest. There are many researchers need for newspapers, including to fill in gaps in research and corroborate information from other sources, or finding public opinion about issues. Other users use this resource to look for development of corruption from 2010 to 2012. Not using catalogs, direct article that discusses the topic. The other one is Looking for a thesis requirement, about sejarah education through the development of school libraries are taken from *Berita Buana*.

## **Conclusion and Suggestions**

To sum up, The variety of newspapers provided in NLI will make major contribution in searching people memory, if they are given with good quality in terms of readability, searchability and availability. NLI should provide page which list link on local hstory or genealogy, because there many information which is not available in certain page. Like if users want to do research on local history can access public library which is become network with NLI. (see. From home page-

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directory –perpustakaan online and BPAD), there is information eventhough most of them are not available online.

The idea of preservation and access will have been done with some effort, including microfilm, bound, or digitize, and there is good facilitating use. NLI offer local history resources both print and electronic resources. However, in digital area the collection seems limited, since not all digital format has been upload. Also for professional guidance, and training necessary to make their genealogical journeys.

Indonesia memories hopefully can continue to expand online historical content as an integral component of the national library commitment to harnessing new technology as it fulfills its mission. Associated with a newspaper history, this collection does require attention in relation to the storage and maintenance of information that has historical value to the nation. By reviewing and researching will gain knowledge and insight into how the situation in the colonial era of independence.