

**Volume-1**

# Dynamics of Librarianship in the Knowledge Society

Festschrift in Honour of  
**Prof. B. Ramesh Babu**

in 4 Volumes

***Editors-in-Chief***

**Prof. Dr. Achim Osswald**  
Cologne University of Applied Sciences, Germany

**Prof. Dr. S.M. Zabed Ahmed**  
University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

***Editors***

**Prof. Dr. D. Chandran**  
**Dr. P. Rajendran**  
**Dr. S.K. Asok Kumar**

***Associate Editors***

**Dr. P. Nageswara Rao**  
**Dr. S. Baskaran**

## Compliments and Impressions on Prof. Dr. B. Ramesh Babu

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*Prof. Dr. Achim Osswald*

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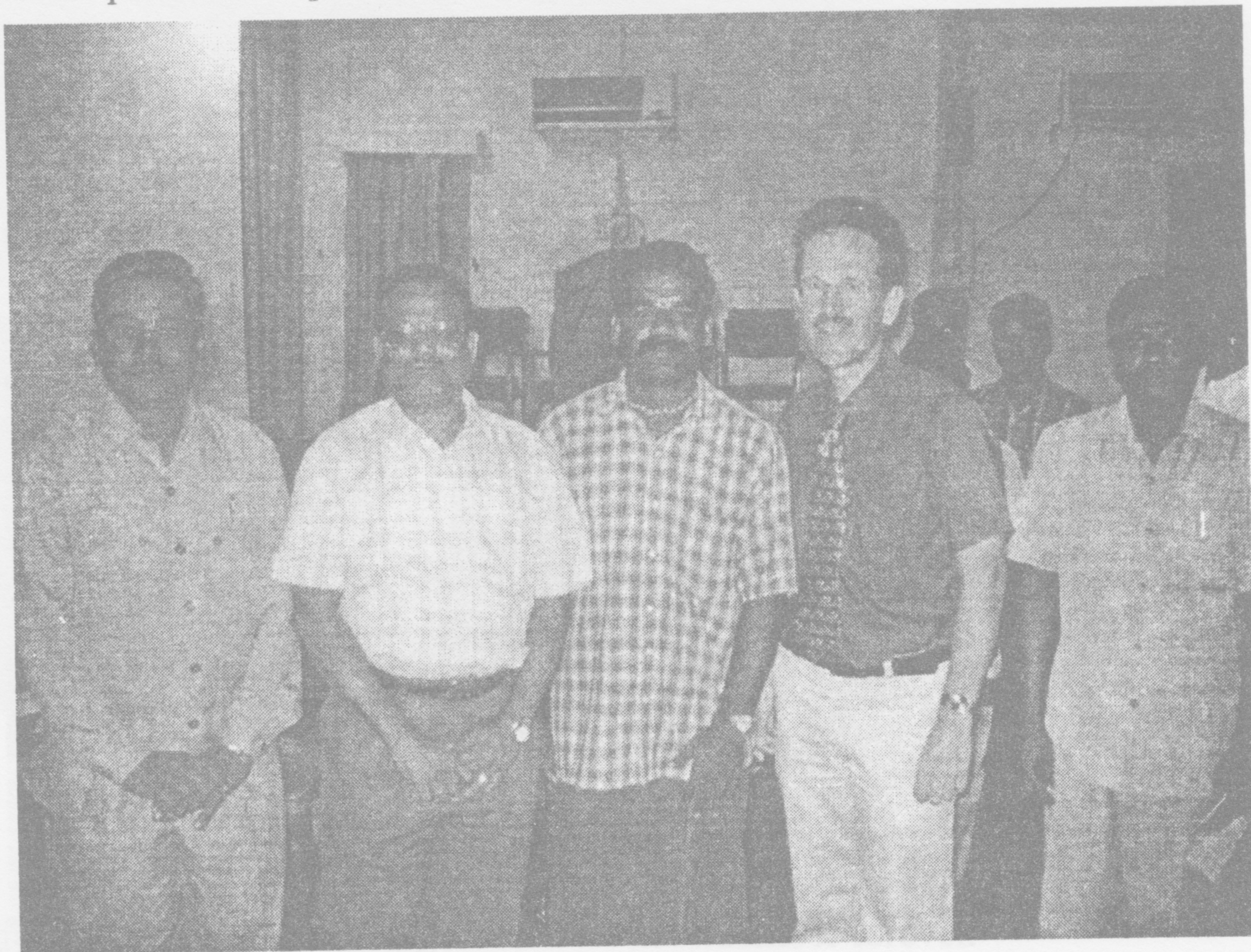
It is great pleasure to have the opportunity to contribute to the Festschrift for Prof. Dr. B. Ramesh Babu. His outstanding contributions to the development of Library and Information Science (LIS) in general and to the improvement of concepts and the LIS practice in India in particular have been highlighted by several other colleagues. His merits as an academic teacher have been recognized not only by his students but also by his fellow colleagues. In addition there are good reasons that the Felicitation Committee has mentioned his network of library professionals all over the world. I feel happy to be part of this network having experienced professional exchange and personal contact with Prof. Ramesh Babu. I always enjoyed staying with him, his immediate family and his "family" of students whom he hosted at his home for personal and professional exchange.

By giving an account of some personal impressions about our cooperation and meetings I would like to express my professional and personal thanks to Prof. Ramesh Babu – especially regarding his openness and hospitality. He is one of the colleagues who I will always remember when I think of India. In July 2003 I received an e-mail from a colleague at the Department of Library and Information Science, University of Madras,

\* Cologne University of Applied Sciences, Institute of Information Science, Faculty of Information and Communication Sciences, Gustav-Heinemann-Ufer 54, 50968 Cologne, Germany, achim.osswald@fh-koeln.de

Chennai. My name had been referred to him by Dr. Shailandra Kumar, a colleague from the University of Delhi and today a member of the Felicitation Committee, who had been part of a group of professionals visiting Germany with the support of Max Mueller Bhavan (MBB) the year before. Ramesh Babu asked me to join the Board of Examiners in the adjudication of the Ph.D. thesis of Mr. S. Gopalakrishnan. I did – and since that time I had the opportunity to be member of the Board of Examiners of six other researchers who had been supervised by Prof. Ramesh Babu writing their Ph.D. thesis. It started as an international cooperation between two members of LIS Departments of Universities in Chennai, India, and Cologne, Germany, and led to a cooperative partnership between our departments – including some inspiring and well reminded meetings in India.

Reading the thesis of S. Gopalakrishnan I gained interesting insights into the empirical research approach of Prof. Ramesh Babu and his students. Gopalakrishnan and most of the other students who have been supervised by Ramesh Babu had been practitioners in the information science field already. Their practical experience was questioned and enriched by the research



Chennai, November 2004 with (former) students

approach of their guru Ramesh Babu. He did this not only academically but also in a very personal manner. I will come back to this later on. The friendly impressions I received from the Indian colleagues who had visited Germany in 2002 resulted in ongoing relationship. MMB encouraged me to visit India in 2004. I took the chance to visit Chennai and meet the colleagues from the LIS department of Madras University. Prof. Raghavan, Dean of the Department at that time, and MMB arranged a lecture which was attended by a professional audience including Prof. Rames Babu, Dr. Gopalakrishnan and Dr. Asok Kumar. It was a great pleasure to meet them in person.

For the occasion of the lecture Dr. Gopalakrishnan had interrupted a pilgrimage. Later on during my journeys through India I realized the significance of this interruption and I am still impressed by it.

India and the friendliness of its people have touched me – so I decided to accept when I was asked by Madras University to become a member of the Board of Examiners in the adjudication of the Ph.D. theses of Asok Kumar, U. Nagalingam, G. Ravisanka, P. Nageswara Rao, Joyson Soundrarajan and



Mamallapuram with family and colleagues (January 2007)

S. Baskaran. Part of the motivation was and still is the fact that this is an opportunity to get insight into the situation of LIS practice in Tamil Nadu and beyond.

During 2006/7 I was invited by ARD Prasad and DRTC Bangalore (Documentation Research and Training Centre, Indian Statistical Institute) to stay as visiting professor at DRTC. During this stay I had the chance to meet Prof. Ramesh Babu and his family twice. Once he, his family and his Ph.D. students as well as Dr. R. Ambuja from Chennai came to Mamallapuram and all together we enjoyed the historic monuments of the UNESCO World Heritage Site. I was impressed not only by the monuments but also by the social responsibility and the cooperative team spirit of the group which was led by Prof. Ramesh Babu.



**Mamallapuram with Dr. R Ambuja (January 2007)**

A few weeks later we met at Chennai. Prof. Ramesh Babu hosted me at his private home, a privilege which I will remember forever.



Chennai, February 2007 at Prof. Babu's house

Unfortunately I did not have the chance to visit Chennai and the colleagues since then. Nevertheless we have kept on exchanging expert opinions on Ph.D. theses, professional ideas and opinions and I am quite sure that this will continue in variations for the coming years.

I would like to express my thanks to Prof. Babu for the opportunity to cooperate with him. I appreciate his professionalism, his open-minded attitude and his warm and friendly personality. Contentment and well-being may be the companions of him and his family!

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**Volume : 1**

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