

ISSUES AND TRENDS IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

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Research Management Centre
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA



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INFORMATION SCIENCE**

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CHAPTER SIX

MALAY MANUSCRIPTS OF BIMA

WAN ALI WAN MAMAT

Introduction

Bima is a district in the eastern part of Sumbawa, a small island toward the East of Bali, Indonesia. It is one of the seven districts that forms the Nusa Tenggara Barat Province. The role of the province today in the context of the political, economic and social life of Indonesia is very minor due to several factors. Among the factors are the sparse population, remoteness of the area and the infertility of the land is not fertile. However, it was an important state in the eastern part of the Malay Archipelago in the past, especially in the 17th and 18th century. This is due to the fact that it was situated along the trade route between Malacca and the Moluccas, the region famous for spices that were greatly in demand by Westerners, the Arabs and the Indians. Any ship travelling to the Moluccas would normally have to stop at Bima for provisions and even trading. It had an excellent harbour, peaceful port and active trading environment. The main product of the district that attracts traders was the *sapang* wood (brazilwood). The wood produced red colour that was in great demand for making cloth and paper in Europe and Arabia then.