

Besemah texts and the notion of ilmu : a paper prepared for a symposium on Indonesian religion at the Twenty-Six annual Meetings of the Association for Asian Studies, Boston, Massachusetts, April 3-5, 1974

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Abstrak

This book include the course of recent anthropological fieldwork among the Basemah in the highlands of South Sumatra, study a number of heirloom manuscripts. These texts are written in a syllabic script apparently derived from Pallava writing of South India. At this point cannot assign a certain date to the introduction of the script to South Sumatra, but it is likely that the several South Sumatran highland peoples who have a literature in this script, received the writing from contact with the Empire of Srivijaya which flourished between the seventh and thirteenth centuries in the Palembang lowland area.

A philological study of the South Sumatran literature be required a level of competence in several Sumatran languages and Javanese as well as Arabic and Sanskrit. That relate to agricultural development.

An examination of ilmu in this way may begin to reveal a style of social interaction, a mode of perceiving and evaluating others and an attitude toward effective action and the constellation of important values that prevail throughout the Malay world.