

Mangummangaraa: The search of inao's origin in Thailand

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Abstrak

In 2017, as an acknowledgement of their extreme popularity in Southeast Asian countries, including Thailand, manuscripts of Panji tales were recommended for inclusion in the UNESCO Memory of the World Register. This paper will discuss the scope and extent of this popularity, its influence on both Thai classical culture and pop culture, plus a record of the search for its point of entry and manner of introduction into Thai culture. Even though such a search is not as seemingly impossible as Panji's searches for his fiancée, namely: mangummangaraa, there are still several gaps to fill in. In particular, this paper proposes that the existence of over a hundred Malay words left untranslated in all the Thai versions of the Panji tales is evidence of a certain degree of Thai-Malay bilingualism in Thailand in the eighteenth century. Changes in the canonical shapes in certain syllables and how these words were pronounced also provide clues to the fact that the tales came into Thai culture through Malay via southern Thailand, and not directly from Javanese, as several scholars believe.