

AFTERTHOUGHTS ON THE ROMANIZATION OF SIAMESE

by

A. B. Griswold

Summary

In using the European alphabet to transcribe Siamese words, few people use any method consistently. In most cases, the writers, being Tai, know both the Siamese spelling and the pronunciation, while the readers, being foreigners, know neither. The writers would like to use a method that would indicate both at the same time. Unfortunately that is impossible, and any attempt to do so leaves the readers baffled. Two different systems are necessary, and they should be kept separate.

When the exact spelling must be made known, the *graphic* system is indispensable. Its rules are clearly established, and should be resolutely followed. But it is suited only to certain limited purposes.

When it is more important to give a clue to the pronunciation, some *phonetic* system is required. Innumerable phonetic systems have been invented as aids to language students. Only one, the so-called General System, was designed for the wider use of conveying information to foreigners who have no intention of learning Siamese. On the whole it is a very good system, but certain defects have prevented it from becoming popular. A few amendments would turn it into a Commonsense System which could be used for signboards, timetables, newspapers, and so on. For more serious literature, Optional Refinements can be added.

No system can cause foreigners to pronounce correctly. The author is content to propose a simple system that will not force them to pronounce worse than they otherwise would.

1. Slapdash and Phonetics

The early attempts to transpose Siamese names into European letters were naturally rather haphazard. Sixteenth-century Portuguese writers call the country SIÃO or MUANTAI, its capital HUDIA, and its great river MEINÃO. These Romanizations, though far from perfect, at least succeed in conveying the general idea; but what of XARNAUZ? Some scholars think it represents Suvarṇa [bhūmi], as corrupted by the Arabs; but we cannot be sure.¹ It is only one in a long list of wretched Romanizations extending over a period of four hundred years.

The French missionaries in the 17th century worked out a fairly accurate method of phonetic transcription. LaLoubère, Louis XIV's ambassador, has a chapter on the Siamese language in his *New Historical Relation of the Kingdom of Siam*. The material in it was evidently provided by one of the missionaries, and on the whole it is good. He gives several sample phrases, such as KIN LÊOU REÛ? *Hath he eaten?* and MEÛÂ TÂN MÂ, RÂO DÃI KIN SAM-RED LÊOU, *When you came I had already eaten*. He writes SAPAROT for pine-apple, CLOÛEY for banana, and CA-NOUN for jackfruit. In all, he transcribes several hundred words, most of which are easy to recognize. "The Siamese Pronunciations," he adds wistfully, "are very difficult for us to imitate, and they correspond so ill to most of ours, that of ten Siamese words written in French Characters, and read by a Frenchman, there will not perhaps be one, that is known and understood by a natural Siamese, what care soever is taken to accomodate our Orthography to their Pronunciation." And he sees with perfect clarity that a phonetic transcription must disregard the Siamese spelling, inasmuch as "they will write

1. See DeCampos, *Early Portuguese Accounts of Thailand*, JSS XXXII/1. We do not know who made the very first attempt to Romanize a Siamese name: its chances of survival would be practically zero. Gerini lists several place-names mentioned by Italian writers in the 15th century (*Siam and its Productions, Arts and Manufactures: a Descriptive Catalogue of the Siamese Section at the International Exhibition and Labour held in Turin April 29—November 19, 1911*, English edition, Hertford, 1912, pages XX-XXI).

Tahar and *Mar*, and they will say *Tahan* and *Man*."²

Unfortunately the missionaries' scholarly efforts passed unnoticed by most writers of the period. Portuguese or Spanish, Italian or French, Dutch, German or English, they jotted down the names of persons and places, using the conventions of their own languages to spell out the sounds they heard. Depending on the writer's nationality, and the sharpness of his ear, Chiangmai might come out as JAGOMA, TIONGH MAY, ISCHEEN MEY, or ZIMMÉ; Bishnuloka might be PICELOUCK or PURSELOUCK; Bejrapurī might be PIPRY or BIJREPOOREE; and so on.³ Sometimes a Siamese name would remind the writer of a familiar word in his own language, so he might write ออพระ as OPERA, or Nagara Rājasimā as CARISSIMA. Late comers would find some forms too well established to change. Thai is why we have BANGKOK, as the French wrote it; if the British had started the fashion, we might have BONG GAWK, or else—after it became the capital, GROONG TAPE.⁴

* * * *

2. De LaLoubère, *Du Royaume de Siam*, Paris, 1691; English translation: *A New Historical Relation of the Kingdom of Siam*, London, 1693. The chapter on language is in Volume II, of which the author says in the foreword: "I have almost no other hand in this Volume, than the collecting of the Pieces thereof. Some are Translations, which are not mine, in some others I only have held the Pen, whilst the substance thereof was dicated unto me." Was it Father Laneau who provided this chapter? He had written a dictionary and a grammar of the Siamese language, which I suppose were the first ever composed by a European. I have never seen these works, but they are mentioned in Launay, *Histoire de la Mission de Siam* (Paris, 1920, pages 20 and 44); incidentally Father Laneau also wrote a Pali grammar and a Mon dictionary. Father Laneau's version of the Lord's Prayer in Siamese, as LaLoubère records it, begins as follows:

"Pô rão you savang. Scheu Prá hǎi prá kot touk heng. Kon tang-lǎi touǎi Prá pôn. Meüang Prá cô hǎi dǎi kê rão. Hǎi léou ning tchǎi prá Meüang Pen-din semô savang . . ."

3. There was still another hazard; he might hear the word pronounced not by a Siamese, but by an Indian, a Cambodian, a Mon, a Malay, or another European.

4. BANGKOK, if pronounced as the French intended it to be, is not a bad approximation of กรุงเทพมหานคร; unfortunately we usually pronounce it as though it were English and say กรุงเทพมหานคร.

Even today most people who have to write Siamese words in English letters use any spelling that happens to come to mind. That saves them trouble, but leaves the reader guessing.

Here are four examples of such *Slapdash* spellings, one real and three imaginary:

- (1) Sam-law ma-ne.
- (2) Nigh um-purr my you, crop. By Knock-Corn See
Tommyrot lie one ma layer. My sop war cow jar club
ma mower-rye.
- (3) Meh tom ngahn mock; my queueille key ghee-at.
- (4) Phra Rama Teabody sway raht nigh groong See
Ayuthya.

The first, according to a recent issue of the *Thai Tourist Guide*, is the way to call a tricycle. I doubt if it would work.⁵ While the tourist can guess that LAW and MA are to be pronounced like those words in English, he would probably guess, wrongly, that SAM is to be pronounced like the nickname for Samuel, and NE would draw a complete blank.

The second, which I have deliberately manufactured, is a kind of charade—a sophisticated sort of Slapdash in which nothing but real English words are used.⁶ Like OPERA for ออเปร่า, they are rather distantly related to the Tai sounds they stand for, but the reader can say them off without hesitating, and it is just possible he might be understood. Perhaps this sort of Slapdash could develop into a system, though not a very pretty one, if all Tai sounds could be transposed more or less into real English words.

5. I wrote this paper in 1958, before the tricyclists were threatened with extermination. In 1960, alas, the tourist who calls for one of those amiable persons is likely to call in vain, no matter how perfect his pronunciation may be.

6. *Mutatis mutandis*, it is like that other charade in which real French words stand for English sounds: *Pas de lieu Rhône que nous*.

But that is far from the case, as the third and fourth examples show. Some of the syllables here are English words, one is the name of a French statesman, one is the Indian word for clarified butter—and all the rest have had to be arbitrarily invented. Since they have no existence of their own, there is no way to tell how they should be pronounced.

Evidently something more systematic than Slapdash is needed even for simple matters like calling a tricycle or commending an industrious old lady.

* * * *

King Rāma IV, I believe, was the first Siamese to protest against Slapdash Romanizations. It was inexorable, he said a hundred years ago, to write PIPRY for Bejrapurī.

Bishop Pallegoix, the learned Frenchman who taught him Latin, had already perfected a scientific phonetic system; and a rival scheme, devised by American missionaries, had been published under the title *A Plan for Romanizing the Siamese Language*.

The King, however, was scornful. "Why is the name of Mr. Knox not printed MISSA NOX," he asked, "if Bejrapurī is to be printed PETCH'ABURY?"

* * * *

The King, being a scholarly man, was a champion of the *graphic* system, which reproduces the original spelling exactly. But as it cannot serve foreigners as a guide to pronunciation it was of little use to the missionaries. A *phonetic* system, on the other hand, transcribes the sound of the spoken word—either carelessly like Slapdash, or scientifically like Pallegoix—but it cannot tell the reader how that word is spelt in Siamese.

There is indeed a system called the "Precise Transliteration" that shows both the spelling and the pronunciation, faultlessly; but it is very difficult to master (Fig. 2).

Unfortunately a great many people, though they would not think of attempting the Precise Transliteration, write their names in part graphically and in part phonetically; the newspapers are full of examples. Such hybrids merely combine the disadvantages of both methods: they give a false idea of the pronunciation and of the spelling too.

If the two methods are mixed, they are worthless; but if they are kept separate, each has its uses.

2. The Graphic System

(Fig. 3 and Appendix A)

King Rāma VI, like his grandfather, preferred a graphic system. "Personally," he wrote, "I think it is absolutely futile to attempt to transliterate phonetically, most attempts towards adopting any such system being usually attended by results both ludicrous and confusing..."⁷

The graphic system of Sanskrit equivalents he favored is perfectly suited to certain purposes, and indeed indispensable for them. For example when transcribing inscriptions—most of which are sprinkled with Sanskrit and Pali words—consistency is the first requirement, and all oddities of spelling must be preserved.

The rules of the system are clearly established, and known to Orientalists all over the world. This is a great advantage. Words from the classical Indian languages are hard to recognize from their pronunciation in the different countries of Southeast Asia. In Burma, for example, a certain word is pronounced YAZAWIN; in that form, I suppose, few Siamese would recognize it. The difficulty vanishes when it is transcribed graphically: RĀJAVAMSA. For reciprocal reasons we might think twice before writing RACHAWONG for export.

Though few people in foreign countries know Siamese, a good many know enough Sanskrit or Pali to grasp the purport of names written in this system. One thinks immediately of international atlases and universal histories, names of persons and places derived from the classical Indian languages, Royal titles, technical Buddhist terms and the official designations of monasteries, references to Siamese statesmen and diplomats in the international press. Here it is the significance of the words that counts; it does not make the slightest difference how the reader may fancy they would be pronounced.

The Graphic System has the advantage of a certain universality, and it has the advantage of dignity. These advantages are very persuasive, particularly when we are referring to persons worthy of respect and to places with a rich heritage of tradition. Names written in the Sanskrit style will never sound ridiculous, no matter how they are pronounced. August names deserve

august forms: HIS MAJESTY KING BHŪMIBALA, SUKHODAYA, AYUDHYĀ. For such names it is acutely embarrassing to see pseudo-phonetic spellings that cause casual readers to say "fummy poll," "suck a thigh," or "a youth here."

* * * *

In many cases the Graphic System runs exactly counter to phonetic values, so that a strong will and a steady hand are needed to keep from reverting to faulty spellings that come more naturally. (That is one reason why so many Siamese mis-spell their own Sanskrit names when they Romanize them.) For instance, *u*, though pronounced *B*, is Sanskrit *P*; but *w*, though pronounced like English *P*, is Sanskrit *B*. The other series of consonants behave similarly: *ṇ* is *K*, *ṅ* is *G*; *ṡ* is *C*, *ṣ* is *J*; *ṭ* is *T*, *ṭ* is *D*.⁸ (For the complete system, see Appendix A). When these rules are forgotten, Sanskrit terms that are quite properly spelt in Siamese will take on an undeservedly barbarous look.

In using the Graphic System it may often be necessary, for practical reasons, to omit the diacritical marks; instead of *Ñ*, *NG* can be used; and there is no great harm in dropping off the final unpronounced *A*, though *RATNAKOSINDR* is surely less attractive than *RATNAKOSINDRA*. There are good reasons to retain great graphic variations, and to write *PEÑCAMAPABITRA* instead of *PAÑCAMAPAVITRA*, *BEJRAPURĪ* instead of *VAJRAPURĪ*.

I do not see how we can ever do without the classical transcription—correctly used—in cases where dignity, universality, or orthographic precision are needed. Personally I should like to see its used extended and purified, rather than curtailed and adulterated.

But it is quite unsuited to the practical affairs of ordinary life. Tai words that are unrelated to Sanskrit assume strange disguises when the Graphic system is used: Chiengmai would be *JIĀN-HMĀI*, and Bangkok would be *PĀNKŌK*.

8. It looks arbitrary, but it is not. The Siamese spelling of Sanskrit words is correct in the majority of cases; it is only the pronunciation that has been corrupted. Some people, for reasons that escape me, fancy that *ṇ* is *DH*, and the pages of newspapers are now and then sullied with such spellings as *DHEBSIRIND*. There is no excuse for such nonsense: the proper Graphic is *DEBASIRINDRA*, while the General System would have *THEPSIRIN*, and commonsense phonetics *TÉPSIRIN*.

3. Phonetic Systems for Dictionaries and Teaching Methods

(Figs. 4-7)

Some phonetic system is necessary for teaching foreigners the rudiments of the language, and it is a great convenience in a bilingual dictionary.

There are dozens of such systems in existence; let us glance at a few of the more important ones.

Pallegoix (see Fig. 4).—In devising his phonetic system, Pallegoix's main purpose was to teach young missionaries to speak Siamese fluently. He also used it in his monumental Siamese-Latin-French-English Dictionary.⁹ In this system the consonants are mostly to be pronounced as in French, the vowels as in Italian; where equivalent sounds do not exist in those languages, diacritical marks and forms from other languages are used. A breve ($\acute{}$) is put over short vowels, and four other diacritical marks indicate the tones. Pallegoix's system is logical and precise; and considering how much it conveys, it is surprisingly easy to learn. Nevertheless it has certain disadvantages. Its diacritical marks are impossible on a typewriter, yet if they are omitted the values are completely falsified. Besides, the pronunciation of consonants in the French manner is a handicap in a country where English is the best-known European language.

McFarland (see Fig. 5).—McFarland tried a system in which both consonants and vowels are to be pronounced as in English.¹⁰ Diacritical marks are eliminated, but at a heavy price. Some of the required sounds are approximated by cockneyisms (UM-PUR, MARK) and repellent forms (CHJA, MUR-AH-RAI); but even so there are some inconsistencies (A, AH, AR all stand for the sound of a , while A and U both stand for

9. Pallegoix. *Dictionarium Linguae Thai*, Paris, 1854. See also his *Dictionnaire Siamois-Français Anglais*, revu par J.L. Vey, Bangkok, 1896.

10. McFarland, *Thai-English Dictionary*, Stanford, London and Oxford, 1944.

the sound of \tilde{v}). Tones are indicated by small exponent figures. McFarland frankly admitted that he did not like his own system, and begged the users of his dictionary to learn the Tai alphabet.

Campbell and Chuan (not illustrated).—Consonants and vowels both have English values, but some un-English diacritical marks are required and cockneyisms abound. The system is less elegant and less thorough than Pallegoix's.

PRU's Standard Thai-English Dictionary (see Fig 6).—This is the best of the English-based systems, and the least English (the vowels in KRAB and GIAD are more nearly Italian). There are some bad spots (KUHY, BPAI).¹¹

Dr. Mary Haas (see Fig 7).—Recognizing that English vowels, with their shifting values, are really impossible, Dr. Haas has devised a means of transliteration (it can hardly be called Romanization) based on the International Phonetic System.¹² The small but increasing number of boys and girls in America who are studying Tai mostly use it. It is no less precise than Pallegoix's system, but no easier to learn, and type writers that can deal with it are not yet common.

11. *PRU's Standard Thai-English Dictionary*, by Plang Phloyphrom and R.D. Golden, with the cooperation of Brother Urbain-Gabriel, Bangkok, 1955.

12. Haas and Subhanka, *Spoken Thai*, n.d.; Haas, *The Thai System of Writing*.

4. The "General System"

(Fig. 8)

"The whole question of Romanization really concerns the Europeans more than my people," wrote King Rāma VI in 1912; "but at the same time, I should be glad to see some sort of uniform system adopted, rather than to have to endure the haphazard and fanciful systems, which not only each body of men but also each individual, seems to use for Romanizing my language. Since the question concerns Europeans more than it does us, I consider that the proper body to discuss the question is the Siam Society, and I beg to submit this paper as an expression of my own personal opinion, in my capacity of Patron of the Siam Society, of which position I may say I am extremely proud."¹³

In the communication that contains this passage, His Majesty deplored the use of Slapdash, but observed that it would be impossible to devise any single method of Romanization to satisfy all requirements. For words derived from Sanskrit or Pali, he recommended that the Graphic System be followed as strictly as possible. For ordinary Tai words, some other method was required. Believing that any attempt to write them phonetically was doomed to failure, he himself had been experimenting with a method of using the Graphic with certain modifications to bring it partially in line with Siamese pronunciation, but he was not entirely satisfied with it.

In response to His Majesty's communication, a committee of three European members of the Siam Society was appointed to make recommendations. In their report, submitted in 1913, they fully agreed that words of Sanskrit and Pali origin should be transcribed according to the Graphic System. For ordinary Tai words, they were unable to devise any satisfactory adaptation of the Graphic method; they therefore proposed a phonetic system, based more or less on Pallegoix.¹⁴

13. JSS IX/4, page 10.

14. JSS X/3.

The King could see no merit in the last recommendation. "Is the proposed system," he wrote, "meant for scholars or for tourists and globe-trotters, or is it meant for European residents of Siam? If it is meant for scholars, then the system should in my opinion be as much founded on the Hunterian [graphic] system as possible, so as to facilitate them in their work in the way of etymology and derivations. If it is meant for European residents, then it would have to have at least three distinct tables of phonetic spelling; one for Bangkok residents, one for the north country, and one for the Malay Peninsula ... If, however, the tourists and globe-trotters are the people to cater for, then I should be strongly inclined to offer Mr. Punch's famous advice to those about to get married—Don't!"¹⁵

There was wisdom as well as wit in what he said. But so eminent a scholar could hardly be expected to see the problem in the same light as the unlearned foreigners who need Romanization. They need something very simple; the scholar is inclined to give them something too complicated. That was one of the troubles with the experimental scheme the King had been trying.

If King Rāma VI were writing today, almost half a century later, I doubt whether he would so summarily dismiss phonetic systems as futile. They are needed, in some way or other, by all three categories of users he listed.

1. International scholars need the Graphic as much as ever, but etymology is only a part of their field of inquiry. They have to deal with phonetics too.

2. The foreign residents have become far more numerous. Many wish to learn Siamese, or at least a smattering of it, but they would get little help from the Graphic system. The problem of regional differences in the language is less difficult now, since standard Siamese is understood all over the country.

3. As to the "tourists and globe-trotters," air travel has immensely multiplied their numbers, and an appreciable share of the national energies is devoted to offering them hospitality.

The Graphic system is useless for the tourists; what chance would they have of reaching their destination if they told the driver to take them to VAT SUDARŚANA or the PARISAD HMAI DAIY?

In former days Slapdash served European travelers well enough, as a sort of private code for keeping memoranda, and also as an impressive jabberwocky when they wrote books about their travels to astonish their countrymen. Anyone could write in Slapdash, as there are no rules; and it mattered little if nobody knew how it was to be pronounced.

The modern needs for Romanization are more numerous and more exacting: a great quantity of Siamese names and other words must be communicated in writing to foreigners, in the form of signboards, directories, time-tables, circulars, newspapers, and so on. For such purposes, Slapdash leads to endless confusion, because whatever else it may be, it is not a system. On the other hand, all the phonetic systems we have been discussing were designed for a special purpose, namely to help foreigners to learn Tai. Not one of them could be used for the *general* purpose of communicating information to foreigners who do not intend to learn Tai at all.¹⁶

* * * *

After King Rāma VI's withering criticisms, all hope of producing a General System lay dormant for eighteen years. In 1931 it revived again, when the Minister of Public Instruction appointed a committee of distinguished scholars to submit new proposals.

A more competent committee could hardly be imagined. They set to work to devise "a general system constituting a minimum standard, which might be expanded for particular purposes." It was to be "based as far as possible on the phonetic principle of 'one sound, one symbol,'" but in selecting the symbols

16. It is hard to imagine street-signs reading PHLŌN CHĪTR (Pallegoix), PLERN CHJIT (McFarland), PLUHN JID (PRU), or PHLəən CĪD (Haas); PRA:XATHIPA:TAI (Pallegoix), BPRA-CHAH-TI-BPA-DTAI (McFarland, PRU), or PRÀCHAATHĪBPÀTAI (Haas).

account was to be taken of "available type in printing and typewriting."¹⁷

When the committee submitted their report, the Siam Society and the general public were invited to comment. After much discussion, and the adoption of some minor amendments, the General System was promulgated in a communiqué by the Royal Institute in 1939.¹⁸

Virtues of the General System. — According to the announced principles, consonants are to have their English values so far as possible, and vowels their Italian values. For the sake of simplicity, many distinctions are thrown overboard; long and short vowels are not differentiated, tones are not indicated, and all but a few diacritical marks are suppressed.

These principles are indisputable right. The system must come easily to Tai nationals who are supposed to use it; and while it cannot miraculously cause foreigners to pronounce correctly, it should at least give them a rough idea of the pronunciation with as little fuss as possible. Both Tai and foreigners can instinctively feel the values of *English consonants*. As we have seen, English vowels will not work (is A in any given word to be pronounced as in ALONE, ABLE, BAT, DARE, CALM, or ALL? is I to be pronounced as in BIT, BITE, FIVE, or MACHINE?); but *Italian vowels*, being better behaved, have gained a certain international acceptance, and anyone can quickly learn to feel their values. Where simplicity and precision cannot be reconciled, precision must be sacrificed. People are liable to forget diacritical marks anyway, so it is better to use them sparingly and in such a way that their loss will not be disastrous. Some letters will have to serve a double or triple purpose, as there are not enough to assign one to each and every Tai sound.

When they stand at the *end* of a word, the letters of the กฏ group are written K; those of the กฏ group are written T; those of the กฏ group are written P. Some scholars wished

17. JSS XXVI, page 219.

18. JSS XXXIII, pages 49-65.

to substitute finals that would correspond more exactly to the Siamese orthography, but the committee—quite rightly, in my opinion—rejected their argument. These sounds in ordinary conversation are pronounced almost exactly like English final K, T, P. (กิด is very nearly the same as English KIT; it is not at all like English KID.) The system should be kept strictly phonetic, and jealously guarded against any contamination from the Siamese spelling.

Defects of the General System.— The General System might have become popular if the committee had stuck more resolutely to the announced principle—English consonants and Italian vowels. But they felt forced to “take account of current practice” in the selection of symbols. In effect that meant inheriting a certain number of symbols from Pallegoix—symbols that were right enough in his system, but out of place in the General System, for they constituted an immediate exception to the rule of English consonants. Other symbols were chosen from further afield, one from the International Phonetic System, one from the Czech alphabet, and one (via Pallegoix) from the *quoc-ngu* of Vietnam.

Here is how the General System would render our four examples:

- (1) Sam-lə ma ni.
- (2) Nai amphoe mai yu, khrap. Pai Nakhon Si Thammarat lai wan ma laeo. Mai sap wa khao cha klap ma mu'arai.
- (3) Mae tham ngan mak; mai khoei khi-kiat.
- (4) Phra Ramathibodi sawoei rat nai krung Si Ayut-thaya.

Ordinary people can read most of this fairly well if they remember to pronounce the consonants as in English and the vowels as in Italian. But for THAM they are sure to say something like THUMB with a different vowel; AMPHOE looks like AMFO-E, with PH as in English PHILOSOPHY, OE as in

Italian COEFFICIENTE. It is no good saying that PH and TH must be pronounced as aspirated P and T; people cannot *feel* it.¹⁹ And what are they to make of O with a comma under it, or U with an apostrophe after it, or OH with a circumflex accent?

Artificial forms like these, I believe, prevented the General System from becoming popular. It duly became official, but today even the Government uses it halfheartedly, and the public for whom it was designed hardly know it exists.

That is a pity, because the General System is on the whole very good. A few amendments would make it work beautifully.

19. For the pronunciation of THAILAND uninformed people in America hesitate between THEY-LAND and THIGH-LAND; they would have a better chance of getting it right if it were written MÜANG TAI, or even SIAM.

5. A Proposed Commonsense System

(Fig. 9 and Appendix B)

How can the General System be improved?

Being myself but an indifferent Tai scholar, it might be thought I should leave such discussions to others. But as King Rāma VI observed, Romanization is needed only when foreigners are somehow involved; and I might add that in serving their needs some personal experience with their difficulties is an advantage. The less Tai they know the more they will need "a general system constituting a minimum standard."

To take an analogy from the business world, the Siamese words to be communicated are raw material to be processed. The processors, for the most part, are Tai nationals: Government and municipal officials, members of the Armed Services, the Staff of the Foreign Office and of the Publicity Department, postal and telephone authorities, merchants and clerks, tourist agents, magazine writers and boxing promoters and newspaper reporters. The finished product will be the Siamese words spelt in English letters, and the ultimate consumer is the foreign reader in Siam or abroad.

The processing is accomplished by various devices called Romanization. The devices most often used are different sorts of Slapdash—rickety gadgets thrown together with miscellaneous imported parts, many of them obsolete. Such devices are easy to operate, but turn out a low-grade, unserviceable product.

In offering the General System, the Royal Institute provided a much better mechanism. Unfortunately it proved too difficult for inexperienced operators to manage; and the finished product, though of standard quality, was too strange-looking to appeal to the ultimate consumer.

Suppose we now wish to furnish a more practical device. None of the teaching or dictionary systems will do, for they are all single-purpose machines designed for a different use entirely. Our general-purpose device must be simpler, and we should not demand too much precision of it. It must be designed for easy

operation by Tai nationals who are writing for foreign readers. 20 It must be sturdy enough not to break down if small parts like diacritical marks get lost. And it must be guaranteed to turn out a good, medium-quality, uniform product that will be serviceable to the foreign readers who are the ultimate consumers.

The best procedure is the most natural one. We can use the basic design of the General System, but improve it in a few particulars where it failed to give satisfaction.

Anyone can remember the General System's announced rule: *English consonants and Italian vowels*. The exceptions cause trouble, so as far as possible they should be eliminated. Wherever an approximate equivalent can be found within the rule, it should certainly be used; where it cannot, some symbol whose meaning is reasonably obvious should be chosen.

Initial consonants. -- Consider the following series:

Voiced			ด	บ
Intermediates	ก	จ	ค	ป
Aspirated surds	ค	ข	ท	พ

No one can find fault with the way the General System renders the two voiced consonants in the series. Initial ด is D, บ is B; they could not possibly be anything else in a phonetic system.

With the four intermediates, trouble begins. As no English equivalents for them could be found, three French consonants and one modified Czech consonant were chosen:

ก	K	(ÔH in typewriting)
จ	ÔH	
ค	T	
ป	P	

20. Such being the most common requirement, the system should be designed to meet it. Less frequently, foreigners use Romanization to communicate something to other foreigners or to Tai. I expect they would welcome a simple and uniform system.

This first retreat from the principle of using consonants with English values was bad enough, because ordinary English-speaking people are sure to pronounce initial K, T, and P explosively, and they can make nothing at all of $\hat{C}H$ —unless the circumflex is dropped off, and then CH too will explode. But worse was to come.

The first retreat required a second, which would not otherwise have been necessary. For the aspirated surds, English has letters that are very near equivalents: K, CH, T, P. The General System quite rightly rendered ㄅ as CH; but K, T, and P were no longer available, having already been given over to the intermediates. So three symbols were borrowed from Pallegoix:

ㄅ	KH
ㄊ	TH
ㄋ	PH

The forms TH and PH are entirely misleading to ordinary people, who cannot help feeling them to be as in THUMB and PHILOSOPHY, no matter how often they are told otherwise. KH though not so misleading, is hard to remember.²¹

These forms must be dropped if the General System is to have any chance of public acceptance. All the aspirated surds should be Romanized in the obvious and natural way. Since the system takes no account of tones, the change would apply to the high-class letters as well as the low-class. We would then have the following equivalents for initial aspirated surds:

21. When the system was still in the discussion stage, an alternative was tried: K', T', P', in imitation of the Wade system of Romanizing Chinese. But few people liked what King Rāma VI called "the little twiddly signs" (JSS X/3, page 25). There is now a movement on foot to throw the Wade system overboard, and to Romanize Chinese consonants according to a scheme somewhat like the one I propose for Tai.

ก ก ฏ	K
ฦ ฦ ฦ	CH
ฏ ฏ ฦ ฦ ฦ ฦ	T
ฦ ฦ ฦ	P

Then how would we deal with the intermediates? They are not far away from the semi-voiced sounds that come in the middle of some English words in rapid speech:

DISGRACE	(ก)
BOOTJACK	(จ)
MISDEAL	(ต)
DISBURSE	(ฎ)

Thought of in this way, the four difficult sounds become more manageable: ordinary English-speaking people can feel their approximate value. I suggest therefore we write them as follows:

ก	G
จ	J
ต	D
ฎ	B

We are not using G and J elsewhere (except G in the diphthong NG), and it would be a pity to waste them when so few letters must serve so many purposes; two of the "English" systems I have mentioned are more thrifty, using G and J for ก and จ, as I propose to do. It is true that D and B will have to serve for two different sounds, as we have already used them for ต and ฎ; so there might be some ambiguity, but no worse than the ambiguity from failing to distinguish between long and short vowels. In a

"general" system, some imprecision is inevitable, and it is a lesser evil than cumbersome forms.²²

Vowels.— For the most part, the General System deals satisfactorily with the vowels, by basing them on their nearest Italian counterparts. But in two cases, although Italian equivalents exist, the General System does not use them. Instead it has:

æ	Æ (Æ in typewriting)
ø	Ö (Ö in typewriting)

These sounds are the same as the "open" E and O of Italian CAFFÈ and CIÒ. Let us adhere to the rule, therefore, and write:

æ	È
ø	Ò

It is true that people will usually forget the grave accent, but perhaps that will do no great harm. In many Italian words, such as PIETRA and OGGI, the letters E and O, though they have the same "open" sound as in CAFFÈ and CIÒ, are usually

22. As their forms show, η and η were originally the same letter; so were \updownarrow and \updownarrow . As initial consonants, the sound of η is closer to η than to η , and the sound of \updownarrow closer to \updownarrow than to η . (Say BIT BRADU to your servant, and he will close the door.) I am aware that most phoneticians consider η and \updownarrow to be unaspirated surds, equivalent to French T and P; and it might be thought that Pallegoix was of the same opinion. But Pallegoix was seeking approximate equivalents only, and does not claim them to be exact. The matter deserves to be re-examined. French T and P are certainly surds, and moreover are apt to be slightly aspirated in emphatic conversation. η and \updownarrow , on the other hand, are not real surds, but are in fact slightly voiced, like English D and B in words where a preceding sibilant prevents them from being pronounced in the normal way. In MISDEAL and DISBURSE, unless a rather laborious effort is made, D and B are pronounced with the tongue still near the position required to pronounce the S, and are only semi-voiced. The result is about as close to η and \updownarrow as a foreigner is likely to achieve.

written without an accent.²³

Two other sets of vowel sounds are more troublesome, as they have no Italian equivalents, even approximate. Here the General System has:

$\overset{\text{A}}{\text{ô}}, \overset{\text{A}}{\text{ô}}$	U' (U' in typewriting)
$\overset{\text{A}}{\text{î}}, \text{îôz}, \text{îôô}$	Œ (Œ in typewriting)

Surely it would be more natural to borrow two German symbols and write these sounds as \ddot{U} and \ddot{O} , which, though they are admittedly not very close equivalents, at least convey an approximation readily enough.²⁴

Whatever scheme we adopt for the vowels, we should apply it also to the diphthongs that contain them. For instance îôz would be $\ddot{E}O$, îôu would be $\ddot{O}I$, and so on.

For ôu , the General System has UAI , while Pallegoix has UEI . The difference here is less a matter of the system used than of the real sound involved. Pallegoix refused to be influenced by a theoretical pronunciation that might be closer to the spelling. Since the sound is very nearly the same as in Italian BUE , I should prefer to write UE . If we are afraid that people may pronounce it as in English $GLUE$, we can follow Pallegoix.

23. The grave accent in Italian is really used to indicate a stress, or to distinguish between two words otherwise spelt alike. In ordinary usage the written accent is omitted in most words, but Italian "pronouncing dictionaries" use the grave accent to mark a stressed E or O that has the open sound; e.g., $PI\grave{E}TRA$, $\grave{O}GGI$.

24. \ddot{U} and \ddot{O} are the modern forms of the letters which the Germans used to write $\overset{\text{A}}{U}$ and $\overset{\text{A}}{O}$. Those were close enough approximations to satisfy Pallegoix, and one of them satisfied the designers of the General System as well. There can consequently be no just complaint about \ddot{U} and \ddot{O} on the grounds of imprecision. A more serious complaint is that the diacritical marks may get lost. But in practice that is what has already happened to the tail over the U in the General System; and OE is hardly better than plain O. Something might be said in favor of the Slapdash EU for $\overset{\text{A}}{\text{ô}}$, were it not in such flagrant violation of our rule of Italian vowels. The cockneyism UR for îôô is indefensible.

As to ເື້ອ, for which the General System has IEO, it seems more natural to write IO, in conformity with the Italian value as in DIO.

The sound of ເື້ອ in final position is surely IA (as in Italian PIA); but some scholars hold that when ເື້ອ is followed by a consonant it is pronounced IE. We are accustomed to writing CHIENG MAI, and those who prefer it to CHIANG MAI should be allowed to have their way.

There is one simple vowel that is liable to cause trouble—the short neutral sound of ə in the middle of a word. The General System writes it as A, which also stands for ǣ— and ɐ; and in most cases we should do the same. But in devising our improvements it is our duty to serve the reader as well as we can. The General System renders ພຢຽງ as PHAYA, which almost forces the unwary reader to say something like English FIRE. It is quite right in omitting the ɾ, which is seldom heard in ordinary conversation; and indeed PHRAYA, with its resemblance to English FRYER, would be worse. In accordance with our practice, we would write PAYA, which is certainly an improvement, but it still is confusing as it might be pronounced something like English PYRE. In our section on Optional Refinements, we shall propose a cure; but it involves one more accent to distinguish between long and short vowels. In our system for general use, we are not prepared to go so far. One remedy would be to substitute an apostrophe for the first A, and write P'YA. Another way would be to extend a practice of the General System, which recommends that a hyphen be used when necessary to separate syllables; PA-YA would be a reasonable approximation. In cases of this sort, I feel, the users of our system should be free to do as they wish.

The hyphen, indeed, is a great convenience. We can use it whenever we wish to make clear whether a certain letter is the final of one syllable or the initial of the next. For ມ່ຢຽງ, for instance, if we do not wish to write M'PRAO, we can write MA-PRAO, so as to keep the reader from saying MAP-RAO. For

compounds, we can either divide the elements into separate words (MÈ NAM, SAM LÒ, CHIENG RAI), or else use a hyphen (MÈ-NAM, SAM-LÒ, CHIENG-RAI).

The Commonsense System. — If we make the proposed changes in the General System, we shall have a Commonsense System. It will be found in full in Appendix B. Here is how our four examples would look:

- (1) Sam lò ma ni.
- (2) Nai ampö mai yu, krap. Bai Nakön Si Tammarat lai wan ma lèo. Mai sap wa kao ja glap ma müarai.
- (3) Mè tam ngan mak; mai kõi ki giet.
- (4) Pra Ramatibödi sawöi rat nai grung Si Ayuttaya.

* * * *

When I was trying to learn German as a child, I was told that the Kaiser had introduced some spelling reforms and was putting people in prison for writing THÜR instead of TÜR. I do not know whether that was true, but the reforms took hold—perhaps because they were inherently sensible.

It would be unfortunate if people in Siam were arrested for spelling badly; the prisons would not hold them. I can only hope the Commonsense System may gain adherents without the use of force. Easier to operate than the General System, and more efficient than Slapdash: such are the modest claims I make for it.

People now use Slapdash not so much from stubbornness as from bewilderment. At least that is my guess, after studying the timid and uncertain patchwork of forms they turn out.²⁵ The General System too often runs counter to instinct; even people who think they are using it are liable to go wrong on certain

25. For instance I find the same road spelt in three different ways in advertisements on a single page of the Bangkok *Post*: PLOENCHIT, PLOENCHITT, and PLOENCHITR. None of these spellings is a very happy invention; but the public can hardly be blamed for floundering when the only alternatives they have been offered are those cited in a previous footnote (16), or else the General System's unsightly PHLOEN CHIT. Surely PLÖN JIT would be better for everyone concerned.

letters. When they can remember, they dutifully write the aspirated surds as KH, TH, PH; but they often forget and follow their natural impulse to write them as K, T, P. As their conscience also makes them write the intermediates as K, T, P, except when they forget and write G, D, B, the system breaks down and becomes Slapdash. I think the natural impulse is not only stronger than the sense of duty, but also more reasonable. That is why I propose to drop the "correct" forms and make the "errors" standard. The General System is right in its announced rule: English consonants, Italian vowels, using approximations where necessary; but it makes too many exceptions.

The Commonsense System gets rid of the exceptions and the queer-looking forms. Its principles can be learned in a few minutes, and after a very little practice it can be used consistently and without hesitation.²⁶

It is easier to read than the General System, and no less precise—though admittedly no more so. No scheme of Romanization can cause foreigners to pronounce correctly: ours will be quite precise enough if it does not force them to pronounce worse than they otherwise would. At the very least, it will not leave them in baffled silence, as so many spellings now do.²⁷

26. Any typewriter with French accents can produce all the symbols. For an unmodified American typewriter, a double quote (") could be used for the umlaut; the grave accent would have to be added by hand.

27. "PLOENCHITR," for instance; cf. notes 16 and 25.

6. Optional Refinements to the Commonsense System

(Appendix B and Fig. 10)

The General System, it was hoped, would "constitute a minimum standard" which could also be "expanded for particular purposes." Because of a few defects, it did not quite succeed in the first purpose; so the second became impossible.

In the Commonsense System the worst defects are eliminated: it can be used for general purposes, and it can also be brought up to any required pitch of phonetic precision for special purposes. For the sort of articles that appear in the Journal of the Siam Society, for instance, a certain number of Optional Refinements would be convenient. We can use diacritical marks more freely: a careful writer will not mislay them, nor will his readers find them irritating.

Consonants. — So as to avoid ambiguity, we could underline D for ð and B for ɓ, to distinguish them from the fully voiced d, D, and u, B. For the sake of consistency, we could also underline G for ɠ and J for ɟ, though that is not really necessary as they have no fully-voiced counterparts.

Vowels. — The most urgent refinement is to distinguish between long and short vowels. As Italian does not do so, we cannot follow our chosen model precisely. But Italian dictionaries put an accent over a vowel to indicate a stressed syllable; and since the vowel in such cases is ordinarily given a longer value than in an unstressed syllable, we are entitled to stretch the convention slightly and use an accent to indicate a long vowel. For two vowels, E and O, Italian dictionaries use the grave accent when they have the "open" sound, the acute when they have the "closed" sound. We have already decided to follow them in the first case (Ê for uə and Ô for əə); let us now follow them in the second as well, and write Ě for iə andfor Ó ĩə. For long A, I and U we can use the circumflex, writing Â for əɪ, Î for ǐ, and

û for ă.²⁸ For uəz and uə̌, ɛəz and ɛ̌ and ɔ̌ (sounds which do not exist in standard Italian) we can write Ě and Ŏ, so as to distinguish them from plain E (ɛz, ɛ̌) and plain O (ɔz and the unwritten vowel in words like au). Our vowel symbols thus fall into a clear rule: long vowels are marked with an acute, grave or circumflex accent; short vowels are left unmarked, or else marked with a breve (˘).

With such refinements, the system will serve well for serious literature. Most readers of our Journal, I believe, would prefer RÂM KAMHÈNG and Ô TÔNG to McFarland's RARM KAM-HAANG and OO-TAUNG or the General System's RAM KHAMHAENG and UTHÔNG. JAO PA-YÂ or JAO P'YÂ would surely be better than McFarland's CHJOW PRAYAH or Dr. Haas's CÂW PHÁJAA—not to mention the Slapdash CHOW PHYA, in which the first syllable looks like a little dog and the second like "fire."

Some time ago when I was writing a book containing a lot of names, I tested my system by showing the manuscript to three or four Americans who knew no Tai at all. I told them only that the consonants have English values and the vowels Italian, with the few exceptions which I explained. They were then able to pronounce the names readily—not quite correctly, but at least recognizably. That is more than can be expected of any other system I know of.

For most purposes, a few refinements will be sufficient; even in scholarly articles, unless absolute phonetic precision is needed, it is better to be content with fair approximations; too much refinement troubles the printer and slows down the reader. That is why I have so far avoided any attempt to indicate tones.

28. It really does not matter which of the three accents we use for long A, I and U. The circumflex seems to me the best visual indicator, and we have an Italian analogy for it in such optional forms as STUDI (plural of STUDIO). Italian dictionaries differ in their choice of accents to mark A, I and U in stressed syllables; some use a circumflex, some a grave; some mark A with a grave and the other two with an acute.

But any writer can add such further refinements as he wishes: he can invent them *ad hoc*, explaining them in a footnote. By such means the Commonsense System can easily be made to serve for teaching and dictionaries.²⁹

29. For these special purposes, several additional refinements come to mind:—

In the first place, we have used the symbol \ddot{U} for both \ddot{u} and \ddot{u}^h , and the symbol \ddot{O} for \ddot{o} , \ddot{o}^h and \ddot{o}^l . In order to differentiate them, we could write the short sounds as \dot{U} and \dot{O} , the long as U and \ddot{O} . I don't like the tails, but they would not occur very often; and if awkward forms cannot be avoided, the best place for them is in rare uses.

In the second place, to distinguish between \ddot{u} — and the short neutral sound of \ddot{u} , we could write \ddot{u} — as \check{A} and the neutral sound as plain A . Note that the criterion should be the sound, not the Siamese orthography: in monosyllabic words, or in stressed syllables, \ddot{u} is no longer neutral, and would be written \check{A} (e.g., $\text{W}\check{\text{A}}\text{Z}$, $\text{PR}\check{\text{A}}$). The symbol \check{A} would also stand for ᨶ in certain words ($\text{SUP}\check{\text{A}}\text{N}$, ᨶᨶᨶᨶᨶᨶ). For the sake of consistency, we would have to write \ddot{u} as $\check{A}\text{M}$.

In the third place, we could indicate the glottal stop (o). We could write \ddot{u} as $^o\check{A}\text{N}$ and $\text{W}\check{\text{A}}\text{Z}$ as $\text{PR}\check{\text{A}}^o$.

In the fourth place, we would certainly have to indicate tones. The devisers of the General System recognized that a writer might sometimes wish to show them by means of accents. So as to leave room for them, they went to some trouble to avoid putting diacritical marks on top of vowels; that is why they put a comma under the O instead of an accent over it, and a tail after the U instead of an umlaut on top of it. In providing for a usage that would admittedly be rare, they thus imposed unnatural forms on a scheme that was intended for daily use. Surely it is better to stick to natural forms for the ordinary needs, and to reserve more awkward ones for the rarer uses. That is why I have proposed using accents to differentiate the sounds and quantities of vowels. Of course we do not want to add more accents for tones, so we cannot imitate Pallegoix or Dr. Haas. A recent system uses letters in parenthesis, (h) for the high tone, (f) for the falling tone, and so on; but they are liable to get scrambled up with the word. McFarland uses small exponent figures at the end of the syllable, but it is hard to remember which is which, and the casual user of his dictionary is constantly obliged to refer to the table at the beginning to refresh his memory. The best solution, I think, is to use self-explanatory diagrammatic indicators, such as the following:

_low tone
 \falling tone
 ¯high tone
 /rising tone

The indicator would be put at the beginning of the syllable, the common tone being left unmarked. Syllables would have to be separated by a short space, words by a longer one, and sentences by a still longer one; punctuation had better be eliminated. Here is our second example, equipped with the tone indicators:

nài am pö \mai _yû ¯krap h̄ai na kòn
 /s̄i tam ma \rát /l̄ai wan m̄a ¯lèo \mai \s̄ap
 \w̄a /kao ja _glap m̄a \m̄ua rai

I confess it looks formidable; but is it not less so than any of the other systems that convey an equal amount of information (Figs. 2, 4 and 7)?

7. The Two Systems and their Uses

The lovely dancer Isadora Duncan, it is said, once proposed cohabitation to Bernard Shaw in the hope that they would have children who would inherit her physique and his intellect; but he declined the offer. "Suppose," he murmured, "they were to have *my* physique and *your* intellect...."

We need two distinct systems of Romanization, the Graphic when we wish to show how the word is spelt, the Commonsense phonetic when we wish to show how it is pronounced. If we try to combine them, the hybrid will show neither.³⁰

Hybrids and how to avoid them.— If both the spelling and the pronunciation must be made known, the Graphic form should be given first, followed by the Commonsense in parenthesis, or vice versa.³¹ The repetition will be far less laborious for both the writer and the reader than any attempt to combine the two.

Though no one dreams of using the "Precise Transliteration" today, a great many writers seem to think there is no harm in spelling a word *almost* phonetically, but slipping in a letter or two from the Graphic, or else spelling a word *practically* in the Graphic system, but making some small concessions to Tai pronunciation.³²

30. I once listened to an argument between two Siamese friends over the Romanization of *Wáŋ* in a proper name. PHONG?—no, people would say FONG. BONG?—no, it wouldn't be *right*, because in Siamese it has an S at the end. I timidly suggested either BANŚA, which would satisfy the eye, or else PONG, which would satisfy the ear. Slapdash won the day; the choice fell upon BONGS, which satisfies neither.

31. To avoid all risk of doubt, italics could be used for words transcribed graphically, and ordinary type for words in the Commonsense System.

32. A good many of my Tai friends who Romanize their names by a hybrid method refuse to consider a change. Some say it is too late; people have gotten used to the wrong spelling and anything else would be confusing. That, I admit, is a valid reason. But others (I refrain from citing examples) are proud of the hybrid spelling, claiming as a precedent such English names as Cholmondeley and Berkeley. That is a false analogy. We write CHOLMONDELEY and BERKELEY, and pronounce CHUMLY and BARKLY, just exactly as we write SUKHODAYA and pronounce SUKÓTAI. The spelling corresponds to the Graphic and the pronunciation to the Phonetic. No one would think of writing hybrid forms like CHUMDELEY or BARKELEY. English spelling, with all its waywardness, is a natural growth (it is not, like Slapdash, a mere random groping). Romanization, whether graphic or phonetic, is an artificial creation, with all the advantages that attach to precise rules.

That is why the newspapers are full of pretentious hybrid forms that are worse than Slapdash. Let us pick a few at random, and see why they are bad.

"SARISHDI" looks as if it were intended to be Graphic, but in that system it transcribes the meaningless สริษดี. The proper Graphic form for the Prime Minister's name would be SRISHTI. Fortunately several newspapers have adopted the Commonsense form SARIT.

"PHIBULSONGGRAM" is a jumble of spellings; PH, B, and SONG come from the General System, L and GRAM from the Graphic. People in America would read the first two syllables FIBBLE and then give up. Even a charade like PEA-BOON-SONG-CRUMB would be better, and something might be said in defense of the General System's PHIBUN SONGKHRAM. In the Commonsense System the former Prime Minister's name would be PIBUN SONGKRAM, which anyone could pronounce; in the Graphic it would be BIPULASANGRAMA, which Sanskritists could understand.

"PHONGSAVADAR" looks like a graphic rendering of ฟองสาม, whatever that might be. Some readers might like to know that it is intended to mean BAÑSĀVATĀRA; others might like to know that it is pronounced PONGSĀWADĀN. "PHONGSAVADAR" conveys neither.

"PHRA MANE" is a hybrid between the General System and Slapdash. The tourist who sees this name in the paper will unhesitatingly pronounce the first syllable FRA. He might get the second syllable right, but not if he remembered that the Tourist Guide had told him that MA NE means "come here." The spelling, then, serves the tourist poorly, and it serves the Sanskritist worse: he might like to know that the place is named the Holy Meru.

"DEJO Road" might lead us to pronounce either เดจ or else เตจ; but unless we happened to know, we should hardly think of saying เดจ, DÉCHÓ.

"NAGOR SRI THAMMARAJ" is a monster. NAGOR, SRI and RAJ are mutilated Graphic, THAMMA is from the General

System. Whynot NAGARA ŚRĪ DHARMARĀJA in serious writing, and NAKŌN SI TAMMARAT for air and railway schedules?

“RAJABURI” is a hybrid between RĀJAPURĪ (Graphic) and RACHABURI (General). People who write “RAJABURI” in all innocence might be surprised to learn what it means in Sanskrit.³³

* * * *

If our two systems are kept separate, they will both serve us well.

Graphic.— The Graphic is beautifully adapted to words of Sanskrit or Pali origin; and though awkward for Tai words, it is nevertheless the only practical means of Romanizing their written forms without ambiguity.³⁴ It is essential for a few special purposes, chiefly scientific; it is desirable for Sanskrit and Pali words wherever dignity and universality are required, and for addressing Buddhists and Oriental scholars throughout the world. Its rules are well established, and should be followed resolutely. When the exact spelling must be made known, there is no substitute for it.

The Commonsense System.— For all other requirements I believe the proposed Commonsense System will work well. It is a general-purpose mechanism that can be fitted with special parts (the Optional Refinements) for special purposes.

With some of the Refinements, the system is convenient for scholarly writing; with more, it can serve for teaching and dictionaries.

Without the Refinements, it can fill all the ordinary needs of signboards, tourist guides, advertisements, and newspapers. The people who should use it most will never need to know of the Optional Refinements, and they should have no concern with the Graphic except to leave it alone.

33. See Monier-Williams *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Oxford, 1899, page 735.

34. The last example in Fig. 3 shows its virtues; the first three show its drawbacks.

Appendix A: The Graphic System

(From Coedès, *Recueil des inscriptions du Siam*, I, page 10)

ก	k	ฏ	ṭ	บ	p	ย	y
ข	kh	ฏ	ṭ	ป	p̣	ร	r
ค	g	ฐ	ṭh	ผ	ph	ล	l
ฆ	gh	ท	ḍ	ฝ	f	ว	v
ง	ñ	ฒ	dh	พ	b	ศ	ṣ
จ	c	ณ	ṇ	ฟ	f̣	ษ	sh
ฉ	ch	ด	t	ภ	bh	ส	s
ช	j	ต	ṭ	ม	m	ฬ	ḷ
ซ	j̣	ถ	th				
ฌ	jh	ท	d				
ญ	ṇ̃	ธ	dh				
		น	n				

อ	a	อ	u	ไอ	o
อะ	ah	อ	ū	เอา	au
อ̣	ā	เอ	ē	ออ	ō
อา	ā	เอ	e	เออ	œ
อา̣	ām	แอ	è	เอ—	’o
อ̣	i	ไอ	ai	เออ	’oa
อ̣	i	ไอ	ai	อัว	ua
อ̣	ū			เออ	ia
อ̣	ū				

Appendix B: The Commonsense System

VOWEL	Ordinary	Refinements
อะ อั —	a	
อา	a	â
อ่า	am	
อิ	i	
อี	i	î
อึ อึ๊	ü	
อุ	u	
อู	u	û
เอะ เอ	e	
เอ	e	é
แอะ แอ	e	ê
แอ	è	
โอะ อ(-)	o	
โอ	o	ô
เอะ ออ	o	ó
ออ	ò	
เออ	ö	

VOWEL	Ordinary	Refinements
เอย	ia	
เือ	üa	
อัว อว —	ua	
ไอ โอบ ไอ อับ	ai	
อาบ	ai	ái
เอา	ao	
ฮาว	ao	áo
อุบ	ui	
โอบ	oi	ói
ฮอบ	oi	
เอย	öi	
เือย	üe	
อวย	ue	
อัว	iu	
เือว	eo	
เอา	eo	éó
เอาว	eo	
เือว	io	
ฤ ฤ	rü, ri	

CONSONANT	INITIAL	FINAL
ก	g (<u>g</u>) [*]	k
ข ค ฃ	k	k
ง	ng	ng
จ	j (<u>j</u>) [*]	t
ฉ ช ฌ	ch	t
ญ	y	n
ฎ ฏ	d	t
ฏ ฑ	d (<u>d</u>) [*]	t
ฐ ฑ ฒ	t	t
ณ ฑ ฌ	n	n
บ	b	p
ป	p (<u>p</u>) [*]	p
ฝ ฟ	f	
ม	m	m
ย	y	
ร	r	n
ล ฬ	l	n
ว	w	
ศ ษ ส	s	t
ห ทร	s	
ห ฮ	h	

* Optional Refinements

(The Commonsense System, cont'd)

Key to approximate pronunciations

Initial Consonants (English)

g, disgrace	j, bootjack	d, dog	b, boy	y, yes	s, sing
k, kill!	ch, check!	<u>d</u> , misdeal	<u>h</u> , disburse	r, red	h, hat
ng, singer	y, yes	t, tag!	p, pooh!	l, love	
		n, name	f, fig	w, wet	
			m, man		

Final Consonants (English)

k, break	t, pit	p, lip
ng, sing	n, pin	m, ham

Vowels (Italian¹)

a, adesso	i, difesa*	u, suddito*	e, gentile*	o, siamo
à, stato	î, studi	û, lupo	é, péra	ó, carbóne
am, ambiguo			è, caffè	ò, ciò

ia, mia	ai, barcaiolo	ao, aoristo	ui, fui	ói, cói
ua, sua	âi, assai	âo, ciao		òi, pòi

ue, bue	eo, teoria
iu, piuttosto	éo, né occidente né oriente
	èò, erèò

* the sounds of short I, U and E are more as in English PIT, PUT and PET than in any Italian word.

(The Commonsense System, cont'd)

[Note: In the examples below, I have eliminated the Optional Refinements except in a few cases where they seem specially desirable,]

Geographical Expressions

Jang-wat, Ampö, Müang, Dambon, Ban, Pu-kao, Döi, Mè-nam, Huei, Talé, Klông

Towns

Grung Tép, Tonburi, Nonburi, Ayuttaya, Lopburi, Sukotai, Pitsaunlok, Petchabun, S'wankalok, Chainat, Prè, Nan, Dak, Lambang, Lampun, Chieng Mai, Chieng Sèn, Chieng Rai, Fang, Gampèng Pet, Nakòn S'wan, Ubon, Uddòn, Ròi Et, Lôi, Kou Gèn, Korat, Nakòn Chai Si, Nakòn B'tom, Supanburi, U Tòng, Ang Tòng, Petburi, Ratburi, Chaiya, Pu Get, Nakòn Si Tammarat, Song Kla, Chonburi, Si Racha, Jantaburi

Bangkok Topography

Ratchadamnön, Jarön Grung, Chalöm Grung, Si Pa-ya, Suriwong, Si Lom, Satòn, Bamrung Müang, Ratchini, Grung G'sem, Yaowarat, Wittayu, Pa-ya Tai, Jakrapong, Patpong, Wat Po, Wat Sutut, Wat Pra Gèò, Benjama-bòpit, Bowòn-niwét, Pu-kao Tòng, Ta-rüa Pra Jan, Dusit, Téwét, Hua Lampong, Tung Maha Mék

Fruits

Manao, Ma-brang, Ma-prao, Mafai, Mamuang, Malagò, Som, Gluei, Ngo, Lamut, Lanyai, Mangkut, Sapparot, Turien, Graton, Maküa Tét

Trees

Magòk, Makam, Madiä, Deng, Dèng, Yang, Garawek, Son, Jamjuri, Ga-tin, Grabòk, Sak, Hu Gwang, Kè Farang

FIG. 1: SLAPDASH

- (1) Sam-law ma-ne.
- (2) Nigh um-purr my you, crop. By Knock-Corn See Tommyrot
lie one ma layer. My sop war cow jar club ma mewer-rye.
- (3) Meh tom ngahn mock; my queueille key ghee-at.
- (4) Phra Rama Teabody sway raht nigh groong See Ayuthya.

FIG. 2: ROYAL INSTITUTE'S PRECISE TRANSLITERATION

- (1) sám lô ma nĩ
- (2) nai ămphǝ mǎi (a)yũ k'ráp pǎi nǎk'ɔn(r) s(r)í th'a(rr)mmǎrət(c')
- (h)lái wǎn ma lǎo mǎi ǵ'ap wǎ khǎo ǵǎh klǎp ma mù'ǝrǎi
- (3) mǝ thǎm ngan mǎk mǎi k'œi khi kǐet(c)
- (4) phrǎh ramath'ibodi sǎwǝi rət(c') nǎi krǔng s(r)í ǎyút(th)ǎya

FIG. 3: GRAPHIC

- (1) sām lō mā nī
- (2) nāy āmbhœ mǎi ayū grǎp pǎi nagara śrī dharrmarāja
hlāy wǎn mā lǎw mǎi drǎp wǎ khau ǵǎh klǎp mā mǝarai
- (3) mǝ dām nān mǎk mǎi gey khī kiac
- (4) brah rāmādhīpatī svey rāj nǎi krūn śrī ayudhyā

FIG. 4: PALLEGOLX

- (1) Sám-lǝ ma nĩ.
- (2) Nai ămphǝ mǎi jũ, khǎb. Pǎi Nǎkhon Sǐ Thǎmma:rət
lái wǎn ma lǎo. Mǎi sǎp và khǎo ǵha: klǎb ma mǎi rǎi.
- (3) Mǝ thǎm ngan mǎk; mǎi khi khi kǐet.
- (4) Phra: Ramathibodi sǎwǝi rət nǎi krǔng Sǐ ǎjútthǎya.

FIG. 5: McFARLAND

- (1) Sarm² law⁵ mah nee³.
- (2) Nai um-pur mai³ yoo⁴, krup⁵. Bpai Na⁶-kawn See² Tum-ma⁶-rart³
lai² wan mah laa-oh⁵. Mai³ sap³ wah³ kow² ǵja⁴ ǵklap⁴ mah mur-ah³-rai.
- (3) Maa³ tum ngan mark³; mai³ kur-ay kee³ ǵkee-at⁴.
- (4) Pra⁶ Rarmah-ti⁶ -bau-dee sa⁴-wur-ie² rart³ nai ǵkroong
See² Ah⁴ -yoot⁶ -ta⁶ -yah.

FIG. 6: PRU'S STANDARD THAI-ENGLISH DICTIONARY

- (1) Sahn-law mah nee.
- (2) Nai am-puh mai yoo, krab. Bpai Na-korn See Tam-ma-rahd
lai wan mah laew. Mai sahb wah kow ja glab ma meuarai.
- (3) Mae tam ngahn mahk; mai kuhy kee giad.
- (4) Pra Rahmahtibawdee sawuhy rahd nai grung See Ayudtayah.

FIG. 7: DR. HAAS

- (1) sãam 133 maa nii
- (2) naaj 3amphæə māj jūu khráb paj nákhon sīi thammáráad
láaj wan maa léw māj sáab wáa khǎw ca' kláb maa mýaraj
- (3) mēi tham ŋaan māag māj khæj khii kiad
- (4) phrá raamaathibodi sǎwæj ráad nai krung sīi 3ayútháyaa

FIG. 8: THE GENERAL SYSTEM

- (1) Sam-lə ma ni.
- (2) Nai amphoe mai yu, krap. Pai Nakhon Si Thammarat
lai wan ma laeo. Mai sap wa khao cha klap ma mu'arai.
- (3) Mae tham ngan mak; mai khoei khi-kiat.
- (4) Phra Ramathibodi sawoei rat nai krung Si Ayutthaya.

FIG. 9: COMMONSENSE

- (1) Sam-lò ma ni.
- (2) Nai ampö mai yu, krap. Bai Nakòn Si Tammarat
lai wan ma lèò. Mai sap wa kao ja glap ma müarai.
- (3) Mè tam ngan mak; mai kôi ki-giat.
- (4) Pra Ramatibòdi sawöi rat nai grung Si Ayuttaya.

FIG. 10: COMMONSENSE WITH REFINEMENTS

- (1) Sâm-lò mâ nî.
- (2) Nâi ampö mai yû, krap. Bai Nakòn Sî Tammarât lâi wan
mâ lèò. Mai sâp wâ kao ja glap mâ müarai.
- (3) Mè tam ngân mâk; mai kôi kî-giat.
- (4) Pra Râmâtibòdî sawöi rât nai grung Sî Ayuttayâ.