

## PAPER PRESENTED BY NORWAY\*

Since the 1890's, the Royal Ministry of Education has been responsible for the standardization of the spelling of geographical names. It is assisted by an officially appointed Board of Advisers. This Ministry is also the authority responsible for the spelling of geographical names in the Norwegian Territories in the Arctic (Svalbard and Jan Mayen) and the Norwegian Antarctic Territory. The Board of Advisers is charged with the task of giving advice on the spelling of geographical names to all government offices and institutions (Norges geografiske oppmåling, Norges sjøkartverk, Norsk polarinstitutt, the Ministries of Post and Telegraph, Roads, etc).

In 1913, special instructions were issued, laying down that all Norwegian place names should be written in accordance with an orthographic system suitable for the standardization of genuine Norwegian dialect material. All later rules for the standardization of the spelling of place names are derived from the instructions of 1913. The latest instructions were issued in 1933 and 1957, and deal with specific details of standardization.

From the beginning, the Board of Advisers has been able to base its advice on the spelling of place names on a very famous work, *Norsk Gaardnavne* ("Norwegian Farm-Names") in twenty volumes, with an introduction and an index, listing all names of farms and subdivisions of farms, with a selection of written forms from the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, all known mediaeval forms

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## PAPER PRESENTED BY CAMBODIA\*

Since its establishment in 1955, the National Geographic Service of Cambodia has had a place-names section, which deals with geographical names in the preparation of the country's maps. This section, with an inexperienced staff, has been unable to play an active role during the first seven years of its existence and has accordingly evolved along the same lines as the other activities of the Service.

In the time of the Geographic Service of Indo-China, i.e., up to 1955, there were no Cambodians on the staff of the geographical service. The senior staff were principally French, and the subordinate staff Viet-Nameese. As a result, the pronunciation of most of the names appearing on the maps published by the Geographic Service of Indo-China is represented in a distorted or inaccurate form. The factors responsible for this situation include:

Interpretation by persons not knowing the language of the country or not knowing it well;

Unreliable information supplied by inhabitants having a faulty pronunciation;

Recording of names in letters of the Roman alphabet, but according to French procedures;

Absence of fixed rules for the phonetic transcription and romanization of Cambodian characters.

The names on all maps of Cambodia on the scales 1:100,000, 1:400,000 and 1:500,000 were printed in the Roman alphabet. Although this practice is still followed

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and present-day local pronunciation. Since 1940, all names on new topographical maps published by Norges geografiske oppmåling are written in phonetic script and checked by specialists. Standardization of the written forms on the maps is based on this material.

In northern Norway there is a Lapp minority. There is a special government adviser on Lapp place names. In the two northernmost counties, Finnmark and Troms, there are maps where almost all the names are of Lapp origin, and in border districts between Norwegians and Lapps, there are many places with two different names, one Lapp and one Norwegian.

There is as yet no Norwegian national gazetteer. Plans have been worked out for a gazetteer, which can be based on the maps at 1:250,000 (about 100,000 names).

Norsk polarinstitutt applies the official rules for the standardization of place names on its maps. Names of special features originally given and used by explorers of other nationalities and in use in other countries are very seldom changed into Norwegian names in the Norwegian Arctic and Antarctic Territories. For the Arctic Svalbard region, see the volumes *The place names of Svalbard* and *Supplement to the place names of Svalbard* (1942-1958).

The national names authority is the Board of Advisers on Place Names, and the Royal Ministry of Education is the executive authority.

The Norwegian Place Names Archives is the institution responsible for the collection of place-name material and directs the research work carried out in that field.

today, the National Geographic Service has published a series of special maps for schools in which the names are given in Cambodian characters.

A bilateral Cambodian-United States agreement of 1957 made it possible for the National Geographic Service, from 1961 onwards, to participate actively in the national standardization of geographical names and, with the aid of the mapping service of the United States Army, to produce maps of Cambodia on the scale 1:50,000 on which place names are shown in Cambodian characters and in the letters of the Roman alphabet according to the phonetic transcription. As, unfortunately, no thorough study of the rules for the writing of Cambodian characters in the Roman alphabet had been carried out by the Service up to that time, a few small errors crept into the transcription of names and are now being corrected.

Teams have been sent into the field by the Service for the purpose of inquiring of the inhabitants, and then recording, the names of inhabited places, watercourses and other features. The investigators record these names according to their pronunciation and verify them with the aid of the land registers in the cantonal offices. Where possible, they indicate the origin of these names in order that they may be spelt correctly and that the proper pronunciation may be adopted. It is by no means possible to rely on the information obtained from the inhabitants—and even less so on the names furnished by them—on the basis of their pronunciation because of the fact that in some regions, particularly in the north-west, they have a rather pronounced accent. Foreign investigators tend to make the

mistake of adopting the names supplied by the inhabitants and of following their pronunciation.

Field operations in the easily accessible areas were carried out by the Service's own teams, and in other areas by the Philippine firm, Certeza.

The final determination of the names was then made by the central office, although some errors undoubtedly did slip by in the case of the areas entrusted to the foreign investigators.

At the present time, our task has been facilitated and simplified through the co-operation of the Ministry of the Interior, which has compiled a list of names for the entire country. The *mékhum*, or head of the commune, makes a list of his *phoum* (villages) and other named places, water-courses and other features. He then sends the list to the *chauway srok* (head of canton), who examines and classifies the names. The latter, in turn, makes a list of his *srok* (cantons) and sends it to the *khet* (province or prefecture), where the same procedure is followed as at the *srok* level. The *chauway khet* (governor of province) sends the complete list in its final form to the Minister of the Interior, who thus has all the lists in his possession and can perform his task that much easier in the event that new *khet* or *srok* are established.

Many names in the Kingdom of Cambodia have an historical or legendary origin or have some special characteristic. The Batdambang *khet*, for example, has an historical origin, "*bat*" meaning "to lose", and "*dambang*" meaning "wand", the explanation being that in ancient times a great Cambodian warrior cast his magic wand at enemy troops in order to destroy them and never found it again.

Phnom-Penh, the name of the capital of Cambodia, is of legendary origin. "*Phnom*" means "mountain" or "hill", and "*penh*" is the name of an old woman, and legend has it that the hill which now rises in the centre of the town was built up under the direction of an old woman by the name of Penh.

A *khet* situated in the central part of the country is called Kompong-Chhnang, "*kompong*" meaning "port", and "*chhnang*" meaning "saucepans". In this *khet*, many of the inhabitants make their living through the manufacture of earthenware which they export to other *khet* in launches, the Kompong-Chhnang *khet* being situated in the lake region. Another instance where a name is related to some particular characteristic is the maritime province in the

south-west called Kampot. This is a word meaning "tetrodon", a fish which abounds in local rivers.

The Cardamom chain is the habitat of the cardamom, a variety of plant whose seeds have a sharp taste, and the inhabitants have given this chain the Cambodian name for "cardamom", namely, "Phnum-Kravanh", "*phnum*" meaning "mountain", and "*kravanh*" meaning "cardamoms".

In the case of certain villages in the north-eastern province of Stung-Treng, which formerly had Laotian names, the Cambodian Government has "Khmerized" these names either by translating them into Cambodian or by creating new names that have some connexion with local history or legend.

Through a careful study of these names, it has been possible to eliminate minor errors due to the faulty pronunciation that was recorded when information was being gathered in the field. In order that foreign map-users may be able to avoid phonetic errors, the correct Cambodian spelling must be used, and the Cambodian characters must be transcribed in the Roman alphabet in accordance with the accepted pronunciation and the rules which have been adopted.

It is to be noted that Phnom-Penh, the capital of Cambodia, is often called "Nam-Yang" by the Viet-Nameese and "Kim Thak" by certain Chinese. Cambodia, however, while still recognizing the names which it gave to its former provinces in what is today South Viet-Nam—for example, Prey-Nokor (Saigon), Méat-Chrouk (Chaudoc), Préah-Trápéang (Travinh) and so on—also recognizes the names which have been Viet-Nameese since the occupation.

The names of some of the maritime provinces of Thailand which formerly belonged to Cambodia have likewise been transformed more or less into Thai names; for example: Bachoem-Borei, meaning "western region", has become "Chantaburi" in Thai, and Nokor-Réach was originally changed to "Korat-Aranhvar" in Thai and is now called "Aranya" in modern Thai.

Although some mispronunciation of town and province names by the Viet-Nameese and Chinese is to be expected, the fact of giving new names to the capital and to certain provinces and cantons which are still Cambodian is indicative of questionable intentions.

The proper name of the country is "Kampuchea", which in French becomes "Cambodge" and in English "Cambodia". Phonetic research has shown that the English pronunciation is closer to the Cambodian than is the French.