

SANSKRIT IN THAILAND

One of the most ancient languages of the world Sanskrit has exercised considerable influence on Thai. According to Dr. William J. Gedney¹, words of Indic origin are about as common in spoken Thai as are words of Greek and Latin in spoken English. This is remarkable in view of the fact that Thai is structurally entirely different from Sanskrit. It is coupled with Chinese in view of the two vital characteristics that it shares with it, the monosyllabism and the tone-variation. How then Thai could come to acquire such an enormous corpus of Sanskrit words is, therefore, one of the biggest riddles of linguistic history. Whether Sanskrit entered into this land through Pali which came with the introduction of Buddhism or independently is debatable. Evidences are not lacking in Thai even of the influence of Sanskrit over Pali. One of the most interesting instances of this is the Thai word *pracakṣa*, direct perception. The Sanskrit form of this is *pratyakṣa* and the Pali form *paccakkha*. Now if Thai *pracakṣa* were derived from Pali *paccakkha*, its Sanskritization in Thai would have to be accepted, for the forms *pra* and *cakṣa* would not go well with Pali genius. So would not do the appearance of *r* in *akhra*, Sanskrit *agra*, *marga*, Sanskrit *mārga* which in Pali is assimilated to the following sound: *agga*, *magga*. All this would lead us to the conclusion that Sanskrit was not always on the sidelines in Thailand, nor was it Pali's close follower. Not only the new coinages like *sawad-dī* from Sanskrit *svasti* for *namaste* or the like (the term for greeting), *Tha-nākhān* for bank (Sanskrit *Dhanāgāra*), *Praisani* for Post Office (Sanskrit *Praisaṇī*), *Thora-lekh* for telegram (Sanskrit *Dūralekha*), *Prapā* for water works, *Sathānī-Vitthayu* (Sanskrit *Vidyutsthāna*) for Radio-Station, even quite a few of the older words have a Sanskritic ring about

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1. GEDNEY WILLIAM J., *Indic Loan Words in Spoken Thai* (Yale University Ph. D. Dissertation), Introduction p. I, Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1947.

them. It is a tribute to the Thai power of assimilation, that they have been naturalized in it, given Thai pronunciation, Thai spelling and occasionally even Thai meaning (e.g., *karuṇā* in the sense of 'please' or *kṛpayā* as against its Sanskrit sense of 'compassion', *prārthanā* 'desire' as against its Sanskrit sense of 'request', 'prayer', *saṃjñā* pronounced in Thai as *sañña* 'promise' as against its Sanskrit sense of 'consciousness' or 'appellation' and so on). They might have once belonged to Sanskrit stock, they are now Thai words, an inseparable part of Thai vocabulary. Most of the Thais may be least conscious of the fact that the names that they have, such as Pridi (Prīti), Hongskul (Haṃsakula), Visudh (Viśuddha), Praphod (Prabodha), Vinaya, Prasit (Prasiddha), Mahanond (Mahānanda), Syaṃananda, Chirayu, Valaya, Manjari, Kalyani are all from Sanskrit. To them they are Thai names of which they are legitimately proud.

As with the names of the human beings, so with the names of the cities, towns, provinces and so on. They too have a Sanskritic ring about them. Behind the crust of their phonetic variation, their Sanskrit form peeps out. By way of illustration we take up the following:

<i>Thai</i>	<i>Sanskrit</i>
Ayutthayā	Ayodhyā
Buriram	Purīramyā
Chanthaburī	Candrapurī
Chayanāt	Jayanāda
Chayaphūm	Jayabhūmi
Chonburī	Jalapurī
Kālasindhu	Kālasindhu
Kanchanaburī	Kāñcanapurī
Lopburī	Lavapurī
Nakhon Rātchasiṃā	Nagararājasimā
Nakhon Pathom	Nagaraprathama
Nakhon si Thammarāt	Nagaraśrī Dharmarāja
Nakhon Nāyok	Nagaranāyaka
Nakhon Sawan	Nagarasvarga
Nonthaburī	Nandapurī
Mahāsarakhām	Mohasāragrāma
Mukdāhān	Muktāhāra
Phetchaburī	Vajrapurī
Phitsnulok	Viṣṇuloka
Prāchīnburī	Prācīnapurī
Rājburī	Rājapurī
Sakon nakhon	Sakalanagara
Samut prākān	Samudraprākāra
Samut soṅkrām	Samudrasaṅgrāma
Siṃhaburī	Siṃhapurī
Sukhothāi	Sukhodaya
Surāṭthānī	Surāṣṭradhānī

Surin	Surendrapurī
Sawankhalok	Svargaloka
U Bon	Utpala
Udon Thānī	Uttaradhānī
Uttaradit	Uttaraṭīrtha
Yasothon	Yaśodhara

For a province the Thai word is Prathet, Sanskrit *pradeśa*. One of the provinces of Thailand bordering Cambodia and very much in news these days is Aranyaprathet or Aranyapradeśa.

The origin of the name Cakrī, the present ruling dynasty of Thailand, is quite interesting, nay revealing, as it shows the profound impact of Sanskrit on it. Cakrī is derived from *cakra* pronounced in Thai as *cak*.

The subjects in the kingdom are known as *prachā chon*, Sanskrit *prajājana*. The different parts of the country are called *phāk*, Sanskrit *bhāga*. A province is known as *cañvāt*, of which *vāt*, *vāṭa*, is Sanskrit. The word for countryside is *chonnabod*, Sanskrit *janapada*. The field or farm is *kaset*, Sanskrit *kṣetra*, the seed sown is *phued*, Sanskrit *bīja*. Agriculture is *kasetkam*, Sanskrit *kṣetrakarma*. As per the practice in Thailand the king himself ceremonially ploughs a small piece of land. This formally opens the sowing operation. The people follow it up in their fields. The ceremony is called *phiti charot pra naṅkhan*, Sanskrit *vidhi caraṇa (?) pra (?) lāṅgala*. *Naṅkhan* is *lāṅgala*. *Vidhi — lāṅgala*, the ceremony of handling the plough. Civil service is called *rājakān*, Sanskrit *rājakārya* and a civil servant *kha... rājakān*, *kha... rājakārya*. The word for municipal administration is *thesabān*, Sanskrit *deśapāla* and the one in charge of it is called *thesamantrī*, Sanskrit *deśamantrī*; in big cities *phū vā rājakān*, *phā vā rājakara*. A minister in the Central Cabinet is called *ratha-mantrī*, Sanskrit *rāṣṭramantrī*. The Prime Minister is *nāyok rathamantri*, Sanskrit *nāyaka rāṣṭramantrī*, the foreign minister *rathamantri tān prathet*, *tāng² pradeśa rāṣṭramantrī*, minister of the Interior *mahat - Thai*, Sanskrit *mahā Thai*, the Director of education *siksā-dhikān*, Sanskrit *Śikṣādhikāra*, the Director of broadcasting *adhibodi krom prachā samphān*, Sanskrit *adhipati karma prajā sambandha*. The Parliament is *ratha-sabhā*, Sanskrit *rāṣṭrasabhā* and the Cabinet *khana ratha mantrī*, Sanskrit *gaṇarāṣṭramantrī*. The Secretariat is called *lekhā-dhikān khana rathamantri*, Sanskrit *lekhādhikāragana rāṣṭramantrī*.

The word for road in Thai is *thanon*, Sanskrit *sthāna*, for a footpath, *pādavīthi*, Sanskrit the same, for station *sathānī*, Sanskrit *sthāna* (Bus Stand: *sathānī rod* [Skt. *ratha*] *may*; Railway Station: *sathānī rod* [Skt. *ratha*] *fay*). A hall is *sālā*, Sanskrit *śālā*, a door is *thavān*, Sanskrit *dvāra*, an arch *toron*, Sanskrit *toraṇa*, a palace *prasād*, Sanskrit *prāsāda*³, a pavillion, *vedī*, Sanskrit the same.

2. A Thai word.

3. The Grand Palace is called Phra Borom Mahārājavong of which phra and vong are Thai while Borom and Mahārāja are Sanskritic. *Borom* is *parama*, *Mahārāja* is *Mahārāja*.

The word for enemy in Thai is *satru* which is pure Sanskrit except for the dentalization, not uncommon in India itself of the Sanskrit palatal⁴. The word for friend is *mit*, Sanskrit *mitra* or *sahāy*, Sanskrit *sahāya* (there is slight semantic variation here, in Sanskrit the word means a companion) or *mit sahāy*, Sanskrit *mitra sahāya*. Battle or war in Thai is called *samon*, which is Sanskrit *samara*. So is *samonbūm*, battle field, from Sanskrit *samarabhūmi*. The word for weapon in Thai is *āvut* which is from Sanskrit *āyudha*.

The names of a number of trees, plants and flowers in Thai are Sanskritic. Thus Bikun in Thai is Sanskrit Bakula, Paduma Sanskrit Padma, Kokonadu Sanskrit Kokanada, Komud, Sanskrit Kumuda, Phutsa Sanskrit Badara, Mālī Sanskrit Mālātī or Mallikā, Chombū, Sanskrit Jambū, Tāla, Sanskrit the same and so on. For fruit Thai has *phon* (*tamai*) of which *phon* is Sanskrit *phala* itself. The fruit of an action is also called *phala* or *karmaphala* in Sanskrit. So is it in Thai: *phon la*⁵ *kam*, *phala-karma* or *karma-phala*. The word for tree in Thai is *tonmai*. *Ton* is Sanskrit *taru*.

The names of the months in Thai have also Sanskrit origin. But unlike Sanskrit they are based on the names of the signs of the Zodiac or Rāsis. Quite scientific the Thais follow a definite system in the naming of the months: the names of the months with 31 days end in the word *ākhom*, Sanskrit *āgama*; those with 30 days in *āyon*, Sanskrit *āyana* and the one (obviously February) with less than 30 days ends in *phan*, Sanskrit *bandha*. The Thai names for the months, thus, are:

<i>Thai</i>	<i>Sanskrit</i>	<i>English</i>
Mesāyon	Meṣāyaṇa	April
Phṛsaphākhom	Vṛṣabhāgama	May
Mithunāyon	Mīthunāyana	June
Karakadākhom	Karkaṭāgama	July
Simhākhom	Simhāgama	August
Kanyāyon	Kanyāyana	September
Tulākhom	Tulāgama	October
Phṛscikāyon	Vṛścikāyana	November
Dhanvākhom	Dhanvāgama	December
Makarākhom	Makarāgama	January
Kumphāphan	Kumbhabandha	February
Mīnākhom	Mīnāgama	March

Besides these general names, some of the months may have in Thai some special names based on some special events, e.g., Visākhābūchā

4. Due to pronunciation vagaries ś is often pronounced as s by some people in India.

5. This does not have an independent meaning. It is indicative of compounding.

Sanskrit Viśākhapūjā, for the month Lord Buddha was born, got enlightenment and attained Parinirvāṇa. Similarly the month the Buddhist monks start the rainy-season-prayers is called Ā-sā-la-ha in Thai, Āsālhapūjā in Pali and Aṣāḍhapūjā in Sanskrit.

For season the Thais have ṛdu, a derivative of Sanskrit ṛtu, time *velā*, watch *nāḍī*, both of them the same as in Sanskrit. No word in Thai is found for any particular season. It is only in the name of the dish, Krayāsāt, however, that the name of the season *śarad*, autumn, peeps out. *sāt* = *śarad*.

The names of the days too have Sanskritic origin. As against the Sanskrit practice of adding the word *vāra* or *vāsara* signifying day, after the names of some planets, Thai has the word *van* (= day) preceding them:

<i>Thai</i>	<i>Sanskrit</i>	<i>English</i>
Van - ādit	āditavāra	Sunday
Van - can	candravāra	Monday
Van - aṅkhān	aṅgāravāra	Tuesday
Van - phut	budhavāra	Wednesday
Van - phṛhatsabody	bṛhaspativāra	Thursday
Van - suk	śukravāra	Friday
Van - sao	śanivāra	Saturday

It is noteworthy that Thai has the rather less known word *aṅkhān* (Sanskrit *aṅgāra*) for Mars or Maṅgala, generally found in older treatises on Astronomy or Astrology or here and there in older literature.

While talking of the names of the days, etc., it is interesting to note that the Thai word for calender is *Pratidinam*, a typical Sanskrit word.

The names of quarters in Thai are all from Sanskrit. The intermediate space in the quarters in Sanskrit is identified with certain deities like Rudra, Agni etc. and is named after them. So is it in Thai. Below is being reproduced a chart giving the names of the quarters and their intermediary points in Thai together with Sanskrit originals and English equivalents to help form a clear idea of the influence that Sanskrit has exercised:

	Udorn uttara North	
Phāyap Vāyavya North West		Isān Īśāna North East
Pracim Paścima West		Būrafā Pūrva East
Hawradī Nairṛti South West		Ākhane Āgnēya South East
	Thaksin Dakṣiṇa South	

Thai has words for all the four Varnaś, castes, which are the same as in Sanskrit except for certain phonetic variations and certain semantic peculiarities. Brāhmaṇa is called Phrām, Kṣatriya Kasat, Vaiśya Phait and Sūdra Sūd, in Thai⁶. Of these Phait and Sūd are of academic interest only, being no longer in use in popular speech. The dictionaries list them and give their meaning as people belonging to the merchant class and menials and slaves in India respectively. The word for merchants current in popular speech in Thai is Vānit which is the changed form of Sanskrit Vāṇija. Evidently it is a case of phonetic variation here. Apiece with it is Thai Kasat from Sanskrit Kṣatriya, as noticed above, especially Mahākasat someone belonging to the warrior class, in Sanskrit. Maybe this Kasat is a derivative of Kṣatra and not Kṣatriya.

The concept of the four stages, Āśramas, in the life of a person is not altogether unknown to Thailand where words for at least two stages, Brahmācārya and Gṛhasṭha do exist. Brahmācārya is called *Phrommachan* which means abstinence from sex. It is not unoften used with *praphrt*, Sanskrit *pravṛtti* practice: *Praphrt phrommachan* = practice of Brahmācārya. Gṛhasṭha is called *Gṛhat*, a householder. There are no words for Vānaprastha and Saṁnyāsa in Thai.

The word Brahmācārīn signifies in Sanskrit a young man practising continence. The Thai derivative of it, Phrommacārī, however, signifies a virgin girl⁷.

Saṁskāras as religious rites are unknown to Thailand. As ceremonies however, three of them are known and they have Sanskritic words: Nāmakorn, Sanskrit Nāmakaraṇa, Vivāha and Antyeṣṭi called Jhāpaṇa-kiccā, Sanskrit Kṣapaṇa-kṛtya, burning of the body. For Vivāha or marriage Thai has four words: of which three, except Ṭangan, are Sanskritic: one Vivāha itself, two, Moṅkhon somrot, Maṅgala samarasa and three, Vivāhamoṅkhon, Vivāha maṅgala.

Though a Buddhist country Thailand has words for Brahmanic gods and goddesses; having come under the pale of cultural influence of India. The Sanskrit words for a god and a goddess in general are *deva* and *devī* which are pronounced in Thai as *theva* and *thevī* respectively. Of the Brahmanic gods the most worshipped in Thailand is Phrom, Brahmā, whose temples are a common sight everywhere. The other gods known to Thais though not actually worshipped now, are Indra together with his divine vehicle Airāvaṇa whose figures in certain Wats or Vihāras do meet the eye, Rāma, Sītā and Hanumān whose

6. Together with Śramaṇa the word would be Saman-Phrām, Śramaṇa-Brāhmaṇa, unlike Sanskrit where Brāhmaṇa comes first: Brāhmaṇa-Śramaṇa.

7. In good old days a preparation of rice, coconut milk and sugar called Krayāsāt was distributed among the monks, relatives and neighbours in the month of Bhādrapada. It was to be stirred, as per the custom, interestingly enough by the Phrommacārīs, Brahmācārī(ṇī)s, virgin girls. The word Krayā in Krayāsāt, it may in passing be pointed out, is of Cambodian origin.

representations in frescos are not uncommon and Yima, Yama, the god of Death who is supposed to take away life from and give it to the people at the appointed hour. There is belief in semi-divine beings, the Yakṣas, etc., too, huge figures of whom adorn some monasteries. There is belief also in certain objects, like the trees, having the presiding deities. The Thais call it Rukkhatheva which is Sanskrit Vṛkṣadeva. Some of the Brahmanic gods, though not worshipped, are not the less known to Thailand. A few of its prominent institutions have figures of them. The building of the Arts Faculty of the Chulalongkorn University carries the figure of Saraswadī, Sarasvatī, at its top, the Kromsilpakorn, the Department of Fine Arts of the Govt. of Thailand and the Silpakorn University, have the figure of Khanesa, Gaṇeśa, on their emblem. The National Theatre run by the Kromsilpakorn also has a big figure of Khanesa, Gaṇeśa, on the top of its main entrance. On its both sides it has at the top three figures, those of Narāi, Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu), Phrom, Brahmā, and Isuan, Īśvara (Śiva).

Along with the gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon Thailand shows familiarity with the pious and the spiritual people like the Ṛṣis, seers, Munis, sages, Tāpasas, hermits. The Thai words for them are only the phonetic variants of the above: Rasī (Ṛṣi), Muni (Muni), Dāba (Tāpasa).

The names that some of the sciences or disciplines have been given in Thailand could well be the envy of many an Hindi enthusiast even in India, e.g.,

<i>English</i>	<i>Thai</i>	<i>Sanskrit Original</i>
Anthropology	Manusyavidyā	Manuṣyavidyā
Economics	Sethsāt	Sreṣṭhaśāstra
Logic	Takavidyā	Tarkavidyā
Psychology	Cittavidyā	Cittavidyā
Ethics	Cariyāsāt	Caryāśāstra
Humanities	Manusasāt	Manuṣyaśāstra
Sociology	Saṅkhomvidyā	Saṅgamavidyā
Linguistics	Bhāsāsāt	Bhāṣāśāstra
History	Pravattisāt	Pravṛttiśāstra
Political Science	Rathasāt	Rāṣtraśāstra
Mathematics	Khanitasāt	Gaṇitaśāstra
Philosophy	Prajñā	Prajñā
Zoology	Sattvavidyā	Sattvavidyā
Biology	Jīvavidyā	Jīvavidyā
Science of Teaching	Kharusāt	Guruśāstra
	or	or
Law	Siksāsāt	Śikṣāśāstra
Ethnology	Nītisāt	Nītiśāstra
Engineering	Chātivanvidyā	Jātivarṇavidyā
	Vissavakammasāt	Viśvakarmaśāstra

Science of medicine	Phaityasāt	Vaidyaśāstra
Surgery	Sallayasāt	Śalyaśāstra
Pathology	Āyursāt	Āyusśāstra

As may be seen a particular order is noticeable in the nomenclature. The words which in English end in *logy* are rendered in Thai by the term *vidyā*, while those ending in *ics* by *sāt*, a derivative of Sanskrit *śāstra*.

The institutions of higher learning in Thailand have Sanskrit names. The Colleges are called Vidyālayas and the Universities Mahāvidyālayas, the words being pronounced as Vitthayālaya and Mahāvittthayālaya respectively. For school, however, a typical Thai word, Rong Riean is used. But when it comes to denoting a Primary or Secondary school the words Prathom, Sanskrit Prathama, and Matthayom, Sanskrit Madhyama are preposed to it. Similarly the words Anubān, Sanskrit Anupāla and Achīp, Sanskrit Ājīva, are post-positioned to it to denote the Montessory School and the Vocational School respectively.

The words for some of the University officials are Sanskritic in origin. The Dean is called Khanabody, Sanskrit Gaṇapati and the Rector (Vice-Chancellor) Adhikānbody, Sanskrit Adhikārapati. The Ministry of Education is called Kasuang Siksādhikān of wich Siksādhikān is Sanskrit being derived from Sanskrit Śikṣādhikāra.

The terms for the various University degrees in Thailand are also typically Sanskritic. For the Bachelor's degree the term is Bandīt, obviously from Sanskrit Paṇḍita and for the Master's degree Mahā-bandīt, Sanskrit Mahāpaṇḍita. If the idea of B.A. (Bachelor of Arts) is to be denoted it will have to be done by Aksorsāt Bandīt, Sanskrit Akṣaraśāstra Paṇḍita. M.A. similarly is called in Thai Aksorsāt Mahā-bandīt, Sanskrit Akṣara-sāstra Mahāpaṇḍita. For Ph.D. the Thai word is Dussadī Bandīt or Tuṣṭi Paṇḍita. For research Thai has easily the most appropriate word *vicai*, Sanskrit *vicaya*, gathering or collecting⁸. At least three Universities in Thailand have Sanskritic names: the Universities of Thammasāt, Sanskrit Dharmasāstra, Silpākorn, Sanskrit Silpākara and Kasersāt, Sanskrit Kṣetraśāstra.

The *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, particularly the *Rāmāyaṇa*, are quite wellknown in Thailand. There are mural paintings from it in the Grand Palace and other places. A Thai version of the *Rāmāyaṇa* called in Thai the *Rāmakiēn* (Sanskrit Rāmakīrti) was prepared as early as in 1797 A.D. by king Rama I, the founder of the present Cakri dynasty. The Royal House has contributed much to the translation of Sanskrit works. King Rama VI translated episodes from the *Mahābhārata*, the *Nalopākhyāna* and the *Sāvitrīyupākhyāna* into Thai. The *Sāvitrī* episode was given by him the drama form also. He also translated the

8. How we wish such type of words could be adopted in Sanskrit and Hindi in India instead of the lack-lustre words like *soḍha* or *anusandhāna*.

Abhiññānaśākuntala of Kālidāsa and the *Priyadarśikā* of Śrī Harṣa. Prince Bidiyalongkorn translated some of the stories from the *Vetālapañcaviṃśati*. Among the translations by scholars other than those from the Royal House may be mentioned the translation of the *Bhagavadgītā*, the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, up to the 27th Adhyāya, the *Bṛhatsamhitā* of Varāhamihira and the episode of the killing of Kāṁsa, the Kāṁsavadhopākhyaṇa, from the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* by Prof. Saeng⁹, the translation of the *Kāvyaḷaṅkāra* of Vāgbhaṭa by Sri P.S. Sastri, an Indian immigrant to Thailand, selections from the *Upaniṣads*, by Mr. Rungruing Bunyorasa, the translation of the *Dvātrīṁṣatputtalikāsimhāsana* by Mr. Kila Bardhanabadya, the translation of the dramas *Svapnavāsavadatta* and the *Ratnāvalī* by Mrs. Dusdie Malakun¹⁰ and selections from works like the *Paddhati* of Śārṅadhara, Bhartṛhari's *Satakatraya*, the *Subhāṣitasamgraha* of D.D. Kosambi, the *Subhāṣitaratnaśoṭa* of Vidyākara, the *Subhāṣitāvalī* of Vallabhadeva, and the *Amaruśataka* by Mr. Sthiraphong Varna Pok. Of the present day Sanskritists of Thailand Mr. Karuna Kusalasaya has translated the *Buddhacarita* (Cantos I and II). He is at the moment busy translating the *Mahābhārata*. Prof. Chamlong Sarapadnuke has translated selections from the *Ṛgveda* under the title *Veda-Samhitā*, Parts I and II and the *Bhagavadgītā*. Prof. Likhitanon has translated jointly with Prof. Rungruang selections from the *Upaniṣads*.

Sanskrit studies in Thailand are pursued in a couple of centres the most important of which is the Department of Eastern Languages of the Chulalongkorn University. In this work has been carried out on a number of interesting and important subjects. So far six theses have been approved for the degree.

Some of the topics such as the *Passive and Causative Verbal System in Epic Sanskrit* are highly intricate requiring a degree of expert knowledge of Sanskrit grammar, considered difficult even in India by all standards, on the part of the researcher. Other topics like the *Cakravartin Kingship* though not so intricate do require a thorough knowledge of the history of the ancient period as also of texts to trace its theory and practice. Some of the topics like the *Indian Wedding Customs in the Vedic Period*, *Heroines of Kālidāsa's Dramas* and *Jester in Kālidāsa's Dramas* are comparatively easy. They also cannot admit of much originality, enough work on them having been done already. Besides the theses on which work has been done there are as many as fifteen others on which work is in progress. Of these eleven are pure Sanskrit topics; some of the more interesting of them being: *The Apsaras in Sanskrit Literature*, *Satī in Sanskrit Literature*, *Women's Rights and Duties in Sanskrit Legal Literature*, *Śabdāḷaṅkāras in the Buddha-*

9. Died a few years ago. Was Professor of Sanskrit in the Silpakorn University and was one of those few Thais who could speak in Sanskrit.

10. Wife of the late Minister of Education Mr. Pin Malakun.

carita and the *Nominal stem Formations and Compounds in the Nalopākhyāna*. There are at least five topics including the one: *God Indra in Sanskrit, Pali and Thai Literatures* on which a thesis has been produced and degree awarded, which are connected with Sanskrit and Pali both (or with Thai as seen above). They are: *Brahmā in Pali and Sanskrit Literatures, Garuḍas and Nāgas in Sanskrit and Pali Literatures, The Lotus in the Pali and Sanskrit Literatures, and Elephants in Sanskrit and Pali Literatures*. Some of the fifteen topics on which work is in progress in the Department such as the *Sūdras in the Vedic Age, Similes in Sanskrit Dramas, Childhood Ceremonies in Ancient India, Initiation Ceremony in Ancient India and Nāndī in Sanskrit Dramas*, cannot claim for themselves much originality and could well have been given up in preference to others, more original and thought-provoking. Nonetheless the volume of work being turned out by the Department is substantial enough to attract the appreciative notice of scholars.

Instances are not lacking in the Thai literature, old and new, where Sanskrit literature has been drawn upon for themes. As early as some 400 years back a wellknown Thai writer Sree Prajna had taken up for treatment in his work the Puranic theme of the romance of Aniruddha, grandson of Kṛṣṇa and Uṣā, daughter of Bāṇāsura.

Prosody is however, the field where the influence of Sanskrit is particularly marked. The names of quite a few of the Thai metres are derived from Sanskrit through Pali: e.g., Indravichien from Indravajrā, Indrawong from Indravaiṣā, Vaiṣattha from Vaiṣastha, Upachāt from Upajāti, Vicchummala from Vidyunmālā, Saddullavikkīlita from Sārdūlavikrīḍita, Phūchoṅkhaprayāt from Bhujāṅgaprayāta, Saddharā from Sragdharā, and so on. Some of the names of the metres in Thai and Sanskrit differ in only a letter here and there, e.g., Thai Salinī from Sanskrit Śālinī, Thai Vasantatilok from Sanskrit Vasantatilaka. Occasionally the original Sanskrit word without any phonetic modification is found in such names as Mālinī and Toṭaka. Curiously there are some Thai metres which have Sanskritic names but which, however, are not found in Sanskrit, such for instance, are Īdisam, Sanskrit Īdṛṣam, Upathitā Sanskrit Upasthitā, Kamalā and Citrapadā. There are five groups of metres in Thai of which the three Klong, Klon and Rai are typically Thai. The rest of the two, Kārb and Chan are Sanskritic in origin. Kārb is from Sanskrit Kāvya and Chan from Sanskrit Chanda or Chandas. Kārb is earlier. It has only two metres Indravichien, Sanskrit Indravajrā and Vasantatilok, Sanskrit Vasantatilaka. It does not follow the short and long, *laghu-guru*, syllable scheme. Probably there was no awareness of it when it came into vogue. In the earlier stages of development the name Indravajrā was also not in vogue. It was called Yānī from the first two syllables of the line: *yānīha bhūtāni samāgatāni*. Later the name Indravichien came to replace it. The Chan type of classification recognizes, thanks to the Sanskrit influence becoming much more pronounced, the short and long, *laghu-*

guru, scheme of syllables. It is the one which has all the Sanskritic metres including the ones, Indravicien and Vasantatilok forming part of Kārb.

Even though the Thais drew metres from Sanskrit, they did not leave them as they were; they introduced some innovations in them the most important of which was rhyme employed at regular well-defined intervals and one-line or two-line verses in contra-distinction to the four-line verse pattern of Sanskrit. The only four-line verse metres are the ones which are octosyllabic, a kind of system existing here too, e.g., Pathyāvat, Vicchummala (Sanskrit Vidyunnālā), Mānavaka and Citrapadā. The two - line verse - metres are the maximum: Indravichien (Indravajrā), Upendravichien (Upendravajrā), Upachāt (Upajāti), Vaṁsattha (Vaṁśastha), Indrawong (Indravaiṁśa), Vasantatilok (Vasantatilaka), Salinī (Śālinī), Upathitā (Upasthitā), Phūchoṅkhaprayāt (Bhujāṅgaprayāta), Totaka and Kamalā. The one - line - verse metres are the bigger ones like the Saddullavikkīlita (Śārdūlavikrīḍita), Saddharā (Śragdharā), and Mālinī.

It was some 200 years ago that Sanskrit metres came to be used in Thai poetry. Though they have been taken from Sanskrit, there is a departure from it in the trisyllables or the Gaṇas or the short and long, *laghu guru*, system of Sanskrit. There is no strict rule in it about the length of each syllable. In Thai poetry the rhythm is provided by the break-up of the line.

It is curious that some of the more popular metres of Sanskrit like Mandākrāntā, immortalized by Kālidāsa in his *Meghadūta*, are missing in Thai poetry. It is still more curious that the metres like Anuṣṭubh in which a substantial part of Sanskrit poetry is composed is found carrying an altogether different name of Pathyāvat or Paṭhyāvat in Thai poetry. Further, Pṛthvī or Vipulā which is the name of a particular metre in Sanskrit, is used in Thai for a variety of Pathyā or Anuṣṭubh, also called Śloka in Sanskrit.

A few specimens of Thai verses in Sanskrit metres would not be out of place here:

In Vasantatilaka:

*sae sap prasān duriyasangkhitaphāt ya pherī
srop sing pra dā pra du ca sī suralok cha lo long //*

« The sounds of the music blending with each other, the drum, the singing and everything in music, as if the entire band is transferred from the land of the gods. »

In Mālinī:

*pra futha kamala chiṁ chom
phoei kathāram pho thām pai //
anucha sathita doen dāi
nām sakun chanai sanoe riam //*

« The Buddha, having his heart gladdened started his enquiry, asking: my young one, where do you live, what is your family's name, please tell me. »

In Totaka:

*Ichana nan issaret
phra pravet vana phāi /
rahu thāna sabai
i riyā batha van //
phata se tanamūn
thā kophūn hariūban /
sukhu dom daru van
vara thep thavi ong //*

« At that moment Lord Siva entered into the private sector of his forest. He relaxed his activities at the foot of the white mountain. There he enjoyed himself most in that forest with another one, they were only two of them. »

In Bhujaṅgaprayāta:

*phākphūn phanāran cara saen sarān rom
noen rāb salab som pitsaploen caroen cai //
khōt khoen si khōn khau lae lam nau phanā lai
sūng liw lalān nāi ya na phon pramān mai //*

« At the surface of the forest, wandering very pleasantly sometimes hilly, sometimes plain, alternate properly, looking at it is pleasant to the heart. Small and high hills and peaks of the mountain and also the range of trees very tall. So many things appearing before eyes beyond counting. »

It may incidentally be mentioned that certain types of Thai poetry have Sanskritic names like Nirāt, Sanskrit Nirāśa, Lilit, Sanskrit Lalita.

As for the Sanskrit Mss., Thailand, surprisingly, is particularly deficient. Out of 57697 bundles¹¹ of Mss. with the National Library, Bangkok, there are only one or two bundles of Sanskrit Mss. Only recently a Mss. of the *Vairāgyasataka* on palm leaf belonging to the period of King Rama III has come to light.

Sanskrit begins to appear in inscriptions in Thailand from the sixth century A.D. onwards. So far some 44 of them have been discovered of which ten have been published in book form¹², the rest of them are appearing periodically in journals. They are of both types, very short;

11. A bundle means a lot. It may have sometimes 4 or 5 Mss.

12. Recueil des Inscriptions du Siam, Deuxieme Partie: Inscriptions Dvāravati de Śrīvijaya et de lavo, editées et traduites par G. Coedès, Department of Fine Arts, Bangkok, 1961.

only a word or two of Sanskrit in them; like the one from Nakhon Si Thammarat which has just the word *Liṅgeśvaram* in it; and of good length such as the ones from U Bon, 6th Cen. A.D., Nakhom Si Thammarat 1318 B.E. or 775 A.D.; Panom Rung, Buriram Province, 1660 B.E. or 1117 A.D.; Huaviang Temple, Jaya Distt., Surathani Province, 1799 B.E. or 1206 A.D. and so on. Sanskrit expression in some of these inscriptions is of very high order. What a beautiful, though none too original Utprekṣā, Poetic Fancy, is found in an inscription of as early a period as the 6th cen. A.D.:

*jitvemam deśam akhilam giriśasyeha bhūbhṛti
liṅgam nīveśayāmāsa jayacihnam ivātmanah //*

«He (Citrasena called Mahendravarmā after coronation) conquered this entire country and set up the Śivaliṅga, as a mark of his victory as it were.»

As one more example of beautiful Sanskrit may be taken up the following couplet from an inscription from Panom Rung, Buriram Province (1660 B.E. or 1117 A.D.):

*yo'sau parān dhāma[-] bhujena jetum
ājau vinā savyabhujam nu śaktaḥ /
punar jayan savyabhujena kāryam
savyāpasavyāhitam icchati sma //*

«Who in the battlefield even without the help of the right arm was able to conquer his enemies by the sheer dint of his arm-like prowess. Still, conquering them with his right arm, he wanted to accomplish the task possible of achievement by both the arms.»

The influence of Sanskrit on Thai is all-pervasive. There may be few fields which may not have come under its impact. A study of Thai from the point of view of Sanskrit content in it may be highly rewarding though none too easy.

The present essay may not be complete without reference to the Thai scholars of Sanskrit. Their smallness in number is more than made up by the devotion and the total dedication that they bring to bear on the study of the language and its literature. Headed by Prof. Visudh Busyakul, the doyen of Sanskrit studies in Thailand, they are busy contributing their mite in analysing and laying bare the charming wealth of Sanskrit literature. Professor Busyakul's work pertains to a number of topics. He has brought out a collection of his writings under the title: *Visudh's Nibandh*, writings of Visudh. His colleague in his Department, the Department of Eastern Languages, Chulalongkorn University, Dr. Pranee Lapanich has devoted years to the study of Kṣemendra, particularly his *Kalāvīlāsa*. Prof. Seksri Yamnadda in the Deptt. of Thai of the same University has published some three articles on Sanskrit subjects like the *Sun in Vedic Literature*, *Women in Sanskrit Literature* and *Aśvins*. Miss Subrangsu Indraruna of the Sri-

nakharinwirot University who had earlier produced a valuable thesis, as stated in the preceding pages, on *Passive and Causative Verbal Systems in Epic Sanskrit* is at the moment working on the project of a comparative study of the Thai and Sanskrit words. Prof. Chamlong Sarapadnuke of the Silpakorn University is a prolific writer having a large number of publications, a majority of them small monographs, to his credit. They are: *Practical Sanskrit Grammar*, Part I published, Parts II and III coming, *Saṃskṛtarācanāvidhi*, (Sanskrit composition), *Saṃskṛtapriyadarśiprasastayah*, (Inscriptions of Aśoka rendered into Sanskrit), *Mahāyānabauddhagranthāḥ* (Prajñāpāramitāhrdayasūtra and Sukhavatīvyūhasūtra), *Saṃskṛta-Dharmmapada* (Śyāmaka and Arhatvargas only), *Saṃskṛta Jātaka*, Part II, *Introduction to Rgveda*, *Manual of Vedic Grammar*, *Samāsa*, *Taddhita*, *Saṃjñāvidhāna*, *Sandhi* and *Avyaya*.

Dr. Chirapat Prapandvidya of the same University has worked for his Ph. D. degree on a *Cultural Study of the Dharmāraṇyapurāṇa*. Prof. Choosakdi Dipayagasorn of the National Library, Bangkok, has worked on the Inscriptions of Thailand. He has edited and published quite a few of them in journals. Prof. Prayoon Santankuro of the Mahamakuta Buddhist University, Bangkok has published a work on *Sandhi*.

Two of Thai scholars, Miss Supraphan Na Bang Chang, and Mrs. Manipin are working currently for their Doctorate degrees in Sanskrit in the Universities of Kandy, Ceylon and London, England.

Thai scholars have done valuable work in the field of Sanskrit lexicography too. There are at least three dictionaries by them, two trilingual and one quadrilingual:

- (1) *Sanskrit-Thai-English Abhidhāna* by Captain Luang Bowornbannarak.
- (2) *Sanskrit-Pali-English Dictionary* by Krom Pra Chantaburi Narunat.
- (3) *Pali-Sanskrit-Thai-English Dictionary* by Chalad Bunloy Prayut Prayutto.

Thailand's links with India go back to hundreds of years. And the strongest of these links, apart from that of religion, is provided by Sanskrit with which the Thais developed a sense of belonging since very early times.