AN EXAMINATION OF THE VOWELS AND FINAL CONSONANTS IN CORRESPONDENCES BETWEEN PRE-ANGKOR AND MODERN KHMER

Preparation of Table 1
Summary of the information provided by Table 1
PA-MK correspondences and OK Phonology
Appendix of examples with reference to Table 1

This study is intended to be complementary to a paper on the correspondences between Old and Modern Khmer initial consonants (Jacob: 1976). Only Pre-Angkor Khmer (PA) is dealt with here, however, and not the Angkor dialect (A). It seemed desirable to limit the investigation to PA, partly because of the inclusion of A, with its different vowel-notations, would cause confusion and partly because the author now has a complete card-index of PA, whereas that for A is still in progress.

The majority of correspondences between Old Khmer (OK) and Modern Khmer (MK) involve the same final consonant at both stages of the language. Two regular exceptions to this are final r, which has turned to zero in MK (except in the Battambang area) and final s, which has completely merged with the final aspirate in MK. An example of each final consonant of PA with its MK correspondence is given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Final consonant</th>
<th>PA orthography</th>
<th>MK pronunciation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>sruk</td>
<td>/sro:k/</td>
<td>inhabited area, district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŋ</td>
<td>sron</td>
<td>/sroŋ/</td>
<td>bathe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>roc</td>
<td>/roː:r/</td>
<td>wane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŋ</td>
<td>aŋ</td>
<td>/aŋ/</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>ket</td>
<td>/kast/</td>
<td>wax, be born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>män</td>
<td>/miːan/</td>
<td>have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>cap</td>
<td>/cap/</td>
<td>seize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>psam</td>
<td>/phsom/</td>
<td>unite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td>toy</td>
<td>/daoy/</td>
<td>along</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r - zero</td>
<td>dår</td>
<td>/ṭːə/</td>
<td>claim v.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>jmol</td>
<td>/χmːol/</td>
<td>male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>jāhv</td>
<td>/χːəv/</td>
<td>barter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>thās</td>
<td>/thaː/</td>
<td>tray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>vrah</td>
<td>/prəːh/</td>
<td>holy; god</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero</td>
<td>lvā</td>
<td>/liːː/</td>
<td>fig</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These regular correspondences between 15 PA and 13 MK final consonants were taken as the basis of the comparison. A table was made, using over 200 well-established correspondences, so as to find out their frequency and versatility of occurrence with vowels and arrange them in order. This is the order in which they are presented in Table 1, except
that h is placed next to s for easy comparison.

Up to this point, the enquiry had been made with only established vocabulary. When the validity of certain empty slots in the table was tested by reference to some less certain correspondences, however, it became apparent that a much wider variety of vowels and final consonants was probably in operation. The PA card-index was therefore searched for additional probable correspondences, as much in order to avoid claiming empty slots mistakenly as to try to fill more slots. This led to the preparation of Table 1, which forms the basis of this study.

PREPARATION OF TABLE 1

The vocabulary used comprises:

ESTABLISHED CORRESPONDENCES. These consist of (i) correspondences established by the occurrence of the PA form in a grammatical context with clear meaning and (ii) correspondences established by analogy, the PA form being in a context which clearly indicates the kind of word to be expected. In a place name, for example vrai forest and stuk pool are regularly followed by names of trees. Thus, a word such as ramteñ, which on K. 430 follows vrai, and which also has a form which suggests the correspondence, is held to be an established correspondence for MK /rümdeŋ/ amomum galanga (zingibéracées).

NAMES. Although, as has just been stated, words occurring in place-names may be held to be established when the context makes their nature clear, other words occurring either as place names or personal names or parts of such names may be held to be probable but not established correspondences. Cambodian names, even now, are often names of animals, plants or objects; or they may be descriptive of physical or mental characteristics. Where such words are used as material for the present study the PA word is followed by ‘N.’ in the Appendix and, if the vowel-symbol in the table depends entirely on examples which are names, it is followed by an asterisk.

In identifying correspondences of the two categories just described, certain regular relationships between PA and MK initial clusters were regarded as being dependable. These are:
(i) The relationship between a MK base and a PA form consisting of base with name-prefix, kN. This prefix, which consists of initial k, neutral vowel a, as junction, and nasal consonant, was tentatively included in an analysis of OK affixes (Jacob:1963, pp.69-70). This now seems well substantiated by the preponderance of names beginning with kN in contrast to other prefixes and by information supplied by Mr. Kuoch Hak Srea, that a kN name-prefix is used as a term of endearment before girls’ names still. Some examples are given below with a reference to the number of an inscription on which they occur and the MK equivalent:

kañcañ 562 /caŋ/ malaria  kandai 561 /tèy/ cloth bag
kañjähv 1030 /cl:jv/ barter  kansuc 582 /soc/ N. of insect
Vowels and final consonants in Khmer

(iii) The relationship in which the PA form has the 'wrong' consonant as the first consonant of an initial sequence, i.e. surd where one expects sonant or vice versa. This type of relationship was accounted for as being due to loss of voicing in this pre-consonantal context and examples were given (Jacob: 1976).

Table 1 represents the result of examining over 550 correspondences. Down the left side are arranged all MK vowels, the pairs of vowels produced on the two registers being kept together in accordance with the written symbol with which they are now spelt, since the written tradition is held to represent a development which has taken place from a time when the surd and sonant initial consonants genuinely represented surd and sonant initials and the vowel-symbols did not yet represent vowels diverging according to register. In each slot is placed one or more vowel-symbols, representing PA spellings found in the correspondences. An asterisk indicates that the only examples available are names. For symbols without an asterisk, established correspondences are offered. The Appendix gives as far as possible two examples for each vowel-symbol in the table, reading from left to right.

Notes with reference to Table 1

(i) It is held that the vowel occurring before y, v, c and n and having in those contexts, in MK, the realisations ay/øy, au/øy, ac/êc and ap/êp, according to register, may best be regarded as being a plus final consonant. Strictly according to the conventions of the present table, their representations on the second register would be: ëy, ëv, ëc and ëp. 
(ii) Short e/ê and i in MK occur, in native words, apart from ê in êp and êy mentioned in (i), only before h. Since MK long e: and i: cannot occur before h, the few examples of MK eh, êh and ih are entered along the e:e: and i: lines to save space.

SUMMARY OF THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN TABLE 1

1. USE OF THE PA VOWEL-SYMBOLS

(i) Consistency. It will be observed that in the case of two MK vowel-pairs,
PA correspondences were represented consistently by one vowel-symbol with all final consonants. Thus PA vowels ~ MK ao/בלות were exclusively represented by o and PA vowels ao/ salopes were exclusively represented by e.

Two other pairs were almost as consistent: PA vowels ~ MK i: were exclusively written with á, (though a few PA words of which the vowel ~ MK partner vowel a: were written with a) and PA vowels ~ MK ae/ were all represented by e, with the exception of kamratán (written kamrateń in the A period, however) and one non-established word.

The short-vowel symbols, i and u, were fairly consistently used to write respectively the vowels ~ MK j//ü and o/ǜ. In each case, however, some confusion of spelling with the more open vowels, e on the one hand and o on the other, took place. Open i and u also represent vowels ~ MK iy/i: (open) and o:y/ǜ:. The extent to which i and u occur apart from these uses is minimal.

While á, i and u were chiefly used to write vowels ~ one MK vowel-pair, a, o and e were used to write vowels corresponding with a variety of MK vowel-pairs. Table 2 summarises these uses.

(ii) Register difference. PA vowels ~ MK vowels of one register are sometimes represented by one vowel while correspondences with the MK partner vowel on the other register are not. It seems that this may indicate the beginning of a differentiation between the vowels of the two registers. The details are therefore summarised here:

(i) As was mentioned above, a occurs as well as á to represent PA vowels ~ MK a:, but not i:.

(ii) u occurs alongside o or a to represent the vowel ~ MK ûa, but not û.

(iii) The experimental va, vâ were used in the PA period to write the diphthong ~ MK û: in second register words only.

(iv) The experimental ya, ye were used in the PA period to write the diphthong ~ MK û in first register words, while ya, vâ occur in words ~ MK second register words.

2. MK VOWELS AND FINAL CONSONANTS FOR WHICH PA HAS NO CORRESPONDENCES

(i) The first observation which must be made is that MK úa/ǜa and û: have no entries in the Table. To the best of the writer's knowledge, no correspondence for any of these vowels occurred in PA or A. The first occurrences which are datable are probably the following, all Thai loanwords, found in the Middle Khmer inscriptions (Inscriptions Modernes d'Angkor): mûa on No. 8 (1625 A.D.)1. 19; krûa and (rû) -rûa on No. 12 (1638 A.D.), 11. 16 and 19. Iva:-i(-ôj) occurs on No. 38 (1701 A.D.), 1.26.

Mk ú is represented by only one correspondence in PA, gi, gui, ~ /kû:/ that is, is. In MK, although it is not widely distributed, ú: occurs before n, t, p and h.

(ii) An examination of the MK vowels and final consonants which are not