

## Laotian

### 1. Current status

No romanization system for Laotian has been approved at the United Nations conferences on the standardization of geographical names. In 1966 the BGN and the PCGN jointly adopted a system of romanization that was based on the Lao Commission Nationale de Toponymie (CNT) system, to which a complete vowel table and supplementary notes had been added.

### 5. Other systems of romanization

The **BGN/PCGN 1966 System** gives the following romanization<sup>1</sup>:

#### Consonant characters

ກ k (k)	ຈ ch	ດ d (t)	ບ b (p)	ຢ y	ຫ h
ຂ kh	ສ s	ຕ t	ປ p	ຮ r	ອ ( <sup>4</sup> )
ຄ kh	ຊ x	ຖ th	ຜ ph	ລ l <sup>2</sup>	ຮ h
ງ ng (ng)	ຍ gn (y) <sup>1</sup>	ທ th	ຝ f	ວ v, o <sup>3</sup>	
		ນ n (n)	ຟ ph		
			ຟ f		
			ມ m		

<sup>1</sup> variation: ງ (used at the end of a syllable: ຂາງ *khay*; after ຫ: ຫງາບ *gnap*; and between consonants: ສງງ *siang*)

<sup>2</sup> variation: ລ (ຫຼາມ *lam*)

<sup>3</sup> see note 4

<sup>4</sup> see note 3

Note. Laotian characters are romanized in two ways depending on whether they denote syllable-initials or syllable-finals. The romanization of syllable-finals is indicated in brackets. Some other consonant characters which are not accompanied by a vowel character form a full syllable when used within a word: ຂ *kkha*, ຄ *kkha*, ຈ *tcha*, ສ *tza*, ຊ *tza*, ຕ *tta*, ຖ *ttha*, ທ *ttha*, ປ *ppa*, ຟ *ppha*, ຟ *pfa*.

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<sup>1</sup> For full text and explanations see the original table in *Romanization Systems and Roman-script Spelling Conventions*. Prepared by the U.S. Board on Geographic Names Foreign Names Committee Staff. Published by the Defense Mapping Agency. 1994, pp. 63-67.

**Vocalic nuclei** (• stands for any consonant character)

•ະ	a	ເ•	é	ເໂະ	eu	ໂວະ	oua
••	a	ແ•ະ	è	ເໂ•	eu	ໂວ•	oua
•າ	a	ແໂ•	è	ເໂ	eu	ໂວ	oua
•ົ	i	ແ•	è	ເໂ•	eu	•ວ•	oua
•ົ	i	ໂໂະ	ô	ເໂໂະ	ia	ໂ•	ai
•ູ	u	ໂໂ•	ô	ໂໂ•	ia	ໃ•	ai
•ູ	u	ໂ•	ô	ເໂໂ	ia	ເໂາ	ao
•, ັ	ou	ເໂາະ	o	ໂໂ•	ia	ໂາ	am
•ູ	ou	ໂໂ•	o	ເໂໂະ	ua		
ເໂະ	é	ໂ	o	ເໂໂ•	ua		
ເໂ•	é	ໂໂ•	o	ເໂໂ	ua		

**Reduplicating mark**

ງ (e.g. ແຊອງ *xèoxèo*)

**Notes**

1. Tone marks ະ, ັ, ື, ັ should not be romanized.
2. At the beginning of a syllable, the character ທ unaccompanied by a vowel or tone mark and occurring immediately before ມ *gn*, ນ *n*, ມ *m*, ຣ *r*, ລ *l*, or ວ *v* should generally not be romanized: ຫລວງຟຣະບາງ *Louangphrabang*. Often ligatures ທມ, ທນ, ທຸ are used in such cases.
3. At the beginning of a word ອ should not be romanized: ອີກ *ik*. At the beginning of a syllable within a word the letter should be romanized by a hyphen: ຊະເອມ *xa-ém*, ບັນແກ້ງອີ *Ban Kèng-I*.
4. The character ວ at the beginning of a syllable should be romanized *v*: ທັນວາ *thanva*. As the second character of a combination, ວ should be romanized *o*. At the end of a syllable the character is romanized *o* generally (ນາວ *nao*, ແກວ *kèo*, ດຽວ *diao*) but after *i* it is romanized *ou* (ຄົວ *khiou*, ຕົວ *tiou*).
5. In consonant combinations where the second character is ຣ *r*, ລ *l* or ວ *v*, it should be romanized character by character, even if the second character may represent no pronounced sound: ບ້ານວັດຟຣະໄຊ *Ban Vatphraxai*, ຄູ້ສຳຮຽນ *Khlistsatian*, ສວາງ *soay*, ແຂວງ *khoèng*.
6. In some words of foreign origin the variant ຣ *r* occurs: ເບີຣ໌ *beur*.