

Karen / ကညီ Ka Nyaw

transliteration: Burmese (extended), romanization: KNAB 2009

There are several Karen literary languages, the main being Sgaw (S), Western Pwo (W) and Eastern Pwo (E). Their main characters coincide with that of Burmese but marking tones is different both in Sgaw and Pwo Karen. The spellings are relatively phonetic.

I. Consonant characters (if some characters do not occur in all three languages, the initial letter indicates the language where it is used)

1	က		k	<i>k</i>	20	ဓ	E	dh	<i>d</i>
2	ခ		kh	<i>hk</i>	21	န		n	<i>n</i>
3	ဂ		g	<i>gh</i> [ɣ]	22	ပ		p	<i>p</i>
4	ဃ		gh	<i>kh</i> [x]	23	ဖ		ph	<i>hp</i>
5	င		ṅ	<i>ng</i>	24	ဗ	E	b	<i>b</i>
6	စ		c	<i>s</i>	25	ဆ		bh	<i>b</i>
7	ဆ		ch	<i>hs</i>	26	မ		m	<i>m</i>
8	ဇ		j	<i>z</i>	27	ယ		y	<i>y</i>
9	ဈ	E	jh	<i>z</i>	28	ရ		r	<i>r</i>
10	ရှ	WS	rh	<i>sh</i>	29	လ		l	<i>l</i>
11	ည		ñ	<i>ny</i>	30	ဝ		w	<i>w</i>
12	ဋ	E	ṭ	<i>t</i>	31	သ/ဝ		s*	<i>th</i>
13	ဌ	E	ṭh	<i>t</i>	32	ဟ		h	<i>h</i>
14	ဍ	E	ḍ	<i>d</i>	33	အ		x	'
15	ဎ	E	ḍh	<i>d</i>	34	ဓ		q	(-)
16	က	E	ṇ	<i>n</i>	35	ပ	W	pg	<i>pw</i>
17	တ		t	<i>t</i>	36	ဟ	E	yg	<i>yw</i>
18	ထ		th	<i>ht</i>	37	ဃ	E	ghg	<i>khw</i>
19	ဒ		d	<i>d</i>					

* The first in Sgaw, the second in Western Pwo.

II. Special subscript characters (က stands for any base character)

1	က _၂	-y	<i>y</i>	3	က _၂	-l	<i>l</i>
2	က _၃	-r	<i>r</i>	4	က _၃	-w	<i>w</i>

5 ကု -g g

III. Vowel characters (က stands for any consonant character, the first column contains Sgaw, the 2nd column Pwo characters)

1	ကါ	ကါ	ā	a	6	ကူ	ကူ	ū	u
2	ကံ	ကံ	i	i	7	က့	က့	e	e
3	ကၢ	ကၢ	ö	oe [ɤ]	8	ကဲ	ကဲ	ä	ae [ɛ]
4	-	ကါ	ü	u [ʔ]	9	ကိ	ကိ	o	o
5	ကု	ကု	u	ue [u]	10	ကီ	ကီ	ō	aw [ɔ]

IV. Tone marks (1st – Sgaw, 2nd – Pwo marks)

1	ကါ	ကs	^	kâ	4	ကိ	ကl	`	kà
2	ကံ	ကၢ	ˇ	kă	5	ကၢ	ကၢ	~	kã
3	ကး	ကး	´	ká	6	-	ကၢ	-	kā

Additional tone marks in Western Pwo: ကၢ ˇ 2 *kă*, ကၢ ~ 2 *kã*, ကၢ - 2 *kā*.

V. Other symbols

1 ကိ " (absence of a vowel)

Examples of transliteration and romanization

ကိၤသုလုၤ *kō^süle~ Kâwthulē*, ကညီကိၤစဲၣ် *kañōkō^să` Ka Nyaw Kâwsàe* 'Karen State', ယိၤကိၤ ~ ကိၤကိၣ်တဲၣ် *yo~kō^, kō^kyō`tä` Yōkâw, Kâwchàwtàe* 'Thailand', ကိၤပယိၤ *kō^payō~ Kâwpayāw* 'Burma', ဒဝဲၣ် *dawă^ Dawâe* 'Tavoy', တနီၣ်သရံၣ်ကျိၣ် *tanōsari`klo Tanawthari Klo* 'Tenasserim'; other place names in Karen: ကဆီၣ်ဝါ *kachōwā Kahsawwa*, အမိၤ *xamo~ Amō*, မဲၣ်သမံၣ်ထံၣ် *mă^sami^tha` Mâesamî Thà*, မဲၣ်သမံၣ်ခံ *mă^sami^khi Mâesamî Hki*, မိထံၣ် *mōtha` Mawthà*.

Sgaw text: ပုၤကိးၤလၢ မ့ၢ်တၢ်ဒိသိးသိး လၢတၢ်သိၣ်တၢ်သီအဲ မဲၣ်ညါဒီး ကြးန့ၢ်ဘၣ် *pga~ko^pa~ me^ta^d^so^so^ löta^so^ta^sōxa măññädō´ krō`ne^bha´* — *Pwākópā mêtâdthóthó loetâthòtâhaw^a mäenyadáw króenêbá*.

Pwo text: ပုၣ်ကိၣ်ဂၢၤ လၢပုၣ်ရၢအဖုၤအဂီၢ် အခရၢဖိၤလၢဂၢၤအဝိၣ် လၢဆၢမၤန့ၣ်ခဲးဂၢၤ *pgako^pa~di^ löpgaša~xaphuxagō xakharō^2pho^lapa~xaso^ löchōma~niša~kho^pa´* — *Pwakôpâdî loepwashā^ahpue^agaw^ ahkarôehpôlapā^asô loehsoemānishāhkópá*.

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