Notes on names and spellings

Note on names

In the different ethnographies, I have changed some names and not others. I have done this taking into account that some names are in the public domain, or sufficiently in the distant past, and therefore do not need to be disguised. Others—and the nuns in particular—would still be identifiable and I have not been in a position to ask their permission to do so. I have therefore changed them.

For Aboriginal people, I have checked whether there is an issue in the Pilbara, as there is in some other parts of Australia, when I make reference to those who are deceased. In general, there is no formal customary suppression of these names, although there is some avoidance in practice. For those still living, I have again checked with them or with family members to ensure that there is no concern about naming them. Where there appears to be a problem, I have not used the names of individuals. Where the text refers to ‘Roebourne people’ the reference is to residents of the town and surrounding small communities, regardless of tribal or linguistic affiliation. Any reference to Pilbara native title groups includes those living in the Pilbara and elsewhere.

For referencing Thai individuals or material, I have followed the Thai custom of referring to people’s given names rather than their surnames. Prime Minister Kukrit Pramoj is referred to as Prime Minister Kukrit; the scholar Thongchai Winichakul is referred to as Thongchai. In the list of references and the index, Thai writers are listed according to their given names followed by the surnames, for example, Chai-Anan Samudavanija 1992.

Note on spellings

Thai spellings are largely based on the Thai-English Student’s Dictionary.\(^1\) Although other dictionaries are more recent, Haas’s work remains a standard text. Thai proper names and the names of festivals have been spelt using a system that preserves Thai orthography. As a result, the pronunciation cannot always be guessed—for example, Winichakul is pronounced with a final ‘n’ rather than

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\(^1\) Haas (1964).
‘I’; in Pramoj, the final ‘j’ is pronounced as a ‘t’. Other words—for example, the names of political parties—are romanised using a phonemic system. With these, I have chosen the form that seems to have most common usage.²

Spanish spellings are unproblematic.

For Pilbara Aboriginal groups, I have generally kept those used at the time, except where spelling through the native title process has become current. Ngarluma and Yindjibarndi, for example, have changed and come into accepted use; for Panyjima I have used the spelling Bunjima, which appears in native title applications. Others—for example, Innawonga/Yinhawanga or Marthuthunera/Mardudhunera—use different spellings in different situations.

² I am indebted to Dr Adam Chapman for checking and updating as necessary my spelling of Thai words.