

Words of Magic

IN WHICH THE AUTHOR EXAMINES THE MYSTERIOUS LANGUAGE OF WIZARDS AND THOSE STEEPED IN THE ARCANES LORE OF MAGIC, WITH RELEVANT PICTORAL REFERENCES.

The image of a magister, swathed in the shifting robes of his order and chanting the syllables of some strange and arcane language, is famous throughout this good Empire. I imagine that many who have lived within our Empire's great cities have met or seen a spell-caster such as I describe, while the peasants and farmers of the countryside will undoubtedly know of them from a thousand folktales and legends.

And yet, such is the commonality of this image in life, literature and folktale, it seems somewhat odd to me that so few seem to question it. We non-magisters seem to take it as written that spell-casters must use strange and arcane languages to cast their spells; but why is this? Why do spell-casters, of all kinds, use strange and occult languages to enact their conjurations? Is Reikspiel not sufficient for spell-casting? And if not, why not? Perhaps this seems like a minor consideration to the casual reader, but I believe it to be a fundamental question as to the nature of magic and spell-casting.

According to my esteemed colleague and friend, Magister Patriarch Verspasian Kant of the College of Light, a spell is the process by which a magister, sorcerer, or any other magic-user, binds Aethyric energy to his will and sculpts it into a definite form with a specific purpose. Magister Kant maintains that a spell, at its most basic, is the imposition of mortal will and certainty upon the infinite possibility and uncertainty of Aethyric energy (most often called magic). For, he says, the Aethyr and the 'energy' that forms it is the metaphysical existence of infinite and raw potential, or perhaps more specifically, the existence of infinite, unfulfilled and largely unrealised potential. To Magister Kant, the Aethyr is both the 'Potential Reality' that is the opposite of what he describes as the 'Actual Reality' of the Mortal Realms, and is also the catalyst for, and by-product of, all change and growth within the Mortal Realms.

Magister Kant goes on to say that it is precisely because of the Aethyr's complete opposition to the Mortal Realms that the

Aethyr's energies are drawn to the certainties of their mortal opposites. This is perhaps related to the reason why mortals are drawn so acutely to the uncertainties of dreams, possibility and therefore magic. Indeed, Magister Kant believes that the one certainty of the Aethyr is that as a natural product of its existence it seeks to draw its opposites, (being reason, purpose and certainty) unto itself, and thereby fulfil, or at least realise, the infinite and unrealised potential that it is formed from. This is demonstrated most obviously when Aethyric energy seeps into the Mortal Realms and acquires for itself laws and provisos that it almost certainly does not possess within the infinite uncertainty of the Aethyr. For example, its refraction into the eight colours of magic as soon as it crosses the metaphysical boundaries between the Metaphysical and Physical Realms.

But, just as Aethyric energy is drawn to, and seeks to interact with, the physicality and actuality of the Mortal Realms, it also pulls concept unto itself, and so it is that spell-casting can come to be. Magister Kant is suggesting that the art of binding magic and casting a spell is the art of imposing a definite idea or concept upon the entirely indefinite and chaotic potential that is the Aethyr and its energy, with the goal of harnessing that force, to achieve the specific end that is encapsulated within the concept of the spell.

To postulate within the paradigm proposed by Magister Kant, one could say that, despite the fact the force we call magic is drawn to physical things and seeks to interact with them, it is still entirely random and uncertain in its nature. Although will and intellect can gather, bind, and order magic into a spell, magic is so diffusive and powerful that it takes very specific and crystalline thoughts, concepts and directions to bind it,^o without leaving any loophole through which it can seep out and therefore ruin the spell. If the concept of any given spell could be considered a kind of metaphysical container, then magic naturally flows towards the weakest point in the container. So spells must be absolutely precise in structure and specific

in purpose, otherwise the magic begins to unbind itself and run amok.

To prevent this from happening, spell-casters must use incredibly specific formulae to bind and weave magic into spells – formulae that leave no room at all for the magic to leak free. In order to create these flawless conceptual traps to bind magic, I have learnt that the magisters of the Colleges of Magic use a language they call the ‘lingua praestantia’ to enunciate their spells – a language that was taught to them by none other than that great High Mage of myth and history, the founder of the Great Colleges of Magic, Teclis of Ulthuan.

Though it is said to be an even more complicated language than the tonal language of distant Cathay, I am told that the lingua praestantia still only a simplified and dialectical version of the Asur’s own language, Eltharin, which is in itself is fabled to be a devolved and very simplified version of the language spoken by those ancient, godlike beings the Asur call the ‘Old Ones’, or at least so Magister Kant tells me. It is worth noting that many of the blasphemous texts, which I have been forced to read in the course of this investigation, have suggested that the language spoken by these near mythical sorcerer-mystics is in fact Anoqeyân, the language that, according to legend, is spoken by both gods and daemons. If this is true, then the language that our good Empire’s sanctioned magisters use to cast their spells is related to the hellish language of daemons, and also the divine language of the gods – a shocking realisation indeed, at least for a man of faith such as myself.

However, the relationship between these languages must surely be a tenuous one, and there is considerable debate amongst the scholars of the Colleges of Magic as to whether these ‘Old Ones’ (if they existed at all), learnt their language from the gods and daemons of the Aethyr, or vice-versa. For

himself, Magister Kant believes that Anoqeyân was indeed the creation of these ‘Old Ones’, and that they were the first and only beings to fully identify and quantify every single thing, state and process within the mortal plane of existence, and almost every single thing, state and process that was possible through and in the Aethyr. In addition to this, Magister Kant also believes that Anoqeyân, the divine-tongue, has a life of its own, contracting and expanding with every dream and every thought, of any and all mortals and immortals, even as the Aethyr does.

I cannot comment on these assertions. Before I began this investigation into the ways and means of gods and daemons, I, like the vast majority of the academic community, had assumed that Anoqeyân was just a myth. However, if Magister Kant is correct in his beliefs regarding the lingua praestantia and its genealogy, I think it could be said that to possess a knowledge, of even a considerably devolved and dialectical version, of Anoqeyân (as the lingua praestantia is said to be), would denote a grasp of concepts and processes that are otherwise, unknown or inexpressible, in and through, the mortal languages – hence the lingua praestantia’s pre-eminence as the language of spell-casting, precisely because it is so exhaustively specific.



CONCERNING THE LINGUA PRAESTANTIA

Even the simplest word of the lingua praestantia is incredibly complex. Whatever the enchantment, shadings of rhythm, accent, pitch, duration, volume, timbre, and so many other factors, govern a host of critical elements, any of which, if enunciated incorrectly, will certainly spoil the effect of the spell. Only the rarest individual with the combined gifts of the voice and ear of a temple choir soloist and the intelligence, memory, and wit of the finest scholar can hope to master the subtle chords of the lingua praestantia.

Further, a magister must have also been blessed with a powerful Aethyric organ (known variously as the "Mind" or "Psyche"), so that he can bind the resonance of the words to the shifting winds of magic, and thereby produce the desired magical effect. For most would-be spell-casters, this Aethyric component of the lingua praestantia is hardest to master, but excellence in this exercise is the crucial difference between the lowly hedgewizard who uses mundane language and primitive psychical techniques to cast the simplest of spells, and the more puissant practitioners of the Arcane Arts that study and teach within our Empire's great colleges.

~ Nephasian Kant, Magister-Patriarch of the College of Light.

UNPACKING THE LINGUA PRAESTANTIA

In the following piece I shall look at some of the basic syntax, grammar and vocabulary of the lingua praestantia, bearing in mind that, even were I to know more than just the rawest basics of this arcane language (which I do not), I have neither the time nor the space here to investigate it to the degree that would do this immensely complicated language justice. Indeed, without actually hearing these words spoken by someone truly proficient in the language, it is unlikely that the one would be able to grasp the very precise and musical nature of its pronunciation just by reading the following guide.

The more widely educated amongst those scholars who read this piece might well detect similarities between various aspects of the lingua praestantia and the languages of the Dawi and Asur, not to mention the various dialects of the so-called 'Dark Tongue' spoken by the multifarious followers of Chaos. Whether this relation owes more to the common ancestry of these languages (in relation to Anogyán), or because of some kind of 'cross pollination' between the languages of the dwarfs, elves, and the arcane language of the Empire's Magisters, is anyone's guess.

Though not quite as complex as Eltharin, each individual word of the lingua praestantia encompasses a myriad of associated meanings and concepts. It is undoubtedly for this reason that the lingua praestantia is the most appropriate language of spell-casting and ritual amongst the vast majority of spell-casters in the Old World. A less specific language (like our own Reikspiel) has far less power to evoke and control the mystic forces of the Aethyr, and leaves more room for error while a spell is being cast.

The lingua praestantia is rich in words and phrases that express the mystical, arcane and complex cosmology of both the mortal universe and the Aethyr. Although it is convenient to attach basic meanings to these words (as indeed I have done in the following section of this investigation), each and every one of them is imbued with far greater and deeper significance. Indeed, depending on the context of the sentence or ritual that they are referenced within, many of the core words of the lingua praestantia can have more than one meaning – meanings that might seem contradictory.

In addition to this, the lingua praestantia is a largely agglutinative language, which means that the meaning of each of the root words can be altered by the addition of prefixes and suffixes to bring out the various more esoteric references, tenses, contexts and subtexts locked within them.

There are many different sounds in the alphabet of the lingua praestantia that are used in our everyday usage of Reikspiel, or in most of the other languages and dialects of our beloved Empire. Yet I have been told that, despite the complexities involved in pronouncing the syllables of the lingua praestantia, even they are as nothing next to some of the other dialectical derivatives of Anoqueyân, some of which are said to possess as many consonant and vowel sounds as the mortal tongue and vocal chords can generate, and indeed some that the mortal tongue and vocal chords cannot.

It is for this reason that I have included spellings using the phonetic alphabet devised by the Magisters of the Colleges of Magic (based around the familiar alphabet of Reikspiel), of some the most common sounds used within the lingua praestantia. Correct pronunciation of phrases is of paramount importance for the successful casting of spells, or, at least, so I have been told. Here follow the most commonly used letters of the Magisters' phonetic alphabet with a pronunciation guide:

VOWEL SOUNDS:

'a' – as said in 'as'

'ä' – said like the 'a' in 'harm'

'â' – short, said like the 'u' in 'cut'

'e' – as said in 'yes'

'i' – as said in 'imp'

'o' – short, as said in 'hot'

'ö' – said like the 'er' in 'thinker', only more stretched.

'ô' – very short, said like the 'oo' in 'good'

'u' – short, said a bit like the 'oo' in 'too'

'œ' – said like the 'ee' in 'sleep'

CONSONANT SOUNDS:

'b' – soft, as said in 'battle'

'c' – said like the 'j' in 'jewel'

'ç' – said like the 'ch' in 'champion'

'f' – soft, as said in 'frenzy'

'g' – hard, as said in 'great'

'h' – as said in the word 'hate', but pronounced a bit harder and shorter.

'j' – said like the 's' in 'pleasure'

'k' – hard, said like the 'c' in 'cut'

'p' – hard, as said in 'peasant'

'q' – a tricky one. A short, hard glottal sound made right at the back of the throat. The natives of northern Albion use a similar sound in their word 'loch', only the phonetic 'q' is a much more abrupt and deep sound, generated further back in the throat. If you imagine that the 'ch' sound in 'loch' is a series of harsh, breathy 'k's' strung together, the phonetic 'q' would be a bit like the very first of those 'k's'.

'r' – pronounced by vibrating the tongue against the roof of the mouth, just as the Tileans and Estalians say it.

's' – sibilant, pronounced as a double 's', like at the end of the word 'possess'

'š' – pronounce like the 'sh' in 'shaman'

't' – hard, as said in 'tempt'

'θ' – said like the 'th' in 'thought'

'_' – hard, said like the 'th' in 'their'

'v' – hard, similar to how it is said in 'vengeance', only harsher and fractionally longer.

'w' – very soft, said a bit like the 'w' in 'weather', but even softer and shorter.

'x' – exactly like the 'ch' in 'loch'

'y' – soft, as said in 'yes'

'z' – hard, pronounced like the first double 's' in 'possess', or the last 's' in 'because'

A FEW KEY TERMS AND THEIR MOST BASIC MEANINGS

Qeyos (Chaos / Khaos) – (lit.) spirit energy; psychical power; magic.

Contextual variations – potential; 'Oversoul'; abode of the gods; the Sea of Souls; the 'Afterlife'; the Aethyr; Paradise; Hell.

Feyos (Phaos) – (lit.) 'Soul'

Contextual variations – breath; essence; instinct; holy; the unconscious inner being; the subconscious; anima.

Deyos (Dhaos) – (lit.) Spirit entity

Contextual variations – deity; daemon; divine messenger; of divine (or daemonic) nature or origin; immaterial or incorporeal; of the mind; consciousness; will; purpose; that which mediates between the inner realms of the mind and the outer realms of the physical world; ego; animus.

Qär (Khar) – (lit.) Rage

Contextual variations – anger; fury; frenzy; hate; to destroy; to abominate; the will to cause and inflict violence; 'violence' itself; the need, desire and instinct to survive; the will to dominate.

Tzæen (Tzeen) – (lit.) Change

Contextual variations – inconstancy; to alter; 'then'; the will to change; to look towards or pursue the future; the fear of stasis; the rejection of 'now'; the desire to be different; randomness; chance; hope.

Nurg (Nurgh) – (lit.) Decay

Contextual variations – deteriorate; decompose; rot; 'now'; acceptance of the 'now'; the realisation of what 'is'; to deny the possibility of improvement; acceptance of decay; cynicism; to fall from grace; desperation; the abandonment of hope; despair.

Slä (Slaa) – (lit.) Pleasure

Contextual variations – gratification; delight; ecstasy; rapture; exaltation; the desire to experience pleasure; sensation; the desire or need to 'feel'; the pursuit of happiness or perfection; selfishness; vanity; pride; joy.

Leø, neø (Leth, neth) – 'Lord of'; 'Master of'; 'Ruler of'.

Contextual variations – 'cause of'; 'source of'; 'embodiment of'; 'creation of'.

THUS:

The meaning of each Chaos god's name reflects the complexity of His or Her divine nature. Here follow just a few examples:

Qär'neø – 1. (lit.) Rage Lord, **2.** The Source of Hate. **3.** The Embodiment of Violence.

Tzæen'neø – 1. (lit.) Change Lord. **2.** The

Source of Hope. **3.** The Embodiment of Chance.

Nurg'leø – **1. (lit.)** Decay Lord. **2.** The Source of Despair. **3.** The Embodiment of Cynicism.

Slä'neø – **1. (lit.)** Pleasure Lord. **2.** The Source of Sensation. **3.** The Embodiment of Selfishness.

SIMPLE ORDERS, STATEMENTS AND QUESTIONS:

Te§ = Yes **_an** = No

Mörån = Stop **Geder** = Continue

Ged = Go **Gi§** = Come

Ase_ = Who **Yek** = Bring

Ölen = What **Zöx** = Take

Ölaren = When **Fiç** = Give

Var§ = Where **Câ_** = Throw / Cast

Nelaw = Why **Telån** = Accept

COLOURS AND SHADES:

Aq§i = Red

Orç = Orange

Azir = Blue

Xamön = Yellow

Giran = Green

Sliv = Pink

§yi§ = Purple

Gur = Brown

Ulgu = Grey

Dar = Black / Dark

Hyi§ = White

Qay§ = Spectrum / Iridescent / Multicoloured

SOME COMMON WORDS AND TERMS:

Please note that it would be unwise to experiment with the pronunciation of the following words out loud, for, as much as these words form part of a language and seem innocuous enough

as they are written upon the page, every one of them is imbued with hidden meanings and subtle power. To one who possesses an affinity for, and with, the winds of magic, and knows how to concentrate his or her mind to the task of spell-casting, these words will attract, focus and sculpt raw magic more successfully than most other tongues – often in unforeseen ways.

You have been advised.

Aleri = Plains

Alum = Light (as in luminescence)

Alu = Deny

Ankir = Domain

Aq§i'oy = Bronze or copper

Arian = Woman

Asärmin = Keeper



Ata = Death

Atax = Die

Atem = the Sun

Avel = Heart

Älørey = Doom

Bäj = Oath

Cerd = Heal

Çarik = Endure

Çeyl = Order / Law

Dahazirek – the Sky /
Celestial

Dahqayş – Rainbow

Darfäk = Darkness

Darhan = Night

Derô = Remember / Memory

Deyos = Spirit

Drahay = Dragon

Erhan = Shadow

Feyos = Soul

Gor = Beast or animal

Gorem = Steed, or beast of
burden

Grân = Artisan

Heg = Crone or decrepit

Hoyø = Wisdom

HyiŞete = Smoke

HyiŞfäk = Whiteness

Iöil = Star

IŞeh = Mother

Je = Man

Jedâ = Father

Kadaø = Grace

Kiöön = Knowledge

Koyl = Tear (as in 'crying')

Kreyn = Book / Scroll

Krimner = Warrior

Kurnas = Hunter

Laçey = Noble

Laço = Glory

Leøœn = Storm

Lil'yeø = Arcane

Liad = Music

Li'gur = Mud

Lowik = Laugh

Manan'ek = The Ocean / Sea

Mäj = Spell / Enchantment

Mäjay = Wizard / Spell-
Caster

Mär = Steel

Menli = Life

Minaø = Skill

Mör = End

Möray = Fate

Nurg = Decay

Öriakş = Blood

Pä = Look / See

Qaderô = Remembering

Qamär = Weapon

Qasarat = Defying

Qasinaø = Dying

Qasoraqşi = Burn / burning

Qär = Rage

Qeyin = Murder

Qeyos = Magic

Qeyossaris = Magic/Chaos
Moon

Ruwun = Rune / Letter /
Word

Reyha = Nature (as in flora
and fauna)

Sarat = Defy

Saratfäk = Defiance

Saris = the Moon

Saøey = Fly

Senlayi = Swift

Sinaø = Silence

Sinøoiy = Loyal

Slä = Pleasure

Soraqşi = Fire / Flame

Sorfäk = Heat

Sorir = Hot

Soriraş = Molten

Soroy = Eternity

Sölka = Purify

Şalay = Mercy

Şamel = Visible

Şamelna = Invisible

Şamelna'aşek = body of
water / lake

Täl = Wild

Te = And

Tzœn = Change

Øalu = Vengeance

alädi = Monarch

Ulgute = Mist or Fog

Ulrax = Savage

Urak = Enemy

Vlay = House or Home

Verne = Justice

Völ = Manufacture / Cast

Xamön'oy = Gold / golden

Yanlå = Balance

Zern = Plateau

When the Powers speak, the Universe listens, for the Universe is little more than Form imposed upon Chaos, or the Realisation of Potential. The image of that Form, the expression of that Realisation, is determined through action, consciousness, and will, represented in the unimaginably complex Great Language of Gods and Daemons, known to mortals as Anofejün.

The incalculable powers of Gods are in one (admittedly simplistic) sense a reflection of the fact that they are personifications of concepts, and therefore the gods are actually manifestations of broad areas of the divine language, in the sense that the language itself is the result of conceptualisation. For example, mercy is an action and abstract with no identity until it is actually named 'Mercy', and the attributes of what makes mercy are expressed, codified and debated — so one might say it is with the gods.

Metaphysical Vortices of rage or despair may form in the Empyrean as mortal beings experience these feelings, but I believe that these Vortices are blind and devoid of identity and independent will until intelligent beings in the Mortal Realms become self aware enough to analyse their own raw feelings, bind them into concepts by assigning them names and identifying their attributes, and thereby give these emotions, and by direct association their Vortices within the Empyrean, an identity separate from the actual mortal experience of them.

The lesser Powers of the Empyrean, like daemons and devils, are smaller and ever more specific embodiments of concept and emotion, and therefore have a more modest facility and capacity for the divine language, and correspondingly more modest magical abilities — at least in comparison with their divine masters. I doubt even the greatest of the fabled 'Old Ones' and their most gifted pupils, the Asur magics of prehistory, had more than a baby's babbling comprehension of this language, so impossibly vast and complex it is.

But even with that primitive comprehension they were undoubtedly the mightiest sorcerers of all time. With our command of Anofejün, as expressed through its poor descendant, the lingua praestantia, we the greatest and most powerful practitioners of the arcane arts within the Empire are little better than parrots mimicking the speech of men. Yet even so, our powers are the source of awe and wonder amongst all the peoples of the world who have seen or heard of us — and rightly so.

~ extracted from the third letter of Magister Volans, First Supreme Patriarch of the Colleges of Magic.