

# Some highly unofficial explorations in Chinook Jargon

or,

*Tenas hiyu delate wake kahkwa tyee nanitch kopa Chinook wawa*

## A. Intricacies of Translation

The following invocation from Golden Dawn (and COTS) ritual will be familiar to all in the original:

*Hyas mika, Saghalie Tyee!*  
*Hyas mika, illahee halo mamook mika!*  
*Hyas mika, skookum ikt kopa konaway,*  
*Towagh pe polaklie tyee!*

Literally translated, this comes out:

Great (are) you, Chief (of) the heavens!  
Great (are) you, the land (did/does) not make you!  
Great (are) you, strong(er) one than everything,  
Light and darkness chief!

Some notes:

*Hyas mika*: there is no Jargon equivalent for the word "holy." The words *tah* and *tamanaous* mean "spirit, spiritual, magical" but are as applicable to the lowest aspects as to the highest. *Kloshe*, which Platonically enough means both "good" and "beautiful", might have been suitable, but *hyas*, "great" or "preeminent", was my choice here. Partly this is an attempt to imitate the Cabalistic Hebrew distinction between *qadosh*, "holy" but also implying the absolute transcendence of the divine, and *baruch*, "blessed" but also implying the involvement of the divine in the world, and thus its "goodness" (in human terms).

*Saghalie Tyee*: the closest equivalent for "universe" in Jargon is *konaway illahee konaway kah*, "all place all where". This seemed a little clunky for a poetic invocation, so I fell back on the standard Jargon term for God, which literally means "chief above" or "chief of the heavens".

*Illahee*: there is no Jargon term for "nature." In fact, there are damn few abstract nouns of any kind whatsoever. The closest I could get is *illahee*, which means "earth" in all senses — "land, country, place" but also "dirt, mud, soil." One could make a virtue of a necessity and suggest that this term allows a much more concrete sense of Nature than the highly abstract English word provides.

*skookum ikt kopa konaway*: there's only one word for "big" and I already used it as a replacement for "holy," so "the Vast and the Mighty One" won't work literally. *Skookum* is "powerful" in every sense, and has a connotation of "spiritually powerful"; *ikt* is the number one, but also connotes unity, aloneness, and existence (a Chinook Neoplatonist text might well use *okoke ikt*, "that one," as a clear translation for the Greek  $\tau\omicron\ \epsilon\nu$ ). *Kopa konaway* is the usual Jargon superlative construction, meaning approximately "than everything".

## B. Elemental Symbolism

There is, typically, no Jargon word for "element" or any similar idea. There are also no single words for the directions, seasons, or times of day, and no words for general categories such as "tool", "weapon" or "virtue". (See what I mean about the lack of abstract nouns?) In addition, the total color vocabulary of the Jargon consists of four words, only one of which corresponds to one of our divisions of the spectrum. Still, I have attempted the chart below. I have referred to the elemental working tools as "keys," for want of any better word, divided up the colors as the language allows, and fumbled my way through the necessary constructions for the others.

### *Lakit Elip Iktas* (Four first things)

	<i>Piah</i> (fire)	<i>Koosah</i> (sky)	<i>Wecoma</i> (sea)	<i>Illahee</i> (earth)
<i>Huloima nem</i> (other names)	<i>Olapitsi</i> (fire)	<i>Wind</i> (wind)	<i>Chuck</i> (water)	— —
<i>Tamanous lekleh</i> (magical key)	<i>Stick</i> (stick)	<i>Opitsah</i> (knife)	<i>Ooskan</i> (cup or pot)	<i>Malah</i> (dish)
<i>Ikt cole yaka laly</i> (a year, its time)	<i>waum illahee</i> (warm country)	<i>tenas waum illahee</i> (little warm country)	<i>tenas cole illahee</i> (little cold country)	<i>cole illahee</i> (cold country)
<i>Ikt sun yaka laly</i> (a day, its time)	<i>sitkum sun</i> (half day)	<i>tenas sun</i> (young day)	<i>oleman sun</i> (old day)	<i>sitkum polaklie</i> (half night)
<i>Delate klatawa</i> (straight go away)	<i>kah sun elip saghalie kopa konaway</i> (where sun is higher than anywhere)	<i>kah sun chako</i> (where sun comes)	<i>kah sun klatawa</i> (where sun goes)	<i>kah sun halo mitlite</i> (where sun does not stay)
<i>Mamook kloshe kopa tamanous</i> (make good at magic)	<i>klap tumtum</i> (make up or reach heart)	<i>kumtux</i> (know)	<i>mamook skookum tumtum</i> (make strong heart)	<i>kopet wawa</i> (stop talk)
<i>Tzum</i> (color)	<i>pil</i> (red, yellow)	<i>tkope</i> (white)	<i>spooch</i> (pale, faded)	<i>klale</i> (dark — blue, green or black)

The element of spirit would probably be *Tah*, which is a general word for a supernatural being or thing. *Tamanaous* (variously spelled; my dictionary gives *tahmahnahwis*) is primarily one's guardian spirit, secondarily magic of any kind, luck, special power. A magician is *tamanous man* or *tamanous klotchman* (depending on gender), although there are two other words: *keelaly*, which is translated "medicine man", and *etamana*, translated "prophet"; I am not sure of the

proper meanings of these, although I suspect "shaman" and "diviner" come close.

An angel would be *saghalie tamanous*, elementals *piah tamanous*, *koosah tamanous*, etc; one's higher self would be *tamanous self* (this latter word having been borrowed from English as an all-purpose reflexive). There are also *ekone*, defined in my dictionary as the Good Spirit, and *ekutoch*, the Evil Spirit; what these might actually have been I have no clue. Another word for spirit, which was used specifically for nasty wendigo-type things that wander around at night looking for human prey, is *tsialko* or *seealko*; I'm not sure what this would work out to in standard Western magical terminology. There is also the word *deaub*, "devil," borrowed from the French.

Just for the sake of completeness, it should be mentioned that the *delate klatawa* (direction) of *Tah* is *katsuk* (middle). "Lodge" would probably have to be *ipsoot house*, "secret house," and "Order" would have to be *tillicum*, which is any group of people; the Companions of the Stone might be *stone yaka tillicum*, "stone, its people." The Hidden Sun is *ipsoot otelagh* (this latter is an older and more specific word for the sun, not used for "day" as well).

### C. For the really brave

The following text is given without translation, for those who have (or may want to pick up) Jargon dictionaries. Enjoy!

#### *Tenas tamanous kopa kwinnum keepwot tsiltsil, yaka mamook mahsh*

1. *Mitwhit kopa kweokweo yaka katsuk. Mamook tamanous lacloa.*
2. *Klatawa kopa kah sun chako. Mamook kwinnum keepwot tsiltsil, mahsh saghalie kopa illahee yaka keepwot. Pe mamook hullel wawa, "YHVH."*
3. *Mamook sitkum yaka sitkum kweokweo kopa kah sun elip kopa konaway. Mamook delate kahkwa tsiltsil yahwa pe mamook hullel wawa, "ADNI."*
4. *Mamook delate kahkwa kopa kah sun klatawa, pe mamook hullel wawa "AHHH." Mamook kahkwa kopa sun halo mitlite, pe mamook hullel wawa, "AGLA." Mamook kopet kopa kah sun chako, pe killapi kopa katsuk.*
5. *Mahsh mokst lamah kahkwa lacloa. Wawa kahkwa: "Elip nika, Raphael; kimtah nika, Gabriel; kopa kloshe lamah, Michael; kopa huloima lamah, Auriel. Kehwa lowullo nika kwinnum keepwot tsiltsil mamook piyah, pe kopa nika taghum keepwot tsiltsil mamook towagh. Kloshe kahkwa!"*
6. *Mamook weght tamanous lacloa. Kloshe kopet tenas laly pe nanitch kahta tamanous mamook.*

### D. A final note

Weird though this stuff is, it is not without its value, and readers of Owen Barfield (among others) will recognize how close it brings us to the roots of language, thought and magic. *Kloshe kahkwa!*