Pronunciation

of the

Enochian Language

Since the Enochian texts consist of a series of "Calls", or invocations of supernatural beings, it is clearly necessary to understand how the words should be uttered or spoken. In most magical systems, a slight error in the text of a spell or invocation is regarded as potentially dangerous and will lead to disastrous consequences. Accordingly, John Dee was in the habit of writing the pronunciation of the Enochian words alongside the text.

To make these observations on pronunciation, Dee had to use the ordinary English alphabet, since he had no system of phonetic notation. However, his intention is usually quite clear. He writes **dg** when he means "soft **g**" (as in **gem**); and **s** for "soft **c**"; and he indicates in some places the **ch** is to be pronounced as **k**. He marks the stressed vowels in most words. Sometimes -- but not often -- he indicates that a letter is to be given its pronunciation in the alphabet -- thus **ds** is to be pronounced "**dee-ess**", and **z** in a few instances is given the pronunciation "**zod**." (The letter **z** has not always been called "**zed**" or "**zee**", it has had many names, among them being "**izzard**", and, at the end of the sixteenth century, "**ezod**." "**Zod**" is nothing but a variant of this last name.) In more difficult cases, Dee gives examples from English, thus **zorge** is said to be pronounced to rhyme with "**George**", and **ul** to be said "with such sound to **U** as we pronounce "**yew**", whereof bows are made" -- that is, **ul** is pronounced like "**Yule**."

With all of these instructions, one can get a fairly good idea of how the Enochian language sounded.

The resulting pronunciation of Enochian makes it sound much more like English than it looks at first sight. The following table of letters and combinations gives a general overview of how the spelling system of Enochian works:

**LETTER PRONUNCIATION**

A -- long (stressed), as in **lah-di-dah**

    -- short (unstressed), as in French **patte**

B -- usually as English **b**, but silent between **m** and another consonant, or after **m** finally

C -- as **k** before **a**, **o**, **u** (with some exceptions)

    -- as **s** before **i**, **e** (with many exceptions), and in clusters of consonants (**noncf = nonsf**)

CH -- as **k** in most positions, but as **ch** finally

D -- as **d** in all positions

E -- when stressed, as in French **fee**

    -- when unstressed, as in **bed**

F -- as **f** in all positions

G -- as (hard) **g** before **a**, **o**, **u**

    -- as **j** before **i**, **e**, in final position, after **d**, and in clusters of consonants

H -- as **h** in most position (except in combinations **ch**, **ph**, **sh**, **th**); silent after a vowel, but the vowel is lengthened

I -- when stressed, as in French **machine**

    -- when unstressed, as in **bit**

    -- in combinations: **ai** as in **fly**; **ei** as in **eight**; **oi** as in **boil**

    -- as **y** in word-initial position before a vowel (**Iad = Yad**)

K -- as **k** in all positions

L -- as **l** in all positions

M -- as **m** in all positions

N -- as **n** in all positions

O -- when stressed, as in French **mot**

    -- when unstressed, as in **not**

    -- in combinations: **oi** as in **boil**; **ou** as in **bout**; **oo** as in **fool**

P -- as **p** except in combination with **ph**

PH -- as **f**

Q -- the word **q** is pronounced **kwa**

QU -- as **kw** (**qu** as in **quick**)

R -- as **r** in **right** (but may be rolled)

S -- usually as **s** in **sit**

    -- sometimes **z**, in places where this is more natural in English (**lrasd = elrazd**)

SH -- as **sh** in **ship**

T -- as **t** except in combination **th**

TH -- as **th** in **thank**

U -- as **oo** in **boot**, or **u** in **put**

    -- in initial position as **yew**

    -- as **v** or **w** before another vowel, and in word-final position

X -- as **x** in **fox**

Y -- as **y** in word-initial position before a vowel

    -- as the letter **I** before a consonant, and in word-final position

Z -- as **z** in **zoo**; in a very few words, as **zod**

It should be further noted that the Enochian characters themselves total only 21, not the 24 characters listed above. **C** and **K** are expressed by a single letter, as are **I** and **Y**, and **U**and **V**. The 21 letters of Enochian are, oddly enough, almost exactly the minimum required to write English without any ambiguity.

Using the pronunciation guide above, we can transcribe the beginning of the Call of the First Aethyr "**LIL**" into an appropriate phonetic representation used during the sixteenth century.

**"Mádriaks di-es praf LIL kis miká-olz sánir ka-ózgo od físis balzízras yaida. Nonsa gohúlim: míkma adóyan mad, yá-od bliórb, soba o-áona kis lusíftias pirípsol, di-es abrása nonsf netá-ib ka-ozji, od tilb adfát dámploz ..."**

Like everything else, the Enochian language has undergone some minor changes during the last 400 years. The pronunciation of the words has become modernized to allow easier use by today's practitioner. The following table of letters gives a general overview of how the modernized Enochian works:

**LETTER PRONUNCIATION**

A -- usually as **a** in **ah**

B -- usually as **b** in **beh**

C -- usually as **k** in **keh**

D -- usually as **d** in **deh**

E -- usually as **e** in **eh**

F -- usually as **f** in **feh**

    -- sometimes as **f** in **eff**

G -- usually as **g** in **geh** or **ge**

    -- sometimes as **g** in **egg**

H -- usually as **h** in **heh**

I -- usually as **E** in **Ee**

J --usually as **j** in **jeh**

K -- usually as **k** in **keh**

L -- usually as **l** in **leh**

    -- sometimes as **l** in **el**

M -- usually as **m** in **meh**

    -- sometimes as **m** in **em**

N -- usually as **n** in **neh**

    -- sometimes as **n** in **en**, **noo**, or **nu**

O -- usually as **o** in **oh**

P -- usually as **p** in **peh**

Q -- usually as **q** in **qeh**

    -- sometimes as **q** in **queh** or **quah**

    -- in rare instances as **k** in **koh**

R -- usually as **r** in **reh** or **rah**

    -- sometimes as **r** in **ar**

S -- usually as **s** in **seh**

-- sometimes as **s** in **ess**

T -- usually as **t** in **teh**

U -- usually as **u** in **ueh**

    -- sometimes as **u** in **u**

V -- usually as **v** in **veh**

W -- usually as **w** in **weh** (very seldom used)

X -- usually as **Tz** as in **Tzaddi**, or as **Ts** as in **Cents**

    -- sometimes as **s** in **Samekh**, or as **s** as in **sah**

Y -- usually as **y** in **yeh**

    -- sometimes as **E** as in **Ee**

Z -- usually as **z** in **zeh**

    -- sometimes as **z** as in **zod**

    -- in rare instances as **z** as in **zoad**

Once again it should be noted that the Enochian characters themselves total only 21, not the 26 characters listed above. **C** and **K** are expressed by a single letter, as are **I**, **J** and **Y**, as are **U**, **V**, and **W**.

Using the modernized pronunciation guide above, we can transcribe the beginning of the Call of the First Aethyr "**LIL**" into an appropriate phonetic representation that is used today:

**"Mah-deh-ree-ahtz Deh-seh Peh-rah-feh Lee-el Keh-hee-seh Mee-kah-oh-leh-zeh Sah-ah-nee-reh Kah-oh-seh-goh Oh-deh Fee-see-ess Bah-leh-zee-zeh-rah-seh Ee-ah-ee-dah Noh-en-kah Goh-hueh-lee-meh Mee-keh-mah Ah-doh-ee-ah-neh Mah-deh Ee-ah-oh-deh Beh-lee-oh-reh-beh Soh-bah Oh-oh-ah-oh-nah Keh-hee-seh Lueh-kee-feh-tee-ah-seh Pee-ree-peh-soh-leh Deh-seh Ah-beh-rah-ah-seh-sah Noh-en-keh-feh Neh-tah-ah-ee-beh Kah-oh-seh-goh Oh-deh Tee-leh-beh Ah-deh-peh-hah-heh-teh Dah-meh-peh-loh-zeh ..."**

As can be seen from the above transcription, the Enochian language has indeed acquired a very different pronunciation when it came to be used in twentieth-century magical operations and rituals. It should be noted however, that both versions are absolutely correct -- and both versions work equally well in all magical operations and rituals. The choice of which version to use is therefore left up to the individual.