MYTHOLOGIC TEXT

IN THE

KLAMATH LANGUAGE OF SOUTHERN OREGON.

COMMENTED BY ALBERT S. GATSCHET.

Lupí nãlsh hûnk Kmúkamtch shutäyéga; ná-asht nãlsh hûnk gá-ag kĕmutchátk shashapkĕli-ía génta käílatat. Tchía hûk lãpi shá-ungaltk Aíshish Kmukámtchish; né-ulχa hûnk gēn nánuk tuá ká-akt húk gäg, nánuk tuá kiäm ámbutat wá gítki gíug. Tchúyunk pän I-ulalónan tchkash né-ulχa páplishash gítki gíug; mû gínt nkíllipsh tíwish ndúlsh-ampksh páltki múash s̱hlé-uyuk, tchúyunk máklaksash kiäm ítklank pálshtat pátki gi.

TRANSLATION.

At first Kmúkamtch commenced to create us; thus an old man long ago told us in myths about this world. There lived the two, father and son, (called) Aishish and Kmu-kámtchiksh; this one resolved, that here should come into existence whatever there is, and all the various kinds of fish that live in the water. Hereupon he also ordered that at Cascade Falls (Linkville) a rock-dam should come into exis-tence; that when the south wind blows, it should drive back the waters, loudly roaring at their rushing down, and that the Indians should then, on the dry river bottom, gather up the fish and feed on them.

This text forms the commencement of a long and very popular Indian myth: "The attempted destruction of Aíshish by his father Kmukámtchiksh," which I obtained and wrote down in the Klamath language, while sojourning among the Maklaks Indians, in October, 1877. The whole myth is so thoroughly original, and so faithful a picture of the Indian mind, that even this fragment of it cannot be suspected of containing anything else but the ancient heathen idea of the creation. This myth, however, is lacking the most inter-esting features of all creation myths, viz: the statement, of what substance the world or earth was made, and how it was made. Notwithstanding all my attempts to find out what these Indians think about these points, I obtained no satisfac-tory clue, and was brought to the conclusion that there exists no creation myth among them which is generally adopted by the tribe. But they have myths for every separate crea-tion, for every animal or class of animals; I have even ob-

tained a long story explaining the origin of the black spot on the loon's head. The origin of man is accounted for by some by the fact, that Kmúkamtch created him from a service-berry (tchák), while other myth-tellers prefer to have him made of clay; and to explain the difference of color, they say that the Creator put his first red man in the sun to dry, while he let the first white man become dry in the shadow.

Kmukámtchiksh, in the abbreviated form Kmúkamtch, is to the Klamath or Máklaks Indians the creator and maintainer of the universe, and the ruler of mankind and its destinies. In power, none of the other geniuses and demons can approach him; he is a mean, low-mannered, tricky and false character, who is constantly on the lookout for destroying his son Aishish by some unexpected stratagem. He is the demon embodying all the qualities that we can expect of the divinities of a *hunter*-people, and his great analogy with the "Old Coyote" of California may well impress us with the idea that his prototype was one of the wild quadrupeds. His son Aishish, to judge from the names of his five wives, whom his father seeks to abstract from him, was probably a bird-genius, and his name has to be rendered by the "Secreter" or the "Concealer."

THE WORDS OF THE TEXT.

Lupí means firstly, at first; it is the adverb of the adjective lupíni, in its distributive form, lulpíni: the first (in time, rank or order). This might lead to the supposition that Klamath possesses a series of ordinal numerals. But no other adjectives exist which can be compared to our "seventh, eighth," etc., except the *first*, the *second*, which also means the *middle* (tχálamni), and the *last* (topíni, tâpíni).

nálsh, *us*, the objective case of the pronoun nād, *we*. The full form is nálash, and the objective case in –ash also stands for our dative case: *us* and *to us, for us.*

hûnk is here a temporal particle, indicating that the action of the verb, to which it belongs, was accomplished in the *past*.

Kmúkamtchiksh, abbrev. Kmúkamtch, can best be interpreted by "the Old Man of the ancients," and is somewhat analogous to the second part of our cant term, "the dollar of our daddies." The adjective –ámtchiksh, –ámtch, is appended to all the names of the animal demons, or mythical beings of the past, which fill the Olympus of the Klamath mythology. It seems transposed from mántch, and means 1) old, ancient; and when suffixed to objects of common use, as brooms, dishes, etc., it means 2) used up, good for nothing.

shutäyéga, inchoative form of shutáya, a derivation of shúta, to make, produce, create. The two suffixes forming

verbs which indicate the beginning of an action or state, are
–éga and –támpka; wésh tchutchäyéga and wésh tchutcha-
itámpka: the ice commences to melt.

ná-asht or ná-ash, nāsh: thus, so, in this manner.

gá-ag or ká-ag, long ago, a long time ago; a derivation of
ka-á, ga-á, the intensitive particle, *very, very much, quite much.*

kĕmutchátko is the full form of kĕmutchátk, and is the
participle in -tko of the verb kĕmútcha, to become old.
-tko is an ending that often possesses an active, but more
frequently a passive signification. The possessive case of
kĕmutchátko is kĕmutchápkam, the objective kĕmutcháp-
kash, the locative kĕmutchápkat.

shashapkĕlía means to tell stories, myths or fables in the
interest or for the pleasure of somebody; the final -í-, inserted
before the verbal ending a, has the power of adding to every
active verb the idea that the action is done in the interest of
somebody, sometimes of the one who performs the action.
Shápa, *to tell, count,* is the basis from which the term is de-
rived through reduplication of the first syllable, and through
a diæresis of the i to attain a rhetorical effect.

génta käílatať, "concerning, about this earth" or "world."
This phrase stands in the locative case, and in other connec-
tions could also mean upon this earth, from this earth, etc.
Käíla means 1) earth, world, ground; 2) dirt, mud, and occurs
also in the Pit River language as *kéla,* being one of the rare
terms which this idiom has in common with Klamath. This
phrase proves that pronouns (and adjectives) do not always
show the same case-endings than the substantives which they
determine.

tchía or tsía (for tch and ts are always interchangeable), 1)
to stay, remain; 2) to sit, to be seated; 3) to live, exist;
to be.

hûk, particle, of a similar effect than hûnk, q. v.

lāpi, lápi, means *two* in the subjective case; lálapi would
mean each of the two, being the distributive form; lápuk,
both; lápĕni, twice; lápantka, by means of two (f. i. by two
blows, or two shots), an instrumental case.

shá-ungaltko: standing in the relation of father to son.
The language possesses many of these comprehensive terms
of relationship, f. i. shutpaksáltko, related to each other as
brother and sister; shiptchɣálaltko, related to each other as
brother and sister-in-law. These terms are derived respectively
from unák, son; túpaksh, younger sister; ptchíkap, sister-in-
law. In European languages, few of these forms exist, though
we may compare the German *Geschwister* and *verschwistert.*

Kmúkamtchish is contracted from Kmúkamtch tchísh;
Aíshish Kmúkamtch *also.* The language possesses no term
corresponding exactly to our *and,* and thus has to render the

idea of cöordination either as above, by tchkash, pen or other particles, or by placing both terms aside of each other without any connecting particle whatever.

né-ulχa, to order, command, decree, resolve; from this verb is derived né-ulaksh, an order, edict, resolution, behest: an ancient custom observed as a law; né-ulakgish, council meeting, powwow; né-ulakgishla, to erect a council-house; né-ulakta, to enforce an order, to punish, chastise; nenólχish, decree, judgment; netnólkish, government of the tribe or country; legislature.

gēn, a demonstrative pronoun referring to inanimate objects only.

gäg, kēk, is a demonstrative pronoun referring to persons and animate beings as well as to things; formed by duplication of the simple demonstrative kē, gē, gä, and then apocopated.

nánuk tuá is composed of nánuk *all* and *whole;* the Latin *omnis* and *totus,* French *tout* and *entier (integer),* and of tuá, thing. Nánuktua, in one word, is the common way of pronouncing this term, which means every kind of, every class of objects. Tuá is in fact an interrogative particle—what? which?— and has gradually passed to the signification of: "thing, object, article."

kákat, per diæresin ká-akat, ká-akt, is the distributive form of the relative pronoun *kat,* who, which.

kiäm, generic term for all kinds of fish, and related etymologically to kídsha, *to swim under the surface of the water.*

ámbutat is locative case of ámbu, ámpu, water; it forms derivatives like ámpka (for ámpaga), little water; ámpuala, to lie in deep water; ámbutka, to be thirsty.

wá, uá, to stay, live, exist. This verb has always a complement indicating the medium, spot or locality where the subject lives or exists, while tchía, which has the same meaning, does not need this complement.

gítki gíug are two forms of the verb *gi* to be; referring to casual existence like the Spanish *estar.* It also means (but not here) *to do, to possess* and *to say;* gítki gíug means to come into existence and is a *causal* form directly dependent from né-ulχa, and the same may be observed in the sentence following next.

tchúyunk, "hereupon," a contraction of tchúi, afterwards and húnk, particle indicative of the preterit tense.

pän, pén, péna, again, secondly; tchkásh also, just as well; both are enclitic particles and the latter is a contraction of tchékash, tchēk meaning *at last.*

páplishash is the objective case of páplish dam, stoppage of waters. It is very scarce that inanimate substantives like this take the suffix of the objective case –ash, and this can be accounted for only by a sort of personification.

I-ulalónan or Yulalóna is the Klamath name of the Falls of the Link River connecting Upper with Lower Klamath Lake, and also of the town of Linkville recently built in their vicinity. The verb i-ulalóna means to move forth and back, to produce a rubbing motion, while i-ulalína signifies : to form an edge in falling, or to form a beach or shore-line, and is said of waters.

mû, strongly, impetuously; the adverb of múni great, large, grand; determines the participle nkíllipsh "being in rapid motion," a contraction of nkíllipkash, which is the objective case of nkíllitko, the participle of nkílla, nχílla to be in a rush, to rush forward.

gínt locative adverb: there, at that spot.

tíwish the roar of rushing waters; the nominal form of tíwi to rush down with noise. From this term the town of Linkville also received the name of Tiwishχéni "where the cascade-noise is," χéni being a locative case-postposition.

ndúlshampksh for ndulshámpkash, obj. case of ndúlsh-antko, the participle of ndúlshna, (ntúltchna) to flow down-wards, to flow or rush, said of streams. In the formation of the object. case the n is assimilated by the following p into m, and in ndúlshantko the transposition of a and n has taken place already. The thematic basis of ndúlshna is tíla "to spread about," hence we observe change of vowel, and in the initial consonant a nasalizing process.

páltki to become dry, viz: by the waters being forced back under the pressure of the south wind (múash); -tki is a verbal suffix which may be called formative of the "intentional verbal," and in the construction páltki (from pála to dry up, v. intr.) is governed by shlé-uyuk.

shlé-uyuk, causative verbal of shléwi; in the distributive form shléshlui, to blow (said of winds); shléwish the wind, wind-gust; shlé-uyuk means : because (the south wind) blows, or whenever (the south wind) blows. The same causal suffix -uk (-og, -óga, -úga) is found to occur in the gíug above.

máklaksash obj. case of máklaks, person, man, Indian, and Klamath or Modoc Indian, literally "those living in camps," from máklĕχa to encamp. Its construction with patki gi "in order to eat" forms a sort of "accusative cum infinitivo" construction, governed by né-ulχa. gi *to be* is added here to the intentional verbal pátki (from pan *to eat*) into a form of periphrastic conjugation.

ítklank participle of the *present* of ítkal (for ítkǎlank) to gather up, pick up, collect (in baskets, f. i.). When *one object* is found or taken up only, ndákal is used, but here kiäm is a collective noun.

pálshtat for pálishtat "upon what was left dry," locative case of verbal noun pálish, of pála to dry up. To be render-

ed by: on the dry bottom (of Link River.)" A river bottom left entirely dry for years and years is called pálkuish, the particle –u– imparting the idea of a preterit to the verbal of pálka or pálχa to dry up (v. trans., not intr.)

Unnecessary to state, that the above text is written by means of a scientific alphabet, in which the letters have the value attributed to them on the European continent. With the perfectioned graphic means presently at our disposal, no person of common sense should henceforth attempt to write Indian languages with the syllabicating method or by means of the English alphabet, which is said to be historical, but is so inconsistent with itself, that it is not even fit to render the English language with accuracy.

The author of this, detailed with Prof. J. W. Powells' Geographical and Geological Survey of the Rocky Mountain Region, is preparing a voluminous, systematic report on the language of the Maklaks Indians.

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