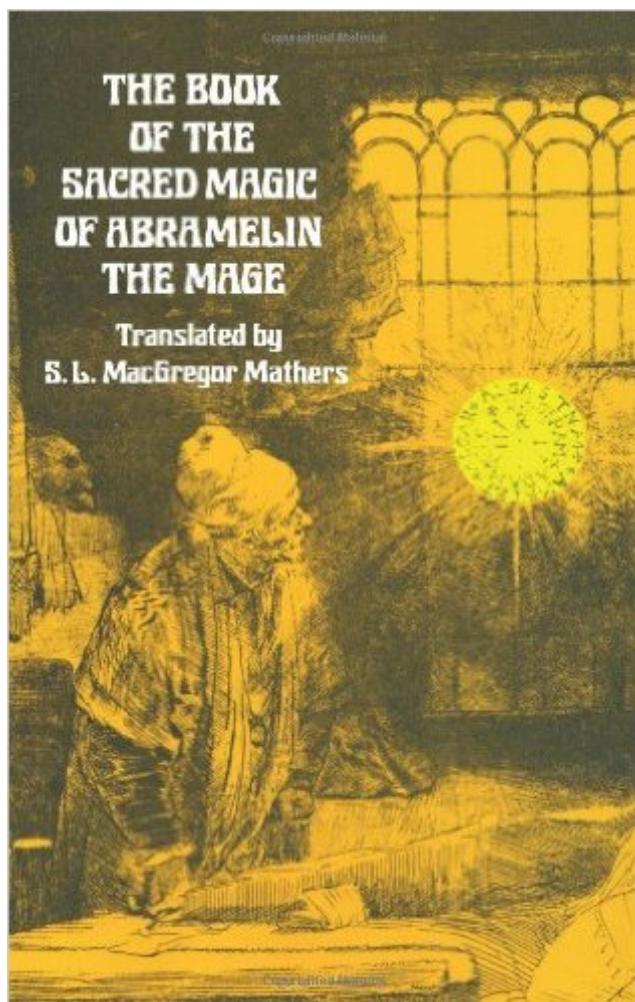


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The Book Of The Sacred Magic Of Abramelin The Mage (Dover Occult)



Synopsis

Around the turn of the century, when Aleister Crowley was working out his system of Magick, the source that he turned to for basics was the system of Abramelin of Egypt. From Abramelin he took his concepts of protections, purifications, evocations, vestments, and dromena down to specific details. This system of Abramelin the Mage is known from a unique fifteenth century manuscript preserved in the Bibliothèque de L'Arsenal in Paris. In it, Abraham of Würzburg, a cabalist and connoisseur of magics, describes a tour that he made of the then civilized world, visiting sorcerers, magicians, and cabalists, estimating their powers and virtues. This quest is in itself as fascinating as the similar tours of Gurdjieff. The high point of Abraham's travels was found in a small town on the banks of the Nile, where he encountered the great magician Abramelin, whose complete system Abraham thereupon sets out in detail. This amounts to a complete course in ceremonial magic (both white and black), which the student can pursue by himself. Abramelin, whose system is based mostly on Hellenistic theurgy of the Iamblichan sort, but with Jewish increments from the Cabala, explains the qualifications needed to become a magician, purifications, and asceticisms to be practiced month by month, studies and activities permitted during this period, selection of place and time for working magic, equipment needed, prayers and formulas, evocation of good and evil spirits, commanding spirits to do one's will, overcoming rebellious spirits, and similar material. Specific instructions are offered to develop such powers as clairvoyance, divining metals and treasures, warding off evil magic, healing illness, levitation, transportation, rendering oneself invisible, creating illusions and glamour, reading minds, placing compulsions, working black magic, and a host of other abilities. We do not guarantee that Abramelin's techniques work, nor that the results are desirable, but we offer this as a genuine medieval course in magic, one of the most important books in the history of occultism. It is of paramount importance to both the historian and the practitioner.

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Customer Reviews

This interesting grimoire was published by S.L. Mathers in 1898, based on a flawed French manuscript. The elaborate and lengthy method it describes for attaining magical knowledge and power is considerably different from the Solomonic grimoires, which it disparages. The flamboyant occultist Aleister Crowley considered it of great importance and underwent the magical operation described. The noted occultist Franz Bardon was familiar with and used the 1725 edition of Peter Hammer. The text was evidently originally written in German, and a German edition which compares the known manuscripts has been published recently by Georg Dehn. (Abraham von Worms. Buch Abramelin. Ed. G. Dehn, Saarbrücken 1995.) Although Dehn was impressed by how closely Mathers rendered the French text, it is clear that Mathers' exemplar did not fully understand the text it was based on, so cannot be entirely relied upon. These older German manuscripts have additional material, and reflect a more elaborate operation. One notable difference is that the operation lasts a year and a half, not six months as described in Mathers' text. Dehn's edition also contains an additional book (mostly a collection of recipes) not found in Mathers' edition. Another problem with Mathers' text is that it did not fill in most of the letters in the magical squares, so many of Mathers' comments on the same are irrelevant. Note that with the corrections, there is a close connection between the lists of spirits and the magical squares. Dehn regarded the name "Abraham of Worms" as a pseudonym for the well known scholar Rabbi Jacob ben Moses ha Levi Moellin, more commonly known as "The MaHaRIL." However, see comments by Gershom Scholem in Kabbalah (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House: 1974, p. 186) who was not impressed with it. According to Scholem, the author, although possessing an uncommon knowledge of Hebrew, was not in fact Jewish. He sums it up thus: "It shows the partial influence of Jewish ideas but does not have any strict parallel in kabbalistic literature." Although Mathers' edition will give a good idea of Abramelin's methods, Dehn's German edition must be considered indispensable until an English translation based on his texts is available.

This is a complex book and the rituals involved should not be attempted by any initiate, and

especially not by the un-initiated. It involves the Practical aspects of the Qabalah, what Abraham the Jew (the supposed author) describes as a Lesser Form of the Theoretical Qabalah known as the "Sacred Magic". The most significant part of the book involves the Ritual to Attain to the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel. In the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn this mystical ritual was described as Seeking the Higher Genius. Aleister Crowley adopted the language of the Sacred Magic when he utilized Aiwass 418 as his own Holy Guardian Angel. However, the Jewish Qabalists refer to it as the Maggid or Angelic Preacher, and it was a major aspect of the Safed school. The Sacred Magic is essential in that it is the only manual available that so eloquently describes the process by which one might attain to the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Maggid. This is the Heart of the Tree of Life glyph. It is Tifareth (Beauty or Harmony). It is the apex of the Meditative Qabalah, as well as the Theoretical and the Practical. The Sacred Magic is divided into 3 Sections: Section 1 is an autobiography of Abraham b. Simon the Jew. Since Lamech is his second-born son, he provides him with the Lesser Qabalah, whereas he provided his first-born son, Joseph, with the Greater Qabalah. Abraham describes the process by which he received this Tradition from Abramelin the Jew of Egypt. Section 2 describes the ceremonial magic (theurgy) by which one might obtain to the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel. These rituals often require a deep knowledge of Judaica. Section 3 describes the actual Sacred Magic, which involves Magical Squares by which one subjugates the Evil Spirits to perform miraculous feats for the Adept. These Qabalistic Squares are complex and require a deep knowledge of Hebrew and Gematria. The Sacred Magic promotes actions that might be considered immoral by our modern society. Abraham appears to have been a Bogomil, and therefore, one should have a deep knowledge of history in order to comprehend the meaning. Otherwise, Abraham appears to promote an anti-female bias, and even appears to promote child-endangerment with his use of the Child Clairvoyant. The translator S.L.M. Mathers provides excellent commentary throughout, unfortunately, the Old English is often difficult to understand. It is like reading the King James Bible. And, the overall appearance of the book and the pages of the book appear to be rather antiquated as well. But, this is the only version of the book that is available right now, and it is an excellent Resource. Shalom - Soror Samhain

I give this book a fantastic rating. The first part of the book reveals a truly captivating tale of the Mage's quest for true magick. However the magical squares revealed in the second part, as Crowley said, have a tendency to get loose and they do things on their own that you will not like. The squares deal with the dark powers, and thus are extremely dangerous to the novice and expert.

This is in all a form of an EXORCIST'S HANDBOOK, as the squares can affect small children, those who are emotionally vulnerable, and animals, even if gazed upon for a moment. Crowley said in his book, Magic Without Tears, "that it is foolish to have this book, unless one is going to go through the whole six months purification ritual."

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