The Study of Solomonic Magic in English

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Reviewers may quote brief passages.

INTRODUCTION

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE to neatly circumscribe a canon of magic texts as being safely of the “Solomonic cycle.” By arbitrary and rather unscientific means, one might do so by simply including those works which, by tradition or artifice, bear Solomon’s name or derive from works which do. Even here, we find at least three classes of material:

1. medieval grimoires, such as The Key of Solomon
2. Byzantine Greek texts of the Magical Treatise of Solomon, or Hygromanteia
3. magical works from late antiquity through the early Middle Ages, such as The Testament of Solomon and Sepher Razim

Hygromanteia is a 5th- or 6th-century Greek astrological/magical text also known as Solomon’s Epistle to Rehoboam. For a full treatment and an English translation of the Hygromanteia, see Ioannis Marathakis’ Magical Treatise of Solomon or Hygromanteia [SOURCEWORKS OF CEREMONIAL MAGIC, Volume 4], foreword by Stephen Skinner (Singapore: Golden Hoard Press, 2011).


Two works trace likely source material for the traditions under discussion:
(2) Skinner’s Techniques of Solomonic Magic (Singapore: Golden Hoard Press, 2015), which is described at some length below.

Hygromanteia is often brought into the discussion in the former work and looms quite large in the latter as a source for the medieval Solomonic grimoire tradition.

For English translations of The Testament of Solomon, see (listed chronologically)


Attribution to Solomon already complicates several biblical texts and apocrypha. Solomon is the hero of many ancient tales in the East; still his legend figures into late traditions of the Freemasons. Rumors which suggest that the wise king left secret books of magic seem never to have died—not to have slumbered—since ancient times.

In order to make short work of closing the category of Solomonic magical works, we shall follow E[liza] M[arian] Butler and focus on the late grimoires (# 1 above). The limitations of her work,
However, must be acknowledged: Butler depended primarily on published works of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including familiar works in English: Francis Barrett’s *Magus* (1801), Montague Summers’ *Witchcraft and Black Magic* (rpt. 1945), C. J. S. Thompson’s *Mysteries and Secrets of Magic* (1927), Grillot de Givry’s *Witchcraft, Magic and Alchemy* (1931), Arthur E. Waite’s *Book of Black Magic and of Pacts* (1898)—even Aleister Crowley’s *Magick in Theory and Practice* (1929)—along with works in other modern languages, in particular the collections of J. C. Horst (*Zauberbibliothek*, 1821–1826) and J. Scheible (*Das Kloster*, 1846-1851).

The classes and selections of the “Solomonic cycle” according to Butler are

1. **The Clavicles (Keys)**
   a. **The Key of Solomon**
   b. **Lemegeton**, or **Lesser Key of Solomon**

2. **The Grimoires**
   a. **Grimorium Verum**
   b. **True Black Magic**
   c. **The Grand Grimoire**

- *The Arras Witch Treatises*: Johannes Tinctor’s *Inventors contre la secte de vanderlie and the Recollection casus, status et condicionis Valdenismi yoblatarum* by the Anonymous of Arras (1460), edited and translated by Andrew Colin Gow, Robert B. Desjardins, and François V. Pageau (2016)

*Making Magic* offers text and analysis of two Elizabethan era MSS: (1) “The Bosgrove Manual” of so-called “learned magic” which draws on earlier magic works, such as Agrippa’s actual *Three Books*, the spurious *Fourth Book* of Agrippa, and the *Heptameron*; and (2) “The Antiphoner Notebook” of common magic (healing and protection spells, conjurations and charms, etc.).


*Long Life…* devotes each of its chapters to a magical object (the ring, a set of bottles, an endless knot, the seal, the *shumir*, the flying carpet) showing how Solomon and his magical tradition has been treated in “legendary or extracanonical” literature and in literature about such literature. Iafrate’s approach is illustrated in the following paragraph from CHAPTER 1, page 9 (Iafrate’s parentheses):

> Given the recognized importance attributed to (magical) objects in this field of study and their pervasiveness at different levels and with a variety of functions, I have dedicated part of this chapter to some notable conceptualizations of magic (and similar themes) proposed by literature scholars. While, interestingly, the examples I will be discussing were all produced within a formalist-structuralist context, it is not my intention to embrace a priori the paradigms proposed by these scholars and blindly project them onto the items I will be discussing, since doing so would create a substantial risk of circularity. Nonetheless, as a sort of experiment, I did try to put my examples in some of these grids to see if some useful consideration could be discovered.

Another Penn State title not in the MAGIC IN HISTORY SERIES should be added to the list:


8 Further regarding the limits of Butler’s work, consider the following quote from *Ritual Magic*, page 135: “*Picatrix*, according to Mathers and other authorities, is an Italian edition of the *Clavicle*, strongly impregnated with black elements.” This is an astounding mistake. *Picatrix*, or *Ghayat al-Hakim* [*The Goal of the Wise*], is an Arabic compendium of philosophy and magic from the tenth or eleventh century.

9 Compare the list of Solomonic texts presented in my outline (which is according to Butler) with that appearing in *The Black Arts* by Richard Cavendish (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1967), Appendix 1: “The Grimoires,” page 371:

1. Key of Solomon
2. Lemegeton
3. Testament of Solomon
4. Grimoire of Honourus
5. Grimoirum Verum
6. Grand Grimoire
7. Red Dragon (“a version of the Grand Grimoire”)
8. True Black Magic
9. Arbatel of Magic
10. The Black Pullet
11. Fourth Book (pseudo-Agrippa)
12. Heptameron (Peter de Abano)
3. Honorius
   a. The Grimoire of Honorius
   b. Liber iuratus, or SWORN BOOK of Honorius

To the list above, we have ventured to add

4. Semiphoras and Shemhamphoras Salomonis Regis

5. Liber Salomonis: Cephar Raziel

The Keys to the Gateway of Magic: Summoning the Solomonic Archangels & Demon Princes, by Stephen Skinner and David Rankine (London – Singapore: Golden Hoard Press, 2005) offers transcriptions of Janna Magica Reserata (KEYS TO THE GATEWAY OF MAGIC), Dr Rudd’s Nine Hierarchies of Angels with their Invocations to Visible Appearance with the Nine Great Celestial Keys, or Angelical Invocations, and The Demon Princes (from British Library Sloane MSS 3628, 3821, 3824, 3825, Harley MS 6482, and Rawlinson D. 1363). This material bears great similarity to the items described in this paper, and a case could certainly be made for wedging these texts into our canon. However, our additions to Butler’s list contain specific internal references to Solomon, which the texts in The Keys to the Gateway of Magic do not—despite the subtitle of the book.10

Within the texts which I have added to Butler’s list, we find the following:

- \textit{S\&S} [paragraph 2]: “In the name of the highest, almighty Creator, I, King Solomon, hold to the interpretation of the name of (God) Semiphoras…”
- \textit{Liber Salomonis} [2]: “\textit{Dixit Salomon Gloria et laus et cu multo honore \&c /} Salomon said glory and praying with much honor be to God of all Creatures, he that is singular \& made all things at one tyme.”

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10 The Keys to the Gateway of Magic is volume 2 of the Golden Hoard Press series SOURCEWORKS OF CEREMONIAL MAGIC:
- Volume 1. Practical Angel Magic of Dr John Dee’s Enchiridion Tables (Skinner & Rankine, 2004)
- Volume 2. The Keys to the Gateway of Magic…
- Volume 3. The Goetia of Dr Rudd: Angels and Demons… (Skinner & Rankine, 2007)—discussed below, § 1. b. Lemegton
- Volume 4. The Veritable Key of Solomon (Skinner & Rankine, 2008)—discussed below, § 1. a. The KEY of SOLOMON
- Volume 5. The Grimoire of St. Cyprian: Claris Inferni, Latin [sic] translation by Peter Forshaw (Skinner and Rankine, 2009) [The translation is in English from Latin]
- Volume 8. The Magical Treatise of Solomon or Hygromanteia (Ioannis Marathakis, 2011)
- Volume 10. The Clavis or Key to Unlock the Mysteries of Magic, by Rabbi Solomon translated by Ebenezer Sibley (introduction by Stephen Skinner and Daniel Clark, 2019)

The first three volumes of this series feature the works and expansions of one Dr. Rudd, “a scholar-magician of the early seventeenth century who knew Dr. John Dee.” This Dr. Rudd is also the supposed compiler of the material in MS Harley 6482, an edition of which was published by Adam McLean as \textit{A Treatise on Angel Magic} (Edinburgh: MAGNUM OPUS SOURCEWORKS [\# 15], 1982, and subsequently reprinted; see the bibliography below: “McLean”).

A facsimile of Frederick Hockley’s transcription of Rudd’s MS, \textit{Dr. Rudd’s Nine Hierarchies of Angels—also Claris Angelica}, edited and introduced by Alan Thorogood, has been published by Teitan Publishing (York Beach: 2013); it includes translations of John Dee’s angelic keys and invocations for the angels over the Table of the Earth. See Egil Asprem, “False, Lying Spirits and Angels of Light: Ambiguous Meditation in Dr Rudd’s Seventeenth-Century Treatise on Angel Magic,” in \textit{Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft}, Volume 3, Number 1 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Winter 2008), pages 54-80.

There are previous editions of Sibley’s \textit{Clavis} (Volume 10 above), see below, page 15, and Turner’s \textit{Ars Notoria} (Volume 11 above), see below, pages 19-21.
While reference to the content of some of the works catalogued here is made, it is not the aim of this essay to offer summaries or analyses. Instead, the reader is referred to sources in which these works are translated, transcribed, or described in English.

My initial advice to anyone interested in pursuing Solomonic material is to go to Joseph Peterson’s remarkable website, TWILIT GROTTO at www.esotericarchives.com, where most of the items discussed below, along with a wealth of other texts, are judiciously presented—and can be viewed for free. If the omissions at the site frustrate the reader, for the cost of one typical printed grimoire, a CD can be ordered from TWILIT GROTTO containing “50+ complete books/31 complete grimoires”—a forgivably mild exaggeration. Further, whenever Peterson has ushered an edition of one of the Solomonic texts into print, it is usually the best version available—and offered at a reasonable price.

Along with the efforts of Joseph Peterson, I can confidently recommend the series MAGIC IN HISTORY from Pennsylvania State University Press (listed above in note 7) and SOURCEWORKS OF CEREMONIAL MAGIC from Golden Hoard Press (listed in note 10).

Boris Balkan, author of the blog, Balkan’s Arcane Bindings: A Closer Look at Esoteric Books, Grimoires, & Talismanic Texts, concurs, adding one more source:

The ‘Sourceworks of Ceremonial Magic’ series is one of the most important series on ceremonial and grimoire magic in print today, rivaled only by the ‘Magic in History’ series, published by Pennsylvania State University Press, and the ‘Palgrave Historical Studies in Witchcraft and Magic’ series, published by Palgrave Macmillan.11

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THREE NOTEWORTHY BOOKS TREATING SOLOMONIC MAGIC

I

Notice must be given here to Aaron Leitch’s *Secrets of the Magical Grimoires: The Classical Texts of Magick Deciphered* (Woodbury: Llewellyn Publications, 2005). Leitch, a practitioner himself, has made a valiant effort to offer a single-source epitome of the “classic grimoires” with descriptions, tables, and excerpts clearly and logically presented through 400+ oversized pages. The book is in two parts: (1) “history and scholarship,” and (2) “practical work,” including experiments and how-to instructions.

In Part One [*Oculta Philosophia*], CHAPTER ONE, Leitch provides an efficient if not particularly nuanced historical background. He then offers an account of the major grimoires, describing 22 texts, including the Solomonic texts discussed in the current paper, plus *Picatrix*, *The Sacred Magic of Abramelin*, Agrippa’s *De occulta philosophia*, the pseudo-Agrippan *Fourth Book*, *Heptameron*, John Dee’s diaries, Barrett’s *Magus*, etc. Unfortunately, the preamble to these descriptions is marred by some irksome errors. For example, on page 9, Leitch writes,

The *Ethiopian Book of Enoch*, the *Hebrew Book of Enoch*, the *Pirkei Heichaloth (sic)*, and even such canonical biblical texts such as Ezekiel and the Revelation of St. John are all centered upon—or connected to—the *Merkavah* tradition. The *Merkavah’s* use of ritual drugs, its focus on talismans and seals, the summoning forth of angelic gatekeepers, and the gaining of mystical visions are elements that run throughout the grimoire spells.

As an example of a work “centered upon...the *Merkavah* tradition,” the *Ethiopian* (more correctly, *Ethiopic*) *Book of Enoch* is an odd choice to set next to the *Hebrew Book of Enoch* and *Pirkei Hekhalot*. Yet, with “or connected to” interjected, Leitch allows enough slosh room for its inclusion as well as that of the Revelation.

More serious is Leitch’s putting drugs and *merkavah* together, apparently through reading—but not thoroughly—James R. Davila’s accounts of shamanic techniques. In the article which Leitch cites (and in Davila’s book *Descenders of the Chariot*, Leiden: Brill, 2001), the use of drugs is indeed mentioned as a shamanic technique, and comparison is made between shamanic (generic) and *merkavah* mystics (specific). However, Davila states, “Nothing in the Hekhalot literature indicates that the descenders to the chariot made use of psychoactive drugs to induce their visionary experiences” (“The Hekhalot Literature and Shamanism”)—the article that Leitch cites—at the web

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12 The *Slavonic Book of Enoch* might have been a better choice. Andrei A. Orlov has suggested that it could be described as “proto-hekhalot.” Refer to Orlov, *The Enoch-Metatron Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005) and idem., *From Apocalypticism to Merkavah Mysticism: Studies in Slavonic Pseudepigrapha* (Leiden – Boston: Brill 2007).

The *Ethiopic Book of Enoch*, also called 1 Enoch (third century BCE), and the *Slavonic Book of Enoch*, called 2 Enoch (first century BCE), are counted among the Jewish pseudepigrapha. The *Hebrew Book of Enoch*, called 3 Enoch—both somewhat misleading titles—is more accurately called *Sefer Hekhalot* (Book of Palaces), for it is a rabbinic work of the fifth century CE or after representative of the *hekhalot* literature. Even though 3 Enoch is included in James Charlesworth’s *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1983), edited by P. S. Alexander, “3 (Hebrew Apocalypse of) Enoch,” it really does not belong there. *Sefer Hekhalot* should be in James R. Davila’s *Hekhalot Literature in Translation* (Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2013), where it is not included in deference to Alexander’s “excellent English translation” in Charlesworth.

*Pirke Hekhalot* is an alternative title for *Hekhalot Rabbi*; it is also from the rabbinic *hekhalot* tradition of the fifth century and thereafter. The bulk of *Hekhalot Rabbi* is given in Davila’s *Hekhalot Literature in Translation*. A more complete version which was translated by Morton Smith can be accessed online at [http://www.digital-brilliance.com/contributed/Karr/HekRab/index.php](http://www.digital-brilliance.com/contributed/Karr/HekRab/index.php).

Leitch’s approach to the grimoires is best expressed in CHAPTER THREE, “The Art of Ecstasy: Way of the Prophet-Shaman,” which begins,

The altered mental state is the most essential and critical aspect of magickal practice.

A few pages before (page 71) Leitch states,

Some of the material in the grimoires may be, in fact, outdated. However, my focus is not upon the content or intent of the spells but on the foundational occult philosophy upon which the magick itself is based. It is my hope that this book will outline the processes by which this kind of magick works, and allow the practitioner to experiment with gaining conversation with various entities.

Part Two [Ocula Practique] mixes Leitch’s prose with tables and extracts from the grimoires on all the technical matters: times, tools, and talismans; purification and prayer; angels and spirits.

As a first or stand-alone book, Secrets… has much to recommend it. Leitch has reached beyond the old stand-bys (Mathers, Waite, Crowley, original and later Golden Dawn material, E. M. Butler) and utilized some recent scholarship (James R. Davila, Claire Fanger, Richard Kieckhefer, Robert Mathiesen), though perhaps not enough. Leitch does not draw on the work of Michael D. Bailey, Charles Burnett, Ioan Couliano, Valerie Flint, David Halperin, Deborah Harkness, Gösta Hedegård, Naomi Janowitz, Frank Klaassen, Christopher Lehrich, Rebecca Lesses, Marvin Meyer, or Robert Turner, to name a few who have dealt directly with the texts and topics in Secrets…; the “classic” works of Lynn Thorndike and Joshua Trachtenberg are also neglected. (See my bibliography below: WORKS OF RELATED INTEREST.) Nearly all of the texts and scholarly sources Leitch refers to are readily available (in English), thus, the book has little new to offer, save Leitch’s synthesis and organization, which sets the “grimoiric” material out in the form that suggests a unified system—which it certainly is not.

Despite all of the times I furrowed and bristled while poring over Leitch’s book, because of its range, readability, and spirit, I recommend Secrets of the Magickal Grimoires, especially to those who intend to do the stuff. For the practitioner, Secrets… could serve well as a hard-copy anchor to the mass of texts available on Internet sites, such as TWILIT GROTTO at www.esotericarchives.com, SACRED TEXTS at www.sacred-texts.com, and NORTON’S IMPERIUM > “Classics of Magick” at www.hermetic.com/browse-archive. Academics, however, would do better to go directly to Leitch’s sources—and well beyond.13

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II


The volumes of the paperback, or chapters of the hardback, are

I  –  *Liber Noctis (A Handbook of the Sorcerous Arte)*
II – *Ars Salomonis (Being of the Hidden Arte of Solomon the King)* “…working with the talismanic figures found in the Key of Solomon.”
III – *Ars Geomantica (Being an account and rendition of the Arte of Geomantic Divination and Magic)*
IV – *Ars Theurgia Goetia (Being an account and rendition of the arte and praxis of the conjuration of some of the spirits of Solomon)*, “…working with the versatile spirits and wandering princes of the *Theurgia Goetia*, part of the seventeenth-century Lemegeton.”
V  –  *Otz Chim (The Tree of Life)*, which includes “the Massa Arborum (sic) Vitae (the Mass of the Tree of Life),” a previously unavailable rite based on the aspects of the Tree and used by the author’s ritual group.
VI – *Ars Speculum (Being an instruction on the arte of using mirrors and shewstones in magic)*
VII – *Liber Terribilis (Being an instruction on the seventy-two spirits of the Goetia)*

These volumes were previously published individually in the years 2004-2013 by Verdelet Publishing (Craven Arms), along with Nottingham’s other works, *Ars Spagyrica: Being an Account and Rendition of the Alchemical Arte of Spagyric* (2005) and *Charms, Charming and the Charmed: Welsh Wicraft (sic) and the Shropshire Border* (2009).

The blurb on the author in the Avalonia promotional email (March 1st, 2015) states,

Gary’s personal magical practices draw on his interest in the alchemical arte, the 17th-century astrologer William Lilly and the arte of horary astrology, grimoires and spirit conjuration, as well as ritual magic. When not peering at bubbling flasks or a shewstone, he can usually be found either reading about such matters, playing chess, or, with his background being in horticulture, in the garden.

Given the present context, that of an essay on the literature of Solomonic magic, our attention naturally turns to Nottingham’s *CHAPTERS/VOLUMES II, IV, and VII* (all page references are to the hardback edition):

II. *Ars Salomonis* (pages 177-257) is an extended consideration of S. Liddell MacGregor Mathers’ version of the *Key of Solomon* (1888) informed a bit by more recent editions (e.g., Rankine and Skinner’s *Veritable Key of Solomon*, 2008). Mathers’ text is generously paraphrased, and all of the pentacles are reproduced.

IV. *Ars Theurgia Goetia* (pages 317-476) “is an interpretation of the seals of the second part of the Solomonic grimoire cycle,” i.e., the Lemegeton, “giving the full seals of the spirits for the first time.” Nottingham’s introduction to this chapter concludes,

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14 Nottingham clearly intends Arborum. However, even if the missing “r” is restored, the title *Massa Arborum Vitae* is still something like “wad of trees of life.” *Massa* might be better rendered *Missa*.


It will be noted that additional conjurations as laid down in the Steganographia [of Trithemius] are also included for the use in the conjuration of the spirit. (—page 322)

VII. Liber Terribilis (pages 635-822) offers instructions on summoning the seventy-two spirits of the Goetia, the first section of the Lemegeton. Nottingham has “also given what [he] consider[s] to be missing information that makes the working more likely to be successful” (—pages 643-644).

Liber Terribilis opens with an entry on the fruitful “conjunction of the Goetic spirit Seere” as conducted by Nottingham and two of his friends, which shows that whilst Goetia conjunction is an effective part of the magical corpus, it will sometimes have you living on the edge, as it can take you right down to the wire before it resolves the situation. Although it is a powerful form of magic it is demanding too and if you can stick the pace you will find it highly effective. (—pages 640-641)

Nottingham’s account of magical practice is described as “personal,” yet nothing here seems particularly original, which, considering the nature of the subject matter, is probably a plus. He is clearly comfortable with a range of methods, having had some forty years’ experience, and he is surely conversant with the texts he presents. Regrettably, he utilizes a rather narrow band of secondary sources, mostly of the “how-to” sort, and overlooks the wealth of recent scholarly literature on his texts and topics which could have greatly enhanced his presentation of the material.

Nottingham occasionally skitters hastily over terms which carry complex implications. For instance, we read in OTZ CHIM, “The Kabbalah says that originally creation came out of nothing and that nothing concentrated itself to a point and became something” (page 484). There is clearly a lot wrong with this sentence, beginning with the cardinal sin of employing the facile “Kabbalah says…”

At times, Nottingham goes against the covey. For instance, he says that he doesn’t believe the Wiccan “law of three-fold return.” In his opinion,

…it was invented by the founders of modern wiccan/witchcraft revival to encourage society to think that they, modern witches/wiccans, were nice people and those modern witches, or those who think they are, are a little misunderstood by society, but kindly folk just the same.” (Liber Noctis, page 125)

This quote is an example of Nottingham’s rather inefficient prose; when making his more personal points, he tends to be a bit scattered and redundant. (Another example of this unchecked style is quoted above in the description of Liber Terribilis.)

16 Nottingham repeatedly begins paragraphs with “The Kabbalah considers…” “The Kabbalah makes clear…” “The Kabbalah teaches…” each followed by a dilute smattering of kabbalistic wisdom. While Nottingham quotes the Zohar with attribution (page 485), he does not provide the conventional volume and section numbers (in this case Zohar 2:76a), nor does he cite his source for the quote, namely Israel Regardie, A Garden of Pomegranates (St. Paul: Llewellyn, 1995), page 93.

This is not the place to reiterate the whole argument against references like “kabbalah says.” Briefly, kabbalah is not a work, a specific source, or even a unified doctrine. Citing a specific text and, if possible, its author seems an obvious minimum requirement. Imagine if someone wrote, “English literature says…”

This issue is taken up in some of my papers:

• “Kabbalah Study: Jewish Mysticism in English,” which is appended (pages 42-49) to “Notes on the Study of Early Kabbalah in English” at Hermetic Kabbalah: http://www.digital-brilliance.com/contributed/Karr/Biblios/ekie.pdf
• “Which Lurianic Kabbalah?” posted at Academia: https://www.academia.edu/30928619/Which_Lurianic_Kabbalah_-_expanded_version
Cross references among the chapters/volumes would have been helpful. In Ars Theurgia Goetia (page 461), Nottingham mentions his assumption

that the reader is familiar with various occult practices from the corpus of Western Magical Traditions, such as the Lesser Banishing Ritual and the Pentagram, the Middle Pillar, and consecrating of the Magic Circle. This also implies that you have the various tools of the arte and are familiar with their use.

Nottingham does not note here that all this is covered in Chapter/Volume I, Liber Noctis, along with basic information on a wide array of practices: geomancy, sigils, “kameas,” magical use of the Psalms, candle magic, etc. Whereas the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram is spelled out in its proper place in a working described in Ars Geomantica (pages 294-296), in the praxis described in Ars Theurgia Goetia, we simply read “Perform LBRP” (—page 462). This could be particularly frustrating to the reader of Ars Theurgia Goetia in the separate paperback edition.

Yet, with these shortcomings, Nottingham writes with a welcome offhand earnestness. In this, his approach to magic is never far from good common sense. Case in point: under the banner of the old “To Know, to Dare, to Will and to Keep Silent,” he bids the practitioner, “Don’t talk about what you’re about” (—page 18). O, what following this advice could have spared so many aspiring magicians—not to mention the people around them.

All in all, Foundations… supplies an impressive amount of practical information from a knowledgeable and reasonable fellow. As a stand-alone source or as an anchor to a collection of grimoires, this book could serve well. For anyone who has confronted a magical text and thought, “Okay, now what?” Foundations of Practical Sorcery offers a broad and well-considered inroad providing all of the information needed for a range of operations.

III

Techniques of Solomonic Magic by Stephen Skinner (Singapore: Golden Hoard Press, 2015) is introduced as part of Skinner’s Ph.D. dissertation, others being Techniques of Graeco-Egyptian Magic (which has been published—Singapore: Golden Hoard Press, 2014), and two further works on the practice of Graeco-Egyptian and Solomonic magic, which are forthcoming. While the already-published titles present intertwined material, this review treats only Techniques of Solomonic Magic due to its focus on the subject at hand. No doubt, this work can stand alone.

Skinner, who is both an experienced practitioner and a judicious scholar, is very careful to define and delimit just what Solomonic method entails (most succinctly in his Appendix 6: “The Classic Solomonic Method”). In this, he preserves Solomonic method as “learned magic,” as distinct from “folk magic or village magic,” which would include the English “cunning man,” the hoodoo “conjure man,” and witchcraft (pages 20-21).

The title, Techniques of Solomonic Magic, might lead one to think that this is an instruction book, for the words “practice,” “methods,” and “techniques,” are often used interchangeably. Skinner draws a distinction between “practice” and the other two terms, reserving for “practice” the performative (read “practical”) aspects of his subject. In Techniques of Solomonic Magic, Skinner seeks to determine

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the historic trajectory of the “techniques” and “methods” of what has coalesced as Solomonic magic.

In composing this trajectory, Skinner has marshaled a broad array of recent scholarship. More importantly, he has done a vast amount of original research, basing his observations and comparisons directly on the pertinent texts, whether in printed editions or unique manuscripts, the vast majority of which Skinner viewed first-hand.

Skinner’s research encompasses more than his years formally working towards his Ph.D. Indeed, his long and admirable career has in large part been involved with the grimoire tradition. In a more concentrated way, the works published in Golden Hoard’s important SOURCEWORKS OF CEREMONIAL MAGIC series, for which Skinner edited nine volumes and, of these, co-authored seven, serve as a preamble to the production of Skinner’s dissertation. In Techniques of Solomonic Magic, Skinner writes (page 27)

As an accompaniment to this volume, I suggest you have to hand copies of some of the source texts:

*The Magical Treatise of Solomon or Hygromanteia* by Ioannis Marathakis; *The Veritable Key of Solomon* by myself and David Rankine; *The Key of Solomon* by MacGregor Mathers; *Sepher Raziel: Liber Salomonis* by Don Karr [and Stephen Skinner]; and *The Lesser Key of Solomon* by Joseph Peterson.

The first, second, and fourth books on this list are volumes in the SOURCEWORKS series. Mathers’ edition of *The Key of Solomon*, first published in 1889, is, of course, the “classic” text. *The Lesser Key of Solomon*, also known as *The Lemegeton*, is the other major “proof text” of the Solomonic tradition; the edition recommended here was most ably prepared by Joseph Peterson (2001).

The value of *Techniques of Solomonic Magic* goes far beyond Skinner’s conclusions about where the material in the *Key of Solomon* came from, for Skinner has presented his entire scholarly process, complete with charts (vast outlines of text groups and manuscripts), tables (comparing details of various texts), and illustrations, all for us to engage. Skinner admits, in so many words, that the book and, for that matter, his entire dissertation project remain works in progress. Case in point: after delivering evidence for his suggestion that *Apotelesmatike Pragmateia* by Stephanos is “an early version or forerunner of the *Hygromanteia*” (page 69), he adds

I would be happy to have this attribution refuted, but only if a better candidate for the authorship of the *Hygromanteia* can be discovered.

Skinner often acknowledges that further research may lead to different conclusions regarding various issues surrounding his primary thesis, but he presents, in overwhelming detail, his case quite convincingly. To me, of Skinner’s nineteen conclusions, the following (ii and iii) are by far the most important (page 280):

ii) There is a clear line of transmission from the *Hygromanteia* to the *Clavicula Salomonis* which is identifiable down to the very detailed level of Solomonic method and specific pieces of equipment. Therefore there can be no doubt that the *Hygromanteia* is the forefather of the *Clavicula Salomonis*.

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19 See above, page 1, note 1 above.
iii) There are two main exceptions to the above point:

a) The scrying chapters in the *Hygromanteia* have not been passed on to the *Clavicula Salomonis*. These scrying methods are however found almost word-for-word in an 11th-century Jewish source. Accordingly, the Jewish sources probably supplied these chapters to the *Hygromanteia*.

b) The pentacles chapters in the *Clavicula Salomonis* do not derive from the *Hygromanteia*, but probably come from the manuscript *Sepher ha-Oto*, or from a related Hebrew source.

Thus, the trend away from supposing that the Solomonic grimoires had Jewish origins is in part confirmed yet in part reversed through Skinner’s discoveries and observations.20

*Techniques of Solomonic Magic* is not a magic instruction book. The description posted at the website of Llewellyn Worldwide—the North American distributor for Golden Hoard publications—accurately identifies the work as

The most detailed analysis of the techniques of Solomonic magic from the seventh to the nineteenth century ever published. This volume explores the methods of Solomonic magic in Alexandria, tracing how the tradition passed through Byzantium (*the Hygromanteia*) to the Latin *Clavicula Salomonis* and its English incarnation as the *Key of Solomon*.21

We will have to wait to see what Skinner’s sequel on the practice of Solomonic magic provides. But anyone who has collected grimoires in the Solomonic tradition can here, in the channels that Skinner has excavated, find an enormous amount of information about the province and composition of the oft-reproduced texts (*The Key of Solomon, The Lemegeton, Agrippa’s Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, etc.) while learning that not all of the famous grimoires are “Solomonic,” and acquaint themselves with less-known magic texts from antiquity and medieval times that contributed to Solomonic literature. Thus, Skinner’s work bears less comparison with the books singled out above by Aaron Leitch and Gary St. Michael Nottingham than it does to, say, *Ritual Magic* by E. M. Butler and the more recent *Grimoires* by Owen Davies—among all of which I would surmise that Skinner’s *Techniques of Solomonic Magic* will prove the most significant.

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20 One small quibble: In his sub-chapter (3.2) on “The Input of Jewish Magic to the *Clavicula Salomonis*,” Skinner speculates (page 40, note 5): “Interestingly the angel ambiguously referred to as the ‘Lord God of Israel’ is Zoharariel, which might better be read as ‘Zohar Arie.’ An angel name possibly generated from the title of that great classic of the Kabbalah, the *Sepher ha-Zohar.*”

This doesn’t follow at all given that Zoharariel already appears in texts of the merkavah tradition (200-800 CE), most importantly *Hekhalot Rabbaṭi* (§§ 96, 99, 102, 103, 110, 111, 119, 121, 197, 204, 232, and 251), but also *Hekhalot Zutarti* (§ 418, as one of the seven angels: Zoharariel, Uriel, Afael, Gabriel, Nuriel, Panael, and Serafiel), *Ma’asih Merkava* (§ 381), and the Geniza Fragments (§ 121). Section (§) numbers follow Peter Schafer et al., *Symposion zur Hekhalot Literatur* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1981).

The *Sefer ha-Zohar* was not written/redacted/manifest/circulated (take your pick) until around 1300.


OTHER SIGNIFICANT PUBLICATIONS


§ M, “Magic of the Grimoires—Angels, Demons and Spirits,” connects with the topic at hand. § M offers tables drawn from

- Testament of Solomon
- Liber Juratus, the Sworn Book of Honorius
- Peter de Abano’s Heptameron
- Codex Latinus Monacensis
- Goetia (Lemegeton Book I)
- Therugia Goetia (Lemegeton Book II)
- Ars Paulina (Lemegeton Book III)
- Ars Almadel (Lemegeton Book IV)
- Key of Solomon – Clavicula Salomonis
- Sacred Magic of Abramelin
- Franz Bardon’s Practice of Magical Evocation
- Grimoirum Verum
- Grand Grimoire

The oft-cited but frustratingly scarce works on the Hebrew MS called Sepher Maphteah Shelomoh (ca. 1700) by Hermann Gollancz have been reprinted in a single volume by Teitan Press (York Beach: 2008):

- Sepher Maphteah Shelomoh (BOOK OF THE KEY OF SOLOMON). An exact facsimile of an original book of magic in Hebrew with illustrations now produced for the first time. (London – New York: Oxford University Press, 1914—of which only 300 copies were printed)

The Teitan edition adds a seven-page foreword by Stephen Skinner, which states that “there is no doubt that this manuscript [i.e., Sepher Maphteah Shelomoh] is part of the Solomonic magical tradition,” and “in a large measure derived from them, which is quite the reverse of the usual assumption” (—page viii). In a section sub-headed CONFIRMATION OF THE LATINIZED CONTENTS, Skinner (following Claudia Rohrbacher-Stricker) presents “proof that this text [i.e., Sepher Maphteah Shelomoh] is a translation from a Latin/Italian original, by a Hebrew translator” (—page xii).

Alas, the reprint is a limited edition of 358 copies.

22 Sepher ha-Levanah (BOOK OF THE MOON) as first published by A. W. Greenup (London: [n.p.], 1912) is, or was, part of the Maphteah Shelomo MS, but became separated from it. Sepher ha-Levanah, too, was taken from Latin to Hebrew. Refer to Liber Luna—Book of the Moon—Sepher ha-Levanah, pp. 71-125 (see note 10 above).
TEXTS OF SOLOMONIC MAGIC IN ENGLISH

BOOKS REFERRED TO FREQUENTLY:


1. a. THE KEY OF SOLOMON

The best-known presentation of the KEY OF SOLOMON is Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers’ *Key of Solomon the King* (London: Redway, 1888; rpt. New York – York Beach: Samuel Weiser Inc., 1974 and subsequently). Mathers compiled his edition from several MSS found in the British Library’s Sloane, Harleian, Lansdowne, and King collections, attempting to weave from these an “ideal” text.


The most extensive treatment of the KEY to date is Volume IV of the Golden Hoard Press series, SOURCEWORKS OF CEREMONIAL MAGIC: *The Veritable Key of Solomon* by Stephen Skinner and David Rankine (London – Singapore: Golden Hoard Press / Woodbury: Llewellyn Publications, 2008), which presents three KEY OF SOLOMON texts translated from the French by Paul Harry Barron:

KEY 1. *The Keys of Rabbi Solomon* (Wellcome MS 4670 [1796])
KEY 2. *La Clavicule ou La Clé de Salomon* (Wellcome MS 4669 Art. 1 [1796])
KEY 3. *Traité Universal des Clavicules de Salomon* (Wellcome MS 4669 Art. 2)

—these being “three different texts from those translated by S. L. MacGregor Mathers.” The texts are introduced by a 60-page survey of the history and various “text-groups” of the KEY, supplemented by several appendices listing KEY MSS.


24 See Joseph Peterson’s full transcription of the sixteenth-century *Key of Knowledge* (i.e., *Clavicula Salomonis*, British Library, Additional MS 36674), which, though in English, was not used by Mathers: [http://www.esotericarchives.com/solomon/ad36674.htm](http://www.esotericarchives.com/solomon/ad36674.htm).

Mathers’ version of the KEY is included in the no-frills “pirate” collection, *The Clavicula Salomonis* (sic) by Magus Tsirk Susej—Jesus Krist backwards—(n.p.: Embassy of Lucifer, 2005); this edition has the text of the KEY and the LESSER KEY (see below 1.b, page 16ff)—with no introduction, notes, or mention of sources, MSS or printed editions.

25 Additional material from Wellcome MS 4669 has been published as *A Collection of Magical Secrets, Taken from Peter de Abano, Cornelius Agrippa and from other Famous Occult Philosophers & A Treatise of Mixed Cabalab, Which comprises the Angelic Art Taken from Hebrew Sages*, translated from Wellcome MS 4669 by Paul Harry Barron from the original French manuscript dated 1796, with introduction and commentary by Stephen Skinner & David Rankine (London: Avalonia, 2009).
A composite of material related to the Key was assembled by Ebenezer Sibley (or Sibly) as *Clavis or Key to Unlock the Mysteries of Magic of Rabbi Solomon, translated from Hebrew into French and from French rendered into English with additions*, ca. 1800.  Three reproduction editions have recently been published:

1. *Solomon's Clavis, or Key to Unlock the Mysteries of Magic* (Leicestershire: Society of Esoteric Endeavor, 2008), which offers Sibley's manuscript, English translations primarily from various French magical sources undorned, *i.e.*, “no modern introduction,” with Sibly’s preface. This one has become a pricey collectable.


3. *The Clavis or Key to Unlock the Mysteries of Magic*, by Rabbi Solomon translated by Ebenezer Sibley, introduction by Dr. Stephen Skinner and Daniel Clark. “It is a 523-page full-colour grimoire, probably the high point of calligraphic Victorian grimoire manuscripts.” (Singapore: Golden Hoard Press, 2019)—the most complete edition.

Similar material is contained in *The Keys of Rabbi Solomon*, “translated accurately from the Hebrew into English” by Edward Hunter, *circ 1830*, edited by Travis Shores, “exclusive limited facsimile format” (Grantham: Hell Fire Books, 2016). This edition is definitely more suited to the collector than the scholar or practitioner given the limited scope of the content. Similar to Sibley’s works, this is a hand-copied manuscript of a composite of Solomonic and other materials. The obscurity of this particular version of the *Clavis* is assured in that the publisher saw fit to release only attractive but high-priced limited editions (42 of calf skin, 250 of kidskin).

There is also *The Pentacles of Solomon* by S. Aldarnay (Hadean Press, 2012): “Author and illustrator S. Aldarnay presents each of the Pentacles given in the *Key of Solomon*, precisely redrawn and with explanations of the divine names, the names of spirits, as well as the vesicles in English, Latin and Hebrew, in an attempt to make the individual’s use of the seals more effective.” (—online description; I have not seen the book).


Note the re-presentation of material from Mathers’ version of the Key in Nottingham’s *Foundations* (described above, pages 8–10): Chapter/Volume II — *ARS SALOMONIS* (*Being of the Hidden Arte of Solomon the King*) “…working with the talismanic figures found in the Key of Solomon.”

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26 In “The Key of Solomon: Toward a Typology of the Manuscripts” (in *Societas Magica Newsletter*, Issue 17, Spring 2007—online at [http://www.societasmagica.org/](http://www.societasmagica.org/)), Robert Mathiesen “offer[s] some materials for an eventual typological study of these [Key of Solomon] texts,” starting with an account of 122 MSS written in languages using the Latin alphabet, as opposed to those in Greek or Hebrew, then offering a provisional division of these into “Western text groups,” *e.g.*, “Oldest (Western) Text [OT],” “Toz Gracius Text-Group [TG],” “Invocation of Angels Text-Group [IA],” and so on. Mathiesen adds some comments on “A Hebrew Version of the Key of Solomon,” namely, *Maṭṭeḥ Shelomoh,* and “An Arabic Version…,” entitled *Al-Mīlah al-Aqdim bi-Salāman al-Hakim,* and proffers some “Tentative Conclusions.”


28 For a description and list of contents, see *https://hellfireclubbooks.com/shop/the-keys-of-rabbi-solomon-ltd-to-250-copies/*

29 *http://www.shop.hadeanpress.com/*
Refer also to Stephen Skinner’s *Techniques of Solomonic Magic* (described above, pages 10-12), which traces the origins of the Key’s methods and contents.

Lastly, find Christopher Warnock’s informative, albeit provocative, blog, “The Greater Key of Solomon is Wrong!” (April 16, 2012), at Renaissance Astrology > http://renaissance-astrology.blogspot.com/2012/04/greater-key-of-solomon-is-wrong.html. Warnock concludes,

Renaissance Astrology pentacles don’t follow the Greater Key exactly and we do this because following the true full chart traditional astrological methodology provides a much more powerfully charged talisman. We don’t use the traditional metals because it simply isn’t necessary for a powerful talisman.

1. **b. Lemegeton, or Lesser Key of Solomon**

The *Lemegeton* consists of five sections:

i. *Goetia* – on binding evil spirits and their seals

ii. *Theriak-Goetia* §§ I and II – on both good and evil spirits

iii. Pauline Art – on the good spirits of the planets and the 360 degrees of the zodiac

iv. *Almadel* – good spirits of the quaternary of the altitudes

v. Notary Art (or *Ars Nova* – see discussions below regarding content)

*Goetia* is the most circulated of the *Lemegeton*’s sections, having been published numerous times. The best-known version is the one transcribed by S. L. MacGregor Mathers in 1898, with an introductory essay entitled “Preliminary Definition of Magic.” A few years later, Aleister Crowley published this same edition enhanced by his own introduction, preface, preliminary invocation, and other ornaments (Foyers: S[ociety for the] P[ropagation of] R[eligious] T[ruth] Ltd, 1904). In 1916, the pirating began—or continued—with an edition bearing the name L. W. de Laurence and the title *The Lesser Key of Solomon—Goetia: The Book of Evil Spirits* (Chicago: de Laurence, Scott and Co.), which is the Mathers-Crowley work unacknowledged; this edition is listed as still in print.

A larger version—in size, not in content—bearing Crowley’s name was published in 1970 (New York: Ram Importer Inc.; subsequent editions from Equinox Ltd in 1976, Magicka Childe in 1989, and First Impressions in 1993) as *The Book of the Goetia of Solomon the King*; this is, for the most part, a dressed-up version of the “SPRT/de Laurence” edition.30

*Goetia* is described and quoted in Butler’s *Ritual Magic* (pages 65-80); it is presented in both Shah (pages 179-211; 299-304) and Waite (pages 64-66; 184-235). Waite’s “list of the seventy-two spirits … along with their sigils” is reproduced in Christopher McIntosh’s *Devil’s Bookshelf* (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1985: pages 168-189).

*Of the Arte Goetia* by Colin Campbell (York Beach: Teitan Press, 2015) offers a manner of *Goetia* companion, which has been a long-standing desideratum. After singling out Joseph Peterson’s “critical edition of the complete Lesser Key of Solomon”31 (of which *Goetia* is the first section) as the text-source of record, Campbell’s first chapter concludes with this statement of intention:

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30 There is also *Aleister Crowley’s Illustrated Goetia*, by Lon Milo DuQuette and Christopher Hyatt, illustrated by David P. Wilson (Tempe: New Falcon Publications, 1992). This work presents the list of spirits “from Crowley’s original Goetia—which also includes many other prerequisites for evocation” along with material from 777, where Crowley “attributed the Seventy-Two Spirits of the Goetia (in pairs, Day/Night) to the Decans of the Zodiac.” (page 71) Each spirit is also given a full-page image drawn by “artist-clairvoyant David P. Wilson, who is also a talented and adept Goetic magician.” (page 72). The text is supplemented by nine chapters which expand on Crowley’s version of the *Goetia*, offering background, advice, and anecdotes.

31 See my comments on Peterson’s *Lesser Key*… below, pages 20-21.
This present work was composed with several aims in mind, the chief of which was to trace the emergence of *Goetia* into the English language manuscripts with which it is now closely identified. By comparing the known sources and influences, it is possible to observe the subtle and not-so-subtle changes; the errors, omissions, inclusions, and other alterations that together combine to create the text as we now know it. We can also use these comparisons to aid us in historical research into the origins of the work, as well as to identify the external influences that affected it (—page 22).

At his website, COLIN CAMPBELL’S *DE ARTE MAGICA*, Campbell writes

Many are aware that the listing of spirits that is presented in *Goetia* is derived almost in its entirety from the earlier work *Pseudomonarchia Daemonum* (*THE FALSE MONARCHY OF DEMONS*) as given by Johann Wier (Wierus [or Weyer]) in his publication in protest of the witch hysteria in his native Germany, *De Praestigiis Daemonum* (*OF THE ILLUSIONS OF SPIRITS*) [1563; *Pseudomonarchia Daemonum* was added as an appendix to *De Praestigiis Daemonum* in 1577]. …

This work [*i.e.*, Wier’s], specifically with relation to its advocacy against persecution of suspected witches (typically, impoverished elderly women), was picked up in England by Reginald Scot, a lawyer, who argued in *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), that not only were witches not actually able to do all the things of which they were accused, but that regardless they should be tried for the crime they were accused of committing rather than witchcraft itself. …

One of the aims of *Of the Arte Goetia* was to place these three sources—Wier, Scot, and the [*Goetia*] manuscripts—side by side so that one could see the evolution of each spirit’s description. Once accomplished, it was easy to show where discrepancies arose.

From among the “manuscripts,” Campbell uses the *Goetia* as it appears in Sloane MS. 3825 as his base text (which was Peterson’s base text for the whole of the *Lemegeton*, parts i-iv).

A catalogue of demons which is closely related to the *Goetia* is offered in *A Book of the Offices of Spirits — The Occult Virtue of Plants and Some Rare Magical Charms & Spells*, transcribed by Frederick Hockley from a Sixteenth-Century Manuscript on Magic and Necromancy by John Porter (1583), with an introduction by Colin D. Campbell (York Beach: Teitan Press, 2011). Campbell suggests that

[given the close relationship between the two manuscripts [*i.e.*, *The Offices of Spirits* and *Goetia*], it would seem reasonable to speculate that they have a common ancestor. If so, then *The Offices of Spirits* is probably the earlier of the two, as *Goetia* is considerably more organized and includes additional seals for each of its spirits.

*Goetia* and *Thesurgia-Goetia* are given full treatment in Gary Nottingham’s *Foundations* (described above, pages 8-10):

(1) on *Goetia*, Chapter or Volume VII – *LIBER TERRIBILIS* (*Being an instruction on the seventy-two spirits of the Goetia*);


34 *The Discovery of Witchcraft* has long been available as one of those ubiquitous Dover paperbacks, which reprints the edition published by John Rodker in 1930. On the goetic spirits as derived from Wier, see [BOOK XV, CHAPTER II](http://www.britannica.com/topic/Witchcraft). Refer also to Philip C. Almond’s *England’s First Demonologist: Reginald Scot & ‘The Discoverie of Witchcraft’* (London – New York: I. B. Taurus Co Ltd, 2011).
Waite considers the *Pauline Art* in *Ceremonial Magic* (pages 66-72), and Christopher McIntosh includes the conjuration of Samael from a MS of the *Pauline Art* “copied out by Frederick Hockley, the indefatigable nineteenth-century collector of occult documents,” in *The Devil’s Bookshelf* (pages 190-1).

Hockley’s full transcription (1838) of both sections of the *Pauline Art* (1. on the spirits of the hours of the day, and 2. on the 360 angels of the zodiac) has been published under the title *The Pauline Art of Solomon* (York Beach: Teitan Press, 2016). Editor Alan Thorogood provides a history of the *Pauline Art*, fills in much of what Hockley edited out, and corrects errors that accumulated in the text. This edition includes a somewhat undersized facsimile of Hockley’s manuscript.


Some efforts have offered complete, or near-complete, editions of *Lemegeton*. All segments but Notary Art appear in Kevin Wilby’s *Lemegeton: A Medieval Manual of Solomonic Magic* [Sloane MS 3648] (Dyfed: Hermetic Research Series NUMBER 5, 1985). In his article, “The Lemegeton Revealed,” (in *The Hermetic Journal*, Issue 29, ed. Adam McLean, 1985), Wilby says that Notary Art “is fragmentary and nowhere near complete,” referring to it as the “corrupted fifth part.” Wilby is even harsher in the FOREWORD to his book, *The Lemegeton*, referring to the “fifth and final book” as “the only blemish I found in this masterly work,” deeming Notary Art “literary tripe.”

A so-so photocopy (with some pages missing) of British Library Sloane MS 2731 (which is in English) and a remarkably poor typescript comprise Nelson and Anne White’s *Lemegeton: Clavicula Salomonis, The Complete Lesser Key of Solomon the King* (Fremont: Technology Group, 1979; 2nd edition, once available at www.techgroupbooks.com—an unfortunately now-defunct site which proved that one picture is, indeed, worth a thousand words).

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35 The *Almadel* of the *Lemegeton* should not be confused with *Armadel*—a completely different work, available as *The Grimoire of Armadel*, translated by S. L. MacGregor Mathers (York Beach: Samuel Weiser, 1980 and 1995); nor should these be confused with the *Arbatel of Magick*, a collection of forty-nine magical aphorisms which is the first section of an otherwise lost nine-part tome said to have been employed by John Dee.


36 *The Holy Almandal* is a practical manual of ritual magic which “may have roots extending back into Persia and the Far East, but its medieval versions were thoroughly Christianized” [page 192]; however, *Almandal* and *Almadel* are of “diverse traditions.” (—Veenstra, *Holy Almandel…*, page 209).
The edition from the International Guild of Occult Sciences (hereafter I.G.O.S.), *King Solomon’s The Lemegeton: Lesser Key (or The Lemegeton: King Solomon’s Lesser Key)* (Palm Springs: I.G.O.S., 1997) contains the Whites’ photocopy slightly enlarged with a transcription which is neat and readable. Neither the Whites’ nor the I.G.O.S. version includes Notary Art, save for a few “sample pages,” stating that Notary Art is “quite obviously not a ‘book,’ but rather a collection of notes and explanations which should have been presented with the first book, *The Goetia*” (the Whites’ edition, page 57); and “a scattered and undeveloped jotting down … at best supplementary notations” (I.G.O.S. edition, page 65).

Robin E. Cousins37 observes that Notary Art is, in fact, omitted from Sloane 2731, the MS used by the Whites and I.G.O.S. According to Cousins,38 Wilby based his edition on a manuscript (Sloane MS 3648) which contains the Notary Art, but—as noted above—he saw fit to exclude it from his “complete” edition.

Another “complete” edition, *Lemegeton: The Complete Lesser Key of Solomon*, edited by Mitch Henson, with revised illustrations by Jeff Wellman (Jacksonville: Metatron Books, 1999), also omits Notary Art. Explaining this omission, Henson says, “Both the content and the context of *Ars Notoria* show no affinity for the listings of spirits that mark the bulk of the material contained in *The Lesser Key of Solomon*.”

In his introduction, Henson states, “The text for this edition is a composite derived from Sloane Ms 3825 and 2731 from the British Library. These are the most complete and internally consistent manuscripts available,” adding further on, “For this edition, we have reproduced all of the illustrations from Sloane Ms 2731.” Henson’s *Lemegeton*, now out of print, has become one of the most sought-after—and high-priced—editions.

A text entitled *Ars Notoria: The Notary Art of Solomon*, translated into English in 1657 by Robert Turner of Holshott (not to be confused with Robert Turner, the present-day author/editor, cited in footnotes 37 and 40) has been published in a collector’s edition (Seattle: Trident Press, 1987 and 1997) along with some support material: “An Astrological Catechisme,” “Solomon and the *Ars Notoria*” from Lynn Thorndike’s *History of Magic and Experimental Science*, and “*Ars Notoria* in Manuscript” by Adam McLean. This is clearly not the *Ars Notoria* referred to by the Whites, I.G.O.S., and Henson.39

A low-cost edition of this work, titled variously *Ars Notoria: The Magical Art of Solomon, Showing the Cabalistical Key of Magical Operations or The Magical Art of Solomon, being the Ars Notoria: A Grimoire [KABBALISTIC GRIMOIRE SERIES III]*, edited by Darcy Kuntz without the sundry additions, was put out by Holmes Publishing Group [Edmonds] in 1998 and remains available in a more recent reprint edition.

A handsome reproduction of Frederick Hockley’s 1839 transcription of—and occasional additions to—Robert Turner’s translation of *Ars Notoria: The Notary Art of Solomon* has been published by Teitan Press (York Beach: 2015). This edition includes an introduction by editor

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38 Ibid., page 141.
39 Clair Fanger states, “There is no modern edition of the Ars Notoria, and the relation of the seventeenth-century text (found in Agrippa’s *Opera Omnia* and the Turner translation) to the medieval manuscript tradition remains unexamined.” (“Plundering the Egyptian Treasure,” in *Conjuring Spirits*, page 219). One would assume that at least the first part of this desideratum has been answered by the more recent editions of *Ars Notoria* listed in the current essay.
Alan Thorogood and an essay, “The Philomath: In Search of Robert Turner of Holshot,” which is “...a significant 24-page biographical study (with bibliography)” by Robin Cousins. And finally, there is “for the first time” a complete version “with unparalleled color plates” including “five complete sets of notae” (“the most vital component of its operation ... which have always been left out of other printed editions”): *Ars Notoria: The Grimoire of Rapid Learning by Magic* with the *Golden Flowers* of Apollonius of Tyana, translated by Robert Turner, edited and introduced by Stephen Skinner and Daniel Clark (Singapore: Golden Hoard Press, 2019)—quotes from the description at [http://goldenhoard.net/](http://goldenhoard.net/).

On the *Ars notoria*, refer to the following:

- *Conjuring Spirits*
  - Camille, Michael. “Visual Art in Two Manuscripts of the *Ars Notoria*”
  - Fanger, Claire. “Plundering the Egyptian Treasure: John the Monk’s *Book of Visions* and its Relation to the *Ars notoria* of Solomon”
  - Klaassen, Frank. § THE ARS NOTORIA within “English Manuscripts of Magic, 1300-1500: A Preliminary Survey”
- Julien Veronèse’s “Magic, Theurgy, and Spirituality in the Medieval Ritual of the *Ars notoria*,” in *Invoking Angels*.

So, what actually *is* the fifth book of the *Lemegeton*? While not really contradicting the White/I.G.O.S. assessment, Benjamin Rowe offers an alternative and more positive take on the *Lemegeton’s* fifth book. In the introduction to his *Ars Nova—Book Five of the Lemegeton* (June 1999), Rowe states that in some manuscripts (such as the one from which he transcribed, Sloane MS. 2731—the same as the Whites’ and I.G.O.S.), the fifth book is an addendum containing notes on *Goetia*. This book has been mistakenly called *Ars Notoria* instead of the correct name, *Ars Nova*. Rowe suggests quite convincingly that the last couple of pages of the manuscript are out of order, and, thus, *Ars Nova* consists of two leaves rather than one. These final pages of *Lemegeton* can be seen in the photocopies of the White and I.G.O.S. editions.42

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41 “The Philomath” as it appears in Teitan’s *Ars Notoria* “has been fully revised and updated with recently discovered material” (—Cousins, *Ars Notoria*, page xxvii).

42 Formerly at Rowe’s site, Norton’s *Imperium: Enochian Magick Papers & Links* > “Classics of Magic,” [www.hermetic.com/browe-archive](http://www.hermetic.com/browe-archive); at this site you will find this message: “This topic does not yet exist.”


The LESSER KEY collection with *Ars Nova*—not *Ars Notoria*—is included in The Embassy of Lucifer’s *Clavicula Solomonis*—mentioned above in note 24. The Embassy’s *Ars Nova* is identical to Rowe’s version, including the footnote numbers in the text—without the footnotes.
In apparent agreement with Rowe, Stephen Skinner notes that whenever *Ars Nova* has been transcribed, it has been read incorrectly as a continuous text rather than as columns. Thus, according to Skinner, the only printed edition of *Ars Nova* which is transcribed in the correct order appears in Skinner & Rankine, *The Goetia of Dr Rudd* (London: Golden Hoard, 2007), APPENDIX 9, pages 414-421; more on *The Goetia of Dr Rudd* below.

*The Lesser Key of Solomon*, edited by Joseph H. Peterson (York Beach: Red Wheel/Weiser, 2001), includes a complete text—all five books, including *Ars Notoria*—with other pertinent material, including a preface from one of the MS editions of the *Lesser Key*, addenda from two others, and Johann Weyer’s *Pseudomonarchia daemonum*.

I have followed Sloane 3825 for this edition, except for *Ars Notoria*. For the latter, the manuscripts are clearly dependent on Robert Turner’s translation. I have therefore used his 1657 printed edition as my primary source.” (INTRODUCTION, page xiii)

However, Peterson adds (in the introduction to *Ars Notoria* at his website, ESOTERIC ARCHIVES http://www.esotericarchives.com/notoria/notoria.htm):

Unfortunately [Turner’s version] omit[s] the drawings of the notae or mystical drawings which are the centerpiece of this art. Their omission adds greatly to the confusion of the text. Unfortunately, Turner further adds to the confusion by omitting some of the internal references to the missing figures.

Intelligently prepared, nicely printed, reasonably priced: Peterson’s *Lesser Key* by far the best edition available.

Further, there is *The Goetia of Dr Rudd: The Angels & Demons of Liber Malorum Spirituum seu Goetia Lemegeton Clavicula Salomonis* / with study techniques of evocation in the context of the angel magic tradition of the seventeenth century / being a transcription of Dr Rudd’s *Liber Malorum Spiritum seu Goetia* from Harley MS 6483, with other pertinent extracts from manuscripts Harley MS 6482, Sloane MS 3824 and Wellcome MS 3203, by Stephen Skinner and David Rankine (London – Singapore: Golden Hoard Press, 2007).

The question “Why another edition of the *Lemegeton*?” is taken up in the introduction. I have condensed:

1. The manuscript contains much material which no other version does. …
2. We wanted to show how the system of magic in the *Lemegeton* was developed and actually practiced by working magicians in the seventeenth century. …
3. The seals in this manuscript are beautiful and more carefully drawn than in any other manuscript …
4. This version explains the preparation and protection of the magician, specifically what precise angel he should use to compel each individual demon, and the use of the Brass Vessel. These key practical details are not present in any other edition of the Goetia.
5. We wanted to trace where the *Lemegeton* material comes from and to demonstrate that its roots reach back at least to the thirteenth century, and the connections between angel magicians and those evoking in the grimoire tradition, which in the case of this manuscript proves to be identical. …

*The Goetia of Dr Rudd* is Volume III of SOURCEWORKS OF CEREMONIAL MAGIC by Skinner and Rankine (see above, footnote 10 on page 4). It contains *Goetia, Theurgia Goetia, The Art Pauline, 43

43 In an email to me, 10/4/2009.
and *The Art Almadel*—but not *Ars Notoria* because “it is not a workable system as it appears in these manuscripts,” i.e., without the crucial note illustrations.

A paperback edition, *Lemegeton: The Complete Books I-V* by Victor Shaw ([GB]: Erebus Society, 2017) offers an inexpensive way to possess the work. It follows Sloane 3825 through the *Ars Almadel*, then Turner’s 1657 version of *Ars Notoria*. A note from the publisher on the back cover reads,

> The illustrations in this book come from enhanced scans of the original seals. The scans have been painted over by hand using black ink and then re-scanned in order to improve the texture and make the lines and letters more legible, as some of the pages and illustrations of the book have deteriorated due to the manuscript’s age, and they appear faded or broken. The original manuscript can be found in the British Museum.

2. a. **Grimorium Verum**

Here again we can turn to Waite (pages 96-100, 159-183, 236-240, with numerous other references) and Shah (pages 64-68 and 75-112).


The most complete edition available is, not surprisingly, that of Joseph H. Peterson (Scotts Valley: CreateSpace Publishing, 2007), which offers not only an English translation but complete French and Italian texts. Peterson’s careful work accommodates academics and practitioners alike.

Jake Stratton-Kent, a practicing necromancer, has “reconstructed a working text from the corrupted French and Italian versions of this important grimoire” in *The True Grimoire: ENCYCLOPEDIA GOETICA, VOLUME 1*, first published as a limited-edition hardcover (2009) which quickly sold out, subsequently reprinted in a quality paperback, called the “Rouge Edition” ([UK]: Bibliothèque Rouge/Scarlet Imprint, 2010).

There is an inexpensive print-on-demand paperback edition: *The True Grimoire*, by Solomon, the Hebrew Rabbi, edited by Denise Alvarado [PLANET VOODOO’S CLASSIC HOODOO REFERENCE SERIES] ([West Liberty]: Planet Voodoo/ CreateSpace, 2010).

> The following text is the newly revised text of the Grimoriom Verum derived from multiple sources, including the Book of ceremonial magic by Arthur Edward Waite (1913). ... This edition of the Grimorium Verum contains illustrations that are not part of the original text. (*copied as written—from the “Editor’s Notes”*)

See also *Crossed Keys, Being a Chimeric Binding of Both the Black Dragon and the Enchiridion of Pope Leo III*, translated with commentary by Michael Cecchetelli, with additional notes by Peter Grey, edited by Alkistis Dimech ([UK]: Scarlet Imprint, 2011). The BLACK DRAGON offers an apparent amalgam of *Grimorium Verum*, the GRAND GRIMOIRE (or RED DRAGON), and the GRIMOIRE OF HONORIUS.

2. **b. TRUE BLACK MAGIC**

There are conflicting descriptions of this text. Butler outlines a MS containing 45 talismans with details of their workings and “all magical characters known unto this day” from a Hebrew original (*Ritual Magic*, page 80). Waite (page 100) refers to it as “simply an adapted version of the KEY... [and] like the *Grimorium Verum*, it is exceedingly confused, and is rendered almost unmeaning by the omission of the practical part.”

Waite does, however, quote and paraphrase it frequently:

- page 146 on abstinence
- pages 147-148 on baths
- page 149 on inks
- page 154 on instruments
- page 166 on pen and ink
- pages 174-176 on parchment
- pages 177-179 on cleaning
- pages 300-302 for love
- pages 306-307 for invisibility

Joseph Peterson has translated the same text from which Waite drew: *True Black Magic, i.e., La Véritable Magie Noire* (Kasson: Twilit Grotto Press, 2017); the author is listed as “Iroé-Grego,” the supposed translator/compiler of the French text. This edition shows French and English on facing pages. In his introduction (page i), Peterson refers to it as “one of the many variants of The Key of Solomon.” This version “preserves some older elements not included in Mathers’ edition,” e.g., a prayer for exorcising water and a chapter on incenses—along with the more usual planetary pentacles.

Another version of *The True Black Magic*, by Iroe Gregor, (translated) by Matthew Lynch ([n.p.]: [“independently published”]), also appeared in 2017. The back cover states,

The True Black Magic or Secret of Secrets was discovered and translated by the mysterious Iroe Gregor in the middle of the 18th century, Gregor held this text to be nothing less than the magical “Key” of the Great King Solomon.

What is not made clear in the promo/introductory material for this book is that Iroe Gregor (more correctly Iroé-Grego) translated the work from Hebrew to French and that Lynch has put it into English.

2. **c. THE GRAND GRIMOIRE**

The GRAND GRIMOIRE,\(^{45}\) also called the RED DRAGON, is described and quoted by Waite (pages 100-103 and 241-264). Shah introduces it and from it offers an operation for conjuring Lucifuge (pages 68-74).

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\(^{45}\) A book titled *The “Grand Grimoire” or Imperial Ritual of Magic* was compiled by American Rosicrucian R[eu]ben Swinburne Clymer (1878-1960), using the pseudonym “Pythagoras 38” ([Allentown: The Philosophical Publishing Co., 1910]). Clymer’s edition is available online at the Internet Archive site: [https://archive.org/details/grandgrimoireclym](https://archive.org/details/grandgrimoireclym) and has been “reproduced from the original
There is an artful limited edition (500 copies) from Trident/Ars Obscura (Seattle: 1996) translated by Gretchen Rudy from the 1612 Italian edition; this was reprinted by Trident in a $100 “library edition” with an optional $25 slipcase (2006).


The Authentic Red Dragon (Le Véritable Dragon Rouge) … followed by The Black Hen (La Poule Noire), published by Teitan Press (York Beach: 2011), reprints an early nineteenth-century French edition (even though dated 1521) with an English translation by Joshua A. Wentworth, along with a highly entertaining introduction by Silens Manus. Manus says of the text, “[I]t is very obviously a variant of the text known as the Grand Grimoire, and in common with this and other similar grimoires the Dragon Rouge is not a work of ‘high culture.’ … It is manifestly also not a work of spirituality or ‘high magic,’ but instead reflects mundane desires and interests…” (— page xvii).

3. The Grimoire & SWORN BOOK of Honorius

Distinction should immediately be made between the SWORN BOOK of Honorius (Liber iuratis) and the later, derivative—and diabolical—Grimoire, also called the Constitution of Honorius. Unfortunately, these titles are often interchanged (as with the I.G.O.S. edition discussed below).

The Grimoire is treated in the books we have already cited: Butler, pages 89-97; Waite, pages 103-110; and Shah, pages 253-280.

The Grimoire of Pope Honorius “from a [German] manuscript from the Infernal Library of a Schwabian farmer,” translated by Kineta Ch’ien, was published in a limited edition in 1999 by Trident Books (Seattle); both the English and German are included. The text is somewhat different from the one(s) treated by Butler, Waite, and Shah, though introduced by The Constitution of Pope Honorius given in French and English, the English of which is identical to Shah (pages 255-6), and quite similar to Waite (pages 107-9). Included in the Trident edition is some welcome support material, such as a “Bibliographic Prolegomenon” by John Davis, an “Examination of the Editions of the Grimoire,” and yet another text, Conturations Demonum, put into English by Matthew Sullivan.
A mere 65 copies of The Grimoire or Book of Spells of Pope Honorius were published by the Society for Esoteric Endeavor (2006), which offers a facsimile of a nineteenth-century copy of Honorius scribed by one Frederick George Irwin, a member of Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia. There is also The Infernal Conjurations of the Notorious Grimoire of Honorius, Circa 1670 from Finbarr International (Kent [UK]; 2009). I have not seen either.

The Complete Grimoire of Pope Honorius by David Rankine and Paul Harry Barron (London: Avalonia, 2013) includes “a partial translation of Wellcome MS 4666 [which is in French], with numerous additions translated from the French editions of the Grimoire of Pope Honorius dated 1670 [the so-called “Rome edition”], 1760 [BL. shelfmark 8632.a.3] & 1800 [BL. shelfmark 8630.aa.21], and a new translation of the German edition of 1845 [from Scheibel’s Das Kloster]” (—title page [my brackets—DK]). The Complete Grimoire… presents “the entire corpus of this grimoire in print for the first time” (—back cover).

A translation of the SWORN BOOK, or Liber sacer sive liber juratus—as distinct from the Grimoire—was done by Daniel Driscoll: The Sworn Book of Honourius the Magician, As Composed by Honourius through counsel with the Angel Hacronell (Berkeley Heights/Gillette: Heptangle Books, 1977 & 1983), using British Museum (now British Library) MSS Sloane 313 and Royal 17A XLI. Printed as a fancy collectable, this work is now difficult and expensive to obtain. With all this, it is incomplete and frequently inaccurate. Further, the entire text is set in a rather distracting Old English font.


The best edition of this material is The Sworn Book of Honorius: Liber Iuratus Honorii by Honorius of Thebes, with text, translation and commentary by Joseph Peterson (Lake Worth: Ibis Press, 2016), which shows the complete text in Latin and English on facing pages, along with a well-researched introduction.49

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46 Ref. http://www.caduceusbooks.com/honorius.htm. The page links to images of the book and the slipcase. The final words of the webpage are “Please note all copies of this title have sold.”
47 Ref. http://www.finbarrinternationalbooks.com/our-books/black-magic/infernal-conjurations-of-the-notorious-51-detail. After a rather long description, the final words of the webpage are “This is a Black Magic Book.”
48 BL = British Library
49 Online, refer to Joseph H. Peterson’s “Liber Juratus Honorii or Sworne Booke of Honorius” based on the English translation of Royal MS 17A/4xi (16th century) with variant readings from British Library Sloane MSS 3853, 3854 and 3885, at http://www.esotericarchives.com/juratus/juratus.htm. This version was posted online in 1998. Peterson’s introduction to the online Honorius text reads,

Liber Juratus is one of the oldest and most influential texts of Medieval magic. The prologue says the text was compiled to help preserve the core teachings of the sacred magic, in the face of intense persecution by church officials. This may be a reference to the actions of pope John XXII (1316-34).

I believe the almost legendary reputation of this work led to the forgery of the so-called Grimoire of Pope Honorius, a ridiculous work so despised by Eliphas Levi and A. E. Waite.

Section IV of Hedegård’s reconstructed Latin text, “de composicione sigilli Dei vivi et veri” (pages 67-71), has been translated into English by Colin D. Campbell as APPENDIX B of The Magic Seal of Dr. John Dee: The Sigillum Dei Aemeth (York Beach: Teitan Press, 2009). This Seal of God, sometimes called the Seal of Solomon, is a prominent feature of the Honorius text.

On the Honorius material, see the following:

- Conjuring Spirits:
  - Klaassen, Frank THE LIBER SACER OR SWORN BOOK OF HONORIUS within “English Manuscripts of Magic, 1300-1500: A Preliminary Survey.”

- Invoking Angels:
  - Fanger, Claire. “Covenant and the Divine Name: Revisiting the Liber iuratis and John of Morigny’s Liber florum.”
  - Mesler, Katelyn “The Liber iuratos Honorui and the Christian Reception of Angel Magic.”
  - Veenstra, Jan R. “Honorius and the Sigil of God: The Liber iuratus in Berengario Ganel’s Summa sacre magiae.”


4. Semiphoras & Shemhamphoras Salomonis Regis (hereafter S&S)


The texts of The Sixth Book of Moses and The Seventh Book of Moses, along with seals in Hebrew and magical script, are English translations from Johann Scheibel’s Das Sechste und Siebente buch Mosis (Stuttgart: 1849), which is volume 6 of Scheibel’s Bibliothek der zauber geheimnis—und offenbarungs-bucher. The S&S texts also trace their printed origins back to German collections, namely volumes 3 and 4 of J. C. Horst’s Zauberbibliothek (6 vols., Mainz: 1821-6); and volume 3 of Scheibel’s Das Kloster (12 vols., Stuttgart and Leipzig: Theodor Thomas, 1846).50

50 Another item from Das Kloster (vols. 2 and 5, respectively): Libellus Magicus, under the title Verus Jesuitarum Libellus, is presented in both Latin and English at TWILIT GROTTO: http://www.esotericarchives.com/solomon/jesuit.htm.
The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses is a popular text in Pow-wow, the folk magic of the Pennsylvania Dutch hexmeisters, and Hoodoo, traditional African-American spirituality and folk medicine.

In 1982, there appeared the profoundly disappointing New Revised Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses and the Magical Uses of Psalms, edited by Migene Gonzalez-Wippler (Bronx: Original Publications). The text and especially the introduction are rife with errors.\(^5\)


Interestingly, “The Seven Semiphoras of Adam” and “The Seven Semiphoras of Moses” within \(\text{S&}^{2}\&\text{S}\) closely match passages in the seventh book of Liber Salomonis: Sepher Raziel, discussed below. For the Semiphoras §§ in \(\text{S&}^{2}\&\text{S}\), see Wehman, Egyptian, and de Laurence—pages 116-140; Gonzalez-Wippler—pages 125-164; Peterson, APPENDIX 3, pages 141-168.

5. Liber Salomonis, British Library\(^52\) Sloane MS 3826

Until fairly recently (2003), Liber Salomonis had not been treated at length in any printed source, though Sloane MS 3826 is described in Waite’s Ceremonial Magic (pages 20-21) and referred to here and there by Shah and Butler. Thorndike mentions this MS only once in History of Magic.\(^53\)

The first section of Liber Salomonis refers to itself as “Cephar Raziel,” “Sephar Raziel,” “booke of Raziel,” and “booke of Razazelus,” \textit{i.e.}, Sepher Raziel. Solomon is indicated as the recipient and redactor—not the author—of the book in the narrative which introduces the text. However, most instructions begin, “Salomon said....” Others begin, “Hermes said....,” “Adam said....,” “Nathaniel said....,” “Moyses said....,” and “Raziel said....” Narrative passages refer to Raziel as the source of the book and to Adam as the original recipient.

Sepher Raziel contains seven treatises:

1. Clavis...“of astronomy and of the starres” (ff 5\(^{\text{r}}\)-11\(^{\text{v}}\))
2. Ala...“the vertues of some stones of herbes and of beasts” (ff 12\(^{\text{r}}\)-27\(^{\text{v}}\))
3. Tractatus Thymiamatus...of suffumigations and of allegations of them and divisions” (ff 27\(^{\text{r}}\)-34\(^{\text{v}}\))
4. The “Treatise of tymes of the year of the day and of the night ... when anything ought to be done by this booke” (ff 34\(^{\text{r}}\)-46\(^{\text{v}}\))
5. The “Treatise of Cleanesse...of Abstinence” (ff 46\(^{\text{r}}\)-51\(^{\text{v}}\))
6. “Samaim” which “nameth all the heavens and her angels and the operations or workings of them” (ff 51\(^{\text{r}}\)-53\(^{\text{v}}\))
7. The “booke of Vertues...and miracles...the properties of the ark of magicke and of his figures and of the ordinance of same” (ff 53\(^{\text{r}}\)-57\(^{\text{v}}\))

My open letter to Original Publications (cc. Llewellyn Publications) dated March 10, 1986, states,

“To my dismay, Migene Gonzalez-Wippler’s edition fails to clean up or clarify this book, and, to my shock, the editor has actually further muddled and mystified the text with misleading information and just plain bad writing. It took no great scholarship to arrive at the [twelve] points that shall follow, showing the shoddiness of the editor’s work. This note represents only a few hours of rooting around in my home library, which is far from extensive.”

Manuscripts were designated “British Museum” until 1997, when the designation changed to “British Library.”

For a full transcription of these treatises, see Sepher Raziel also known as Liber Salomonis, a 1564 English Grimoire from Sloane MS 3826, edited by Don Karr and Stephen Skinner (Singapore: Golden Hoard Press, 2010). In this edition, Skinner provides a modern English version of Sepher Raziel and an excellent introduction on the range of “Raziel” traditions.54

The rest of Sloane MS 3826 consists of
1. Incipit Canon: The rule of the book of consecration… (ff 57r-60v)
2. Orisons (ff 60v-65r)
3. Magical directions (ff 66r-83v)55
4. Liber Luna (ff 84v-94r)56
5. Raphael: The Invocation of Oberon Concerning Physick &c (ff 98r-99v)
6. The Call of Bilgal, One of the 7 etc. (fol. 99v)
7. An Experiment for a Fayry (fol. 100r)57
8. Beleemus De imaginibus (ff 100v-101r)

Sloane MS 3826 is in English, except for
(i) the opening lines of paragraphs in Liber Salomonis and Incipit Canon
(ii) the Orisons
(iii) the invocation, consecration, ligation, and license of Raphael
(iv) Beleemus De imaginibus (BELEMUS ON THE IMAGES [of the planets]).

Printed notices of Sloane 3826 and Sefer Raziel:


55 Robert Mathiesen (in the article listed below, page 29) lists “Sloane 3826…ff. 58-83?” [Mathiesen’s question mark] among the manuscript versions of the SWORN BOOK at the British Library, though he places it with those which “preserve the original Latin text.” Portions of 3826 are in Latin (see above), but the bulk of the text is in English. Gösta Hedégård refutes the identification with the SWORN BOOK (Liber Huratus Honorii, pages 13-14, note 37), quoting Rachel Stockdale that 3826 ff. 58—62 contain “The rule of the booke of Consecration or the manner of working, with some orissons.” Hedégård then refers to Waite (Book of Black Magic…, page 35), stating that the treatises of this part of 3826 “extract matter” from Honorius works; Hedégård allows that this “may possibly be right” (page 14, note 13).

The two paragraphs on fol. 68 begin, “Dixit Thebit Pencorat…” and “Thebit said…” The reference is to Thabit ben Korra, or Tabit ibn Korrah, or Qura (c.836-c.901), member of the pagan sect, the Sabians (mainly of the city Harran, Thabit’s birthplace). A prolific and eclectic writer, philosopher, and translator (he rendered the Greek philosophers—e.g., Archimedes, Aristotle, Euclid—into Arabic or Syriac), Thabit was an authority on the occult, particularly on the subject of images. Indeed, he is cited in Psistrix and the works of Alberthus Magnus and Peter de Abano.

56 See Liber Luna…, listed below under “Printed notices…,” page 28-9.
58 Cresswell used my original e-transcript version in Esoteric, the on-line journal edited by Arthur Verslius (Michigan State University, 2003): Liber Salomonis: Sepher Raziel—
Part 1 at http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/VolumeV/Raziel1.html;
Liber Luna and other selections also appears, oddly formatted, at Esoteric: http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/Liber/LiberLunaes.html.
• Harrison, Peter. The Fall of Man and the Foundations of Science (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), page 18.


• Karr, Don; and Skinner, Stephen. Sepher Raziel also known as Liber Salomonis, a 1564 English Grimoire from Sloane MS 3826. [SOURCEWORKS OF CEREMONIAL MAGIC, volume 6] (Singapore: Golden Hoard Press, 2010; second edition [paperback], 2018). Transcription and contemporary English version of fols. 2'-57'.

• Klaassen, Frank F. RELIGION, SCIENCE, AND THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF MAGIC: MANUSCRIPTS OF MAGIC 1300-1600 (Ph.D. dissertation: Toronto: University of Toronto, 1999); page 133 (ref. Liber sacer i.e., “Honorius material”), page 207 (as an example of a seventeenth-century collection combining ritual and scholastic image magic), page 259 (listed under “Seventeenth Century [MSS]”).


• “M. Plessner, article on ‘Balinus’ in Encyclopedia of Islam (new edn. 1959) I, page 995.” This entry appears on the British Library reference form which accompanies the microfilm version of MS Sloane 3826, from which my transcriptions have been done.


59 Savedows’s Sepher Raziel Hemelach offers a text from the Jewish folk magic tradition—an entirely different stream from Sloane MSS 3826 and 3846.
WORKS OF RELATED INTEREST

Abraham von Worms, AKA Abraham of Wurzburg, Abraham the Jew.

- The Book of Sacred Magic of Abramelin [Abra-Melin] or Abramelin the Mage.

In a lecture from 1975⁶⁰, Gershom Scholem says of the Abramelin text that

[it] is not a Jewish book. No Jew would call his son “Lamech,” you can believe me. “Lamech” in Jewish parlance is a goylim, is a fool. […] It is obviously a non-Jewish text written in the beginning of the sixteenth century by somebody who knew about the kabbalah from the writings of Pico della Mirandola, which can be proved in my opinion.

There was a time that I thought it might be a Jewish text. If it would be a Jewish text, it’s very interesting. [laughter from the audience] I no longer believe it to be a Jewish text. You know, philology works against your own inclinations. […] It was certainly written by a man who knew Hebrew quite well—better than other Christians of this age, I would say. I have studied the book quite often and it concerns the conjuration of your own personal angel—exactly what Eleazar [in the Zohar, son of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai] says cannot be done, he does it, as a Jew, but I don’t believe it. I think he took it from some Neoplatonic [source]. He took it, not from Jewish sources but from other ones, although it has a long autobiographical introduction about the feats he has done, the tremendous feats he has done in his magical career among the gentiles.

The book is a very curious one anyway.

- Abraham the Jew on Magic Talismans to be engraved on Seals of Rings made of various metals under the influence of the Fixed Stars and the Twenty-eight Mansions of the Moon, from a manuscript by Frederick Hockley, edited and introduced by Silens Manus (York Beach: Teitan Press, 2011).

“[T]here is no doubt that the text is to a large degree a compilation made from earlier sources, notably Cornelius Agrippa’s Three Books of Occult Philosophy”—INTRODUCTION, page ix.


This translation (London: 1655) includes all of the items in Robert Turner’s collection rather than just The Fourth Book and Heptameron (see below).

- OF OCCULT PHILOSOPHY, OR OF MAGICAL CEREMONIES: THE FOURTH BOOK—Agrippa
- HEPTAMERON, OR MAGICAL ELEMENTS—Peter de Abano
- ISOGOG: AN INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE ON THE NATURE OF SUCH SPIRITS—Georg Pictorius Villinganus

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Note Scholem’s statements in Kabbalah (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1974):

By the same token, The Book of Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin (London, 1898), which purported to be an English translation of a Hebrew work written in the 15th century by a certain “Abraham the Jew of Worms” and was widely regarded in modern European occultist circles as being a classical text of practical Kabbalah, was not in fact written by a Jew, although its anonymous author has an uncommon command of Hebrew. The book was originally written in German and the Hebrew manuscript of it found in Oxford (Neuhauer 2051) is simply a bad translation. Indeed, the book circulated in various editions in several languages. It shows the partial influence of Jewish ideas but does not have any strict parallel in kabbalistic literature. (—Kabbalah, page 186)

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⁶⁰ “Conception of Tselem, the Astral Body, in Jewish Mysticism,” A PANARION CONFERENCE, Los Angeles, 1975 (Los Angeles: C.G. Jung Institute of Los Angeles, 2012)—2 audio CDs.
• ARBATEL OF MAGICK: OF THE MAGICK OF THE ANCIENTS
• OF GEOMANCY—Agrippa
• OF ASTRONOMICAL GEOMANCY—Gerard Cremonensis


Again, Robert Turner’s translation of the six-book collection, following Stephen Skinner’s edition (listed immediately above). Tyson’s edition includes an “analysis” of each book containing both historical and practical support material.


Includes the pseudo-Agrippan Fourth Book and the Heptameron or Magical Elements of Peter de Abano.


The support material which Tyson provides makes this edition a valuable reference source.


“The Latin copies of Sefer-ha-Raziel in particular shows (sic) a continuation of interest in Hebrew angelology among Christian readers well after the great blooming of such concerns among Rosicrucian authors in 1614-1620” (page 13).

“The angelic doctrine of liber Raziel is taken up by a group of texts called Claves Salomonis, magical texts that in conjunction with al-Magritti’s book of Arabic magic, Picarix; influenced Cornelius Agrippa” (page 18).


On The Black Pullet, see Waite, Ceremonial Magic, pages 113-132.


Most of the contents were copied from Agrippa and other sources.


The Oxford/Weiser edition is far preferable to the reprint from Kessinger (Kila, Montana) entitled *Egyptian Secrets or White and Black Art for Man and Beast* of Albertus Magnus (copied from the Egyptian Publishing Co. [Chicago] edition).


The “Solomonic Sorcery” addressed here is Goetia.

“I have two main reasons for targeting this book to Witches and not, say, Ceremonial Magicians. The first is that every other book available on the Goetia is aimed at Ceremonial Magicians. … I especially recommend Lon Milo DuQuette’s *Illustrated Goetia*. Our biggest complaint with these books is that they continue to advocate spirit torture.

“My second reason for marketing this ‘new key’ to Witches specifically is that Natalie and I both firmly believe that it has been the role of the Witch to summon and stir spirits as allies in magic since Witches first started practicing the Craft.” (from § “Why Create a Key for Witches?”)


*Pacts* includes versions of *Grimoirum Vorum, Grand Grimoire* and *Honorius*, edited and adapted to render them “doable.” May I suggest “doabolic”?


A translation of Bodin’s *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (1580), “a lengthy and complex discussion of many aspects of magic and witchcraft” (—page 22).


See especially chapter XXIII: “The Kabbalistic Names and Signs, and Magical Figures, and Squares of the Seven Astrological Stars or Planets.”


*A Wicked Pack of Cards* (see below under Decker) treats this 18th-century occultist in CHAPTER 9, “From Ghost Writer to Magus: Paul Christian.”

“A strange blend of mumbo-jumbo, fear, fraud and deeply serious study, magic was at the heart of the European Renaissance, fascinating many of its greatest leaders.” (quote on the endpaper) A 643-page compendium, from Deuteronomy to Dee, Moses to Milton, Ptolemy to Paracelsus.


(1) http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/VolumeV/Raziel1.html
(2) http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/VolumeV/Raziel2.html


Davies’ broad summary of magic books through history in the first few chapters may be useful, but it is awfully rapid. Grimoires gets most interesting—and original—in its chapters on more recent times: “Grimoires USA,” “Pulp Magic,” and “Lovecraft, Satan, and Shadows.”


Wicked Pack is a well-written and well-researched treatment of how Tarot came to be positioned at the core of the Western occult, focusing on its assumption by the French occultists J.-B. Alliette (= Etteilla), Eliphas Levi, Gerard Encausse (= Papus), and, important in the present context, Paul Christian.

Dec, John. (various titles)


Picture Museum… has been described as a “coffee-table book” of the Medieval and Renaissance occult, which gives the false impression that it is a trivial work. It just happens to contain a lot of illustrations.


Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism, two volumes, edited by Wouter Hanegraaff in collaboration with Antoine Faivre, Roelof van den Broek, and Jean-Pierre Brach (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2005).
This superb collaboration contains entries on AGrippa, AlBERTus Magnus, AlChEMy, AムULETS, Aストロロジー, FRANcIs Barrett, JOHN Dee, InterMEDIARY BEnGS, magic, mAGIcal IНStrUMENTS, mIchael ScOt, PeTER of AbAno, sATAnism, and many more.


Greene opens his discussion comparing the attitudes of sixteenth-century “country gentleman Reginald Scot” and his contemporary “English theologian William Perkins” toward witchcraft, concluding that “the perception of these two authors was generally correct, that witchcraft—and more broadly magic—does indeed threaten a conventionalist disjunctive linguistics. Both Scot and Perkins understood that a belief in magic required an alternate linguistic theory which would give substance and energy to the word…” (page 256).


“Collected in 3 Books from many Sources … showing the iniquitous and execrable operations of witches against the human race, and the divine remedies by which they may be frustrated” (from the 1929 title page).


An illustrated grimoire for summoning fairies and goetic demons, along with “one of the oldest known copies of” *The Enchiridion.*


Bergman describes *A Complete Book of Magic Science* as “a lengthier version of the text that had been published as ‘The Secret Grimoire of Turiel’.” See below under “Malchus.”

*A Complete Book…* is also included in Joseph Peterson’s *Clavis or Key of the Magic of Solomon* (Lake Worth: Ibis Press, 2009).

______. (Gilbert, R. A. ed.) *Invocating by Magic Crystals and Mirrors* (York Beach: Teitan Press, 2010).


Includes English translations of John Dee’s “angelic keys” and invocations of the angels concerned with the Table of the Earth.

For other Hockley manuscripts/transcriptions:

- see above, pages 4, note 10.
- see above, at the end of § 1. a. on *The Clavis or Key to the Magic of Solomon.*
- see above, toward the end of 1. b. “Lemegeton, or LESSER KEY OF SOLOMON,” *A Book of the Office of the Spirits.*
- see above within this bibliography, the listing for the Hockley MS of *Abraham the Jew on Magic Talismans…,* edited and introduced by Silens Manus (York Beach: Teitan Press, 2011).


In the first section of her book, Izmirlieva analyzes *The Divine Names* of (pseudo-)Dionysius the Areopagite (1st century); in the second section, she studies the (Slavonic) amulet known as *The 72 Names of the Lord* (13th century). Izmirlieva “demonstrate[s], over a large body of textual traces, that *The 72 Names of the Lord* has its roots in the Gnostic Kabbalah and originates from a Kabbalo-Christian exchange that most probably took place in Provence in the twelfth century” (—page 12).


Kahane, Henry; Kahane, Renee; and Pietrangeli, Angelina. “Picatrix and the Talismans,” in Romance Philology 19:4 (Berkeley: University of California, 1966), pages 574-593.


Not the libraries of Spain, Italy, or Greece, but rather Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia.


Malinowski, Bronislaw. MAGIC, SCIENCE AND RELIGION and Other Essays (Garden City: Doubleday [Anchor Books A23], 1948; rpt. 1954).

See the note on Hockley’s MS of *Complete Book of Magic Science*, listed above.


Though this over-sized set of twenty-four books looks like something one might buy a volume per week at the supermarket, one has to be impressed with the names which appear on the list of contributors and the editorial advisory board: Mircea Eliade, R. J. Zwi Werblowsky, R. C. Zaehner, to name a few.


See especially Chapter 1. “Black Magic and Sorcery,” which includes sections on “The Great Grimoires” and “Conjurations from the *True Grimoire.*”


McIntosh has written two of the best “popular” books on their respective subjects: *The Rosicrucians: The History, Mythology, and Rituals of an Esoterica Order* (London: Aquarian Press, 1980; rpt York Beach: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1997) and *The Devil's Bookshelf*. These treatments are readable and reliable, being distillations of the long and careful research of a first-rate scholar.


The second of six volumes collectively called “The Treatises of Dr. Rudd” (MSS Harley 6181-6486). *Angel Magic* gathers material from several sources, including Agrippa, Dee, Reginald Scott, *Lemgeton*, and *Arbatel.*


“The winding, muddy and often submerged paths of occult thinking in the eighteenth century may not be as familiar to British historians as its more visible public byways in the late seventeenth century, but they were well travelled nonetheless. Adherents of the occult kept up a lively interaction with conventional intellectual trends, reconfiguring Hermeticism and Neoplatonism to suit the age of steam engines and revolutionary politics. As in the past, they eagerly absorbed heterodox religious ideas and maintained a keen interest in popular magic.” (*Solomon’s Secret Arts*—pages 18-19)


A search of NECRONOMICON on the Internet yields all kinds of entertaining and curious stuff, including shreds of the debate over whether the mysterious text ever actually existed. Adding to the scholarship, confusion, or hoax—as you wish—surrounding this work are


Complete text in Latin and English. *The Secrets of Solomon* “distinguishes itself as a supplement to the better known Clavicula Salomonis ("Key of Solomon"); whereas that text focuses on aerial spirits, this one focuses on chthonic spirits.”


This grimoire used by “rural folk magic practitioners” is perhaps best known for “the glorious hand” or “hand of glory,” namely the talismanic use of the severed hand of a hanged man.


Picatrix or Ghayat al-Hakim [The Goal of the Wise – the first English edition],

- Volume One, translated from the Arabic by Hashem Atallah; edited by William Kiesel (Seattle: Ouroboros Press, 2002)

Published earlier were “Picatrix”: Das Ziel des Weisen von Pseudo-Magriti, translated into German from the Arabic by Helmut Ritter and Martin Plessner (The Warburg Institute/University of London, 1962)—a summary in English appears on pages lix-lxv; and Picatrix: The Latin Version of the GHAYAT AL-HAKIM, edited by David Pingree (The Warburg Institute, 1986).


Sefer Rezial Hamelach (≈ Sefer Raziel) is primarily a production of Jewish folk magic. It is discussed by Joshua Trachtenberg in Jewish Magic and Superstition (New York: Behrman’s Jewish Book House, 1939; subsequently reprinted), a rare early academic treatment of Jewish magic, considered something of a classic, though in sore need of updating.61

Savedow’s work seems to attempt two things: (1) to provide a reliable English edition of the text, and (2) to provide practicing magicians with yet another grimoire.

An appendix to this book (pages 280-286) gives a list of Sefer Raziel texts in manuscript compiled by Adam McLean. The first MS listed is British Library MS. Sloane 3826, which is discussed in the present paper above as Liber Salomonis. McLean’s list is posted on the Internet at the Alchemy Web Site: “Sefer Raziel Manuscripts,” www.levity.com/alchemy/raziel.html.


Countless times I’ve heard, “This was the first book I ever saw on magic.”

Seligmann (1900-1962) was a second-bench surrealist painter/engraver of the 1930s-1940s Paris-New York art scene. (see https://www.artsy.net/show/weinstein-gallery-kurt-seligmann-first-message-from-the-spirit-world-of-the-object)


- Chapter 2. “Jewish Magic”
- Chapter 3. “Solomon: King and Magician”
- Bibliography, “Grimoire References”


The treatises discussed are

(i) Bruno’s *De Magia, Thesae de magia, De magia mathematica*
(ii) Martin Delrio’s *Disquisitionum magicalum libri sex*
(iii) Campanella’s *De sensu rerum et magia*; (iv) Gaspar Schott’s *Magia universalis*


Shumaker’s study gives full accounts of astrology, witchcraft, magic, alchemy, hermetic doctrine—but oddly not cabala.

Skemer, Don C. *Binding Words: Textual Amulets in the Middle Ages* [MAGIC IN HISTORY SERIES] (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006).


Encyclopedia entries in four categories: 1. OCCULTISM, 2. MAGIC, 3. MAGICAL OBJECTS TECHNIQUES, AND POWERS, and 4. ALCHEMY.


The title is misleading: Tyson’s book is a thorough introduction, description, and appraisal.


Of particular interest are two sections of Book Two: Chapter II, “A DESCRIPTION OF THE INFAMOUS magician and of GOETEIA and THEOURGLA”; and Chapter V, “CONCERNING CERTAIN books of magic,” which discusses “books passed down by Raziel and Raphael,” *Book Four on Occult Philosophy* attributed to Agrippa, but appraised by Weyer as “falsely ascribed to his hand,” and “the pestilential little book of Pietro d’Abano entitled Heptameron or Elements of Magic.” Chapter VI goes on to discuss Trithemius and his book *Steganographia*.

Unfortunately, this volume excludes the Appendix, *Pseudomonarchia Daemonum*. However, Joseph Peterson includes *Pseudomonarchia Daemonum* in both Latin and English as Appendix 2 in his edition of *The Lesser Key of Solomon* (York Beach: Weiser Books, 2001), pages 227–259. Appendix 3 gives a chart comparing the spirits of the *Goetia* with those of Weyer.


Appendix

SOLOMONIC MAGIC ON THE INTERNET

Some Solomonic texts seem to be everywhere on the Internet, while others are not represented at all. Anything touched by one of the founders of the Golden Dawn is, for better or worse, reproduced, pirated, and linked over and over, as, for example, W. W. Westcott’s ubiquitous *Sefer Yezirah* or S. L. MacGregor Mathers’ *Key of Solomon* and *Lemegeton*.

Many sites offering magic texts carry viruses and other sorts of e-vermin which can plague those unfortunate enough to enter. Thus, for safety and, fortunately, a wide array of reliably presented texts, refer to the following sites:

- **ALCHEMY WEBSITE AND VIRTUAL LIBRARY**: [http://www.alchemywebsite.com/](http://www.alchemywebsite.com/)
- **INTERNET SACRED TEXTS ARCHIVE**: [www.sacred-texts.com](http://www.sacred-texts.com)
- **TWILIT GROTTO**: [www.esotericarchives.com](http://www.esotericarchives.com)

On *Liber Salomonis*/*Sefer Raziel*:

- Joseph Peterson’s transcription of Sloane MS 3846: *Book of the Angel Raziel*, also in English, can be viewed at TWILIT GROTTO: [http://www.esotericarchives.com/raziel/raziel.htm](http://www.esotericarchives.com/raziel/raziel.htm)

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62 This has recently been rivaled by the numerous sites offering Aryeh Kaplan’s translation of the *Sefer Yezirah*. 