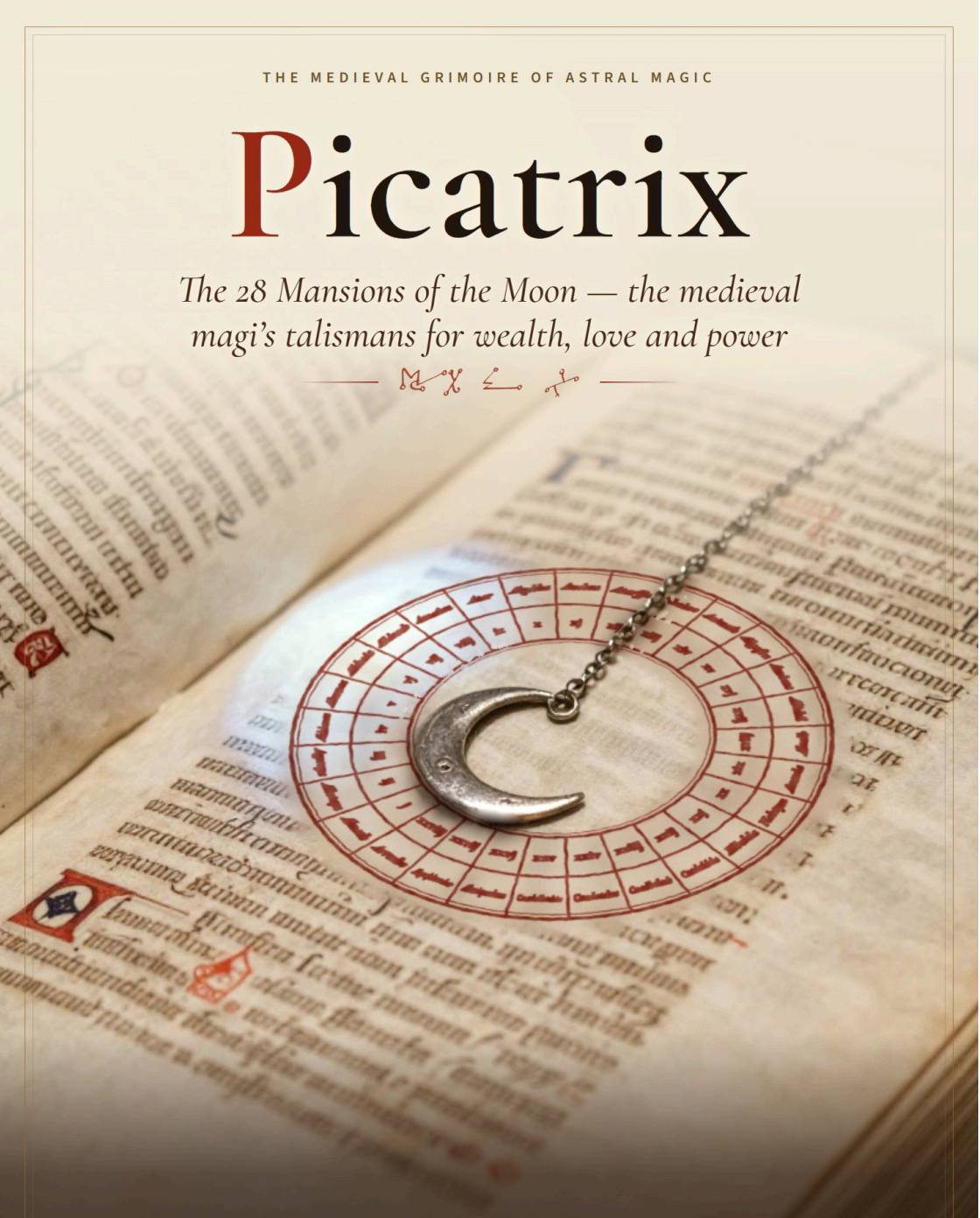
THE MEDIEVAL GRIMOIRE OF ASTRAL MAGIC

Picatrix

The 28 Mansions of the Moon — the medieval magi's talismans for wealth, love and power



Book I · What Is Magic

LATIN MANUSCRIPT c. 1500 · FROM THE ARABIC, ALFONSO X, 1256

غاية الحكيم
BLUSABOOKS

BOOKS OF WISDOM

Picatrix
Book I

What Is Magic: the Heavens, the 28 Mansions of the Moon and Talismans

One of the best-known medieval books of astral magic — the prologue of Alfonso X the Wise, the nature of magic, the heavens and their parts, the 28 Mansions of the Moon, examples of talismans, and man as the small world. Complete, translated from the Latin manuscript, with notes and commentary

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Modern English text, notes, foreword and commentary © 2026 SIA "Blusa Entertainment".

Source: the Latin «Picatrix» — the version of the Arabic «Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm» («The Goal of the Wise») translated at the command of Alfonso X the Wise in 1256, from a manuscript of c. 1500–1525 (Bibliothèque nationale de France), public domain. Translated from the manuscript; no manuscript images are reproduced. The colour illustrations are modern.

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FOREWORD

The Aim of the Sage. *Picatrix* is the most famous book of astral magic of the Middle Ages. It teaches how to draw the power of the stars and planets down into earthly things: how to choose the right moment in the heavens, how to make an image or talisman of metal or stone, how to burn suffumigations, how to pray to the spirits of the planets, and what each planet rules — metals, plants, animals, colours and the works of men. For centuries Europe held this book to be dangerous and secret; it was copied by hand and passed from hand to hand. Renaissance magicians drew heavily on it, among them Agrippa, whose *Occult Philosophy* we have published as our Nos. 14–38.

From Arabic into Latin. The book goes back to an Arabic work, *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm*, "The Aim of the Sage", written in Muslim Spain (al-Andalus) in the tenth or eleventh century. It was long attributed to the astronomer Maslama al-Majrīṭī, but modern scholars hold that its author was someone else, unknown to us. The prologue placed at the head of the book says that King Alfonso X the Wise of Castile and León had it translated from Arabic into Spanish, and that the work was completed in 1256. The Spanish translation has not survived; what has come down to us is the Latin version made from it. In the Latin tradition the name "Picatrix" became the name of the author himself — the prologue calls him "the wise, noble and honoured philosopher Picatrix".

Our source. We translate one particular manuscript, now kept in the National Library of France in Paris (BnF, Latin 17871). It was written on paper around 1500–1525 by a single unknown scribe, with red rubrics and initials, and has 124 leaves. It once belonged to the library of the chapter of the cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris. The Arabic original, the translation of Alfonso's time and this copy have all long been in the public domain. The transcription and the

this book to be translated from Arabic into Spanish with the greatest zeal and the greatest care. Its name is Picatrix[1].

This work was completed in the year of the Lord one thousand two hundred and fifty-six, in the year of Alexander one thousand five hundred and sixty-eight, in the year of Caesar one thousand two hundred and ninety-four, and in the year of the Arabs six hundred and fifty-five[2]. The wise, noble and honoured philosopher Picatrix compiled this book from two hundred and more books of philosophy and named it with his own name. In the name of the Lord here begins the book which the most wise philosopher Picatrix composed in the arts of necromancy[3] from two hundred and more books.

1 In the Latin tradition this is the name of the book's "author". The Arabic original is called "Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm", "The Goal of the Sage"; it was attributed to al-Majrīṭī, though this was later doubted.
2 One and the same year 1256 in four eras: the era of Alexander or Seleucid era (from 312 BC), the era of Caesar or Spanish era (from 38 BC), and the Arab Hijra era (from AD 622).
3 Latin "nigromantia". Picatrix uses the word for the whole of astral magic, not only for summoning the dead; see also our No. 64 "The Necromancer's Handbook".

worked with subtleties to alter the sight, or to make things appear that are not. And this science they called ya ytte legehimyz, which is interpreted as "the drawing down of the celestial spirits." And we do not apply this to all the parts of magic.

And they had no power to reach this science except through astrology, nor can they do without astrology, unless they have at the least a knowledge of the figures that stand in the eighth sphere[1] and of their motions, and of the other spheres, of the order of the twelve signs with their degrees, or of their natures or qualities, for each of the signs, or of the shaping of each of them in the things of the world, and of the parts of each planet in these twelve signs, or of the length of their motions, or of other things joined with those mentioned; and of the natures of the planets,

and of the Head and Tail of the Dragon[2], and of their places in the heavens, and of all their significations in the things of the world, and of the aspects[3] to be granted to each of the aforesaid for themselves, and how aspects suit the others, and of the signification of the rays (these are the roots of astronomy), and of knowing which planet rules by the figure, and of recognizing its rank in that rule, and of extracting the parts of the planets in the zodiac. And these are the things without which no one can come to the work of this science. And all of this is found in the book of astronomy. And this is what the first sage says, who spoke in the aforesaid book of Alphilaha, where he says: "Unless they rise above the heavens." He means that they should know all their motions with their qualities by way of thought and of the senses. And this is what David said when he spoke: "Let us exalt him on high." He means the mind, from sense and understanding, so that it may come to the other sciences.

1 In the medieval cosmos the eighth sphere, beyond the seven spheres of the planets, is the sphere of the fixed stars.

2 The points where the Moon's orbit crosses the ecliptic, the lunar nodes; eclipses happen there.

3 An aspect, or "glance", is the angle between two planets in the zodiac: conjunction, sextile, square, trine, opposition.

people so that they love one another; for keeping safe those who travel the roads; for making buildings and the prisons of captives secure; and for doing them harm.

The Twenty-Seventh Mansion — Algarfalmuchar

The twenty-seventh mansion is called Algarfalmuchar[1], and it begins at the fourth degree, 17th minute, 1st second of Pisces and ends at the 17th degree, 8th minute, 36th second of the same sign[2]. In this mansion you shall make images for increasing trade and gaining profit from it; for joining companions together; for increasing crops; for healing illnesses; for destroying the riches of whomever you wish; for preventing buildings from standing; for bringing seafarers into danger at sea; for keeping captives longer in prison; and for doing harm to whomever you wish.

The Twenty-Eighth Mansion — Arrexhe

The twenty-eighth mansion is called Arrexhe[3]. It begins at the 17th degree, 8th minute, 36th second of Pisces[4] and lasts until the end of that sign. In this mansion you shall make images: for increasing trade; for besieging cities; and for losing jewels; for making crops grow and setting things in order; and for causing treasures to be lost; for those who travel the roads to go in health, that is, to come back with their goods; for pouring peace and concord between husband and wife; for making the prisons of captives secure; and for doing harm to them and to

1 The twenty-seventh lunar mansion; Arabic «al-Fargh al-Mu'akhkhar», "the rear spout", stars in Pegasus and Andromeda.

2 The manuscript (f. 8r) has «gradu 11». Corrected after the French translation (BnF, Français 14788, f. 43r: «the 17th degree, 8 minutes, 26 seconds of Pisces»); the 17th degree is also what the calculation gives (27 mansions of 12° 51′ 26″ each). The minutes and seconds are kept as in the Latin manuscript.

3 The twenty-eighth and last lunar mansion; Arabic «Baṭn al-Ḥūt», "the belly of the fish", stars in Andromeda; it was also called «ar-Rishā'», "the rope".

4 The manuscript (f. 8r) has «in primo gradu» («at the first degree»); the mansion begins where the twenty-seventh ends, so this is corrected to the 17th degree (see the previous note).

person to drink, and at once the pain ceased. Were it not for fear of too many words, I would tell the wonders he worked with these names, for the people to whom he had given it to drink are a very great number, so that one could not truly count them or tell of them. Yet because the power of these names has been proved by experience, I have decided to set them down in this our book and in this chapter. And they are these: *zaaze, kaam, zaave, zaxxeffegeni, bohorim, baborayn, beffe, albimie, ffedraca, affelthiho, tantata, tanyy, rabahar, aylatriyn, haurane, rahamne, ayy, latmrime, quine, arutyrbi, cumyrbi, quibarn, yehuyhamy, yn, latxuyn, hamitamez, beurciy, ratithe, tabnemo, renhe, beyme*. These names must be written in seven lines by themselves, neither more nor fewer. According to Salamon[1] in the chapter on the Moon, and according to Plato, they must be written on the first day of the month of May; and others say they should be written on the first day of Jupiter[2] of any month

you wish. And I have seen them written on whatever day one pleased. Take care not to err in these names, neither in their forms nor in their shapes, so that no error falls into them. As for the name written *bohorim*, I saw a sage write it *nohorim*, that is, with an n; but I gathered them with a b, as I said above. I tell you this so that the secrets of this science may be plain to you.

An Image That Husbands and Wives May Love One Another

Make the image of a girl, cast in metal, and make it with Virgo rising and Mercury in it, and in the circle of his apogee[3], Mercury being the almutaz of the figure[4]; arrange this work in the hour of Mercury, and keep on so until the image is complete. Afterwards make another image in the shape of a youth, and make it when Mercury is in Virgo, returning to the place of the first image, or when he is

1 The Middle Ages ascribed many books of magic to Solomon; the manuscript spells the name "Salamon".
2 The day of Jupiter (dies Iovis) is Thursday.
3 The apogee (Arabic "awj") is the point at which a planet in its circle is farthest from the Earth; there, it was believed, the planet is strong.
4 Almutaz, Arabic "al-mubtazz": the planet with the most rights of rulership in a chart, and therefore its strongest.