THE MEDIEVAL GRIMOIRE OF ASTRAL MAGIC

Picatrix

Planetary spirits & prayers — how medieval magi called on the powers of the stars



Book III · Planetary Spirits and Prayers

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

غاية الحكيم
BLUSABOOKS

BOOKS OF WISDOM

Picatrix
Book III

Planetary Spirits and Prayers: Images, Garments, Suffumigations, Sacrifices, Names of the Spirits and Confections

The third book of Picatrix — what belongs to each planet and sign among plants, animals and stones, the images, garments and suffumigations of the planets, the Perfect Nature of Hermes, prayers and sacrifices to the seven planets, the names of the planetary spirits, the «stones» of Aristotle and confections for love and hatred. 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 brown crosses are our own redrawings after the manuscript. The colour illustrations are modern.

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FOREWORD

The third book. This is the third notebook of *Picatrix*. In the first book the author explained what magic is and described the mansions of the Moon; in the second, how the heavens act upon earthly things and why an image made at the right moment gains its power. The third book is the most practical of all: it says what belongs to each planet and sign in this world, how the practitioner must dress, what he must burn as suffumigation and how he must speak with the spirits of the planets. We translate the same manuscript as in the earlier notebooks. The book opens with a list of its chapters, and then come eleven chapters:

- **Chapter 1** — the shares of the planets in nature: to each planet "belong" its own plants, animals, stones, metals, languages, faiths, crafts, places, tastes, colours and members of the body.
- **Chapter 2** — the same for the signs of the zodiac: from Aries, to which the head belongs, to Pisces, to which the feet belong.
- **Chapter 3** — the images of the seven planets, the colours of their garments and their suffumigations, the colours of the 36 faces of the zodiac used for writing, and stories of climates and the wonders of places.
- **Chapter 4** — a single paragraph: the ancient sages wrote obscurely on purpose.
- **Chapter 5** — the ladder of nature from the shellfish to man, the "Experiment of love" about an Indian magician in Khorasan, and the cross as the "universal figure".
- **Chapter 6** — the "Perfect Nature" of Hermes, the personal spirit-teacher of every sage, and the rite by which it is called.
- **Chapter 7** — the longest chapter: how to speak with the planets. Each planet has its own garment, suffumigation, sacrifice and prayers, and there is also a curse on an enemy made with the stars of the Great Bear.
- **Chapter 8** — the prayers of the Nabataeans (in the manuscript, the "Neptini") to the Sun and Saturn.

The eighth chapter: on the manner of the prayers with which the naptini[1] prayed to Saturn and to the Sun, and in what ways they spoke with them and drew down spirits and effects.

The ninth chapter: on the manner of drawing down the powers of all the planets, and likewise the spirits of those powers, by calling their names part by part; the names, and the manner of saying the names while working.

The tenth chapter: on the showing of the constitutions of the spirits of the planets, and on how to obtain the foundations of the marvellous works and effects of necromancy,[2] and on the suffumigations, ointments and odours which he who works with the spirits of the planets must use, and on the effects of the planets for the sake of the works one wishes to accomplish.

The eleventh chapter: on the effects of images in various things and in alterations of sight, so that things appear other than they are; and also on how to cause sleep and waking; and on ... and their remedies.

The twelfth chapter: on the rules that are needful in this science.[3]

1 The manuscript has "naptini". In the Arabic original this chapter speaks of the Nabataeans, the ancient farmers of Mesopotamia whom Arabic authors regarded as keepers of an old star-cult and of magic; Latin scribes garbled the name in various ways.
2 Latin "nigromantia". Picatrix uses the word for the whole of astral magic, not only for summoning the dead.
3 This chapter is NOT in the manuscript: Book III ends with chapter 11, and directly after it the beginning of Book IV is also missing (see the foreword).

Scorpio has, of the members of man, all the privy members, both of man and of woman. Of colours, green, red and the spotted panther colour. Of tastes, salty. Of places, filthy places, prisons and gloomy places, and stony places where scorpions gather. Of stones, coral and the pearl of the water. Of trees, tall and straight ones. Of animals, scorpions, worms, snakes, small and filthy beasts, and beasts of the water.

On Sagittarius

Sagittarius has, in the body of man, the buttocks, the shins and the superfluous marks on the body, and whatever is in excess in the body. Of colours, rosy inclining to redness, and every spotted panther and varied colour. Of tastes, bitter. Of places, gardens, places of kings and of fire. Of stones, the emerald. Of minerals, lead. Of animals, men, and the birds ..., ... peacocks.

On Capricorn

Capricorn has, of the members of the body, the knees, the sinews and what is below the knees, namely the lower legs and the ankles. Of colours, peacock colour[1] and every colour inclining to the spotted panther colour and to black. Of tastes, astringent. Of places, the palaces of kings, gardens and ..., the banks of rivers and the places of dogs, inns too and ...,[2] and places where captives gather, ..., and places of black ... and of the strong. Of trees, all strong trees, such as the olive, nut trees, holm oaks and all trees that have thorns. And a certain part of the beasts of the water, the reptiles of the earth and scorpions.

On Aquarius

Aquarius has, of the members of the body, the ankles, the heels, the hips, the sinews and the shins. Of colours, green, lead-grey and sky-blue. Of tastes, sweet. Of places, places of running waters, the seas, and places where wine is sold. Of stones, glass and the like. Of trees, tall ones. Of animals, man, and every ... that is

1 Latin "pavonacium": the blue-green of a peacock's feathers.
2 In the manuscript a space has been left blank here: the scribe did not write the word in.

full in their books. For they make confections in which the virtues of the mixed things and of the stars work in the art, since they are mixed with the virtues of fire; and when they reach ... in this world, then their effect is completed through it. Therefore ... is the body without which other bodies can by no means have life. ... as bodies receive influences from that which influences, the effects of the planets are disposed by the will of the agent; and in the corruption of the air itself ... with the general air. And it also has effects through suffumigations set out according to the members of the human body; these suffumigations are composed of odours and certain other things, and by these suffumigations the senses of men are moved towards whatever is desired. And it also has magical works with marvellous and manifest effects.

An excellent example in a certain experiment of love.

But I saw in a book of a certain sage, called «The Division of the Sciences and the Pandects of the Doctors»,[1] where it was written thus: A trustworthy man told me that he, together with Altus and another trustworthy man, met in the land of Khorasan[2] someone who came from the land of the Indians and occupied himself with this science. And when he spoke with him, discussing certain doubts about this science in which he was uncertain, the other said to him: «... in that land there was a certain maiden who was held by all to be the most beautiful.» He said that he would make her come to my lodging.

But I begged him to fulfil for me what he had promised, and this for two reasons: one for love of the science, the other for the girl; and that he should do the said work before my eyes.

And at once he rose, took the ascendant with the astrolabe from the altitude he had found ... and set up the twelve houses. He found Aries in the ascendant, whose lord is Mars, and in the seventh house he found Libra, whose lord is

1 The title in the manuscript is «Divisio scienciarum et pandectorum doctorum(?)»; no such work can be securely identified. Pandects — a comprehensive collection.

2 The manuscript has «de terra Coracen(?)» — most likely Khorasan, a wide land in eastern Persia; the name «Alto» is also uncertain.

You shall ask of Jupiter what lies within his portion, such as petitions concerning the exalted, the rich, the powerful, prelates, sages, preachers, judges of the laws, honours, record-keepers,[1] interpreters, heirs, philosophers, kings, nobles, sons, counsellors; and petitions concerning charity and marriages, and all things like these, ask of him.

The Petition to Mars.

Ask of Mars what lies within his nature, such as petitions against soldiers, officials, fighters, and in deeds

against men-at-arms, the chosen among all, and for the sake of the king's friendships; and against those who destroy houses and cities and do evil to men, murderers, those who behead men, and ... and those who do similar works; quarrellers, herdsmen, robbers, highwaymen, liars, traitors and thieves. And likewise you shall ask of him concerning sicknesses that arise from the blood in the body, and also concerning bloodletting, cupping[2] and the like; in these petitions he will truly help you, because his nature dissolves what Mars has arranged and sets right what it has damaged.

The Petition to the Sun.

You shall ask of the Sun the petitions fitting to it, such as petitions concerning kings, the sons of kings and of knights, men of high rank, those who love justice and truth and abhor worldly desire, who long for good repute and are eager to be praised by men; concerning officials, clerics, physicians, men of high rank, the humble, the sensible and the magnanimous, brothers, masters, fathers and the like.

The Petition to Venus.

You shall ask of Venus what belongs to her, such as petitions concerning women, boys and girls, sons, and in general everything that belongs to the love of

1 Latin «scrinarii» — keepers of chests or archives, clerks; the reading is uncertain.
2 Bloodletting (flebotomia) and cupping (ventosatio — glass cups applied to the skin) were basic procedures of medieval medicine; both were linked with Mars and the blood.