



Magus: A Complete System of Occult Philosophy

Francis Barrett

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The Magus, first published in 1801, is a concise compendium on the Western magical tradition, and one of the primary sources for the study of ceremonial magic. The book contains a fascinating array of information drawn together by author Francis Barrett from several sources, such as Cornelius Agrippa's *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*. Areas explored include Natural Magic, Alchemy, Talismanic Magic, Cabalistic and Ceremonial Magic, as well as biographies of important figures such as Albertus Magnus, Roger Bacon and John Dee. Notable are the author's illustrations, derived from ancient and magical texts. This book remains much sought after by modern readers for the important source material it provides, and it continues to be drawn on heavily for information on many areas of occult philosophy.

Magus: A Complete System of Occult Philosophy Details

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Author : Francis Barrett

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Dominika says

I read this more as a historical fascination rather than as a practical guide for magick. While you see a lot of these fundamentals in many different schools and teachings, the Christian undertones don't really do it for me. I did think the breakdown was pretty simple to understand if you're desperate, but witches are everywhere and part of being a witch is finding your own path.

That all being said, this is pretty comprehensive, with several types of magick being covered, and you could probably do a lot with this if you're looking for a reference in magic systems (for writing fantasy novels).

Kirk Bullough says

I read this book because I read on the internet that Joseph Smith's family owned a copy of this book. It contains a picture of a medallion that Joseph Smith had on him when he died.

Anyway the book is about Christian folk magic. It doesn't hold up against the advances in science since the book was written. Its pretty boring as well. I did buy me a Jupiter Medallion. I use it as a key chain.

Erik Akre says

This might be the most bizarre and random book I have ever read. I read it without any context for its turn-of-the-eighteenth century information, and it blew me away with its strange correspondences, wild numerology, archaic astrology, and twisted suggestions for ritual and spellcraft.

As a student of Wicca, I looked for links between Barrett's writings and current Wiccan practice, and I do feel there are plenty. I am left with wonder at how his own experience in the occult eventually fed into what we now know as "witchcraft." He strikes me as a very strange man who lived underground in his times with a big sack-full of strange information gathered through studies of obscure past knowledge. Did he make any of it up? What on Earth did he study in order to glean all of this bizarre knowledge? What happened to all of this stuff as the nineteenth century progressed?

For quaint interest or a kind of morbid fascination, this book will deliver. For historical material, this book will keep the occultist engaged. For readability, the unadulterated archaic and confusing writing style of this book will be a pure bust.

Constantin says

This book is a good read for someone who is a complete beginner, but not good at all for someone who has already a lot of occult related knowledge.

It contains many chapters on many different subjects, but it explains nothing in depth. 99% of the information in it is simply things that are mentioned theoretically, and serve only as ideas for stuff that you can put sticky notes on and then go ahead and research them once you have finished the book.

Personally, I did not enjoy reading it much. It is very theistic and one could say that it is basically "Christian Folk Magick", i.e. theories and ideas of correspondences but nothing actually practical.

Heka says

From an academic perspective, this was a fascinating read.

Bob Schweiger says

This book is hard to read and definately not for everyone. It contains valuable information for those seeking out old world knowledge.

Aaron Meyer says

Is a hodgepodge of material. For the time it came out though it was huge because access to some of the volumes which it took from were extremely difficult to come by. Of course now that has completely changed and its sources are readily available. Unfortunately that leaves this volume in the dust heap so to speak, worthless other than it being a curiosity of the times.

John Wight says

A great compendium of occult philosophy, going over topics such as natural magic, talismanic magic, alchemy, evocation, etc.

Nevethanaa says

fantastic

Moshe Fine says

Apparently stabbing a horse with an iron nail or sword or whatever will bind nearby witches. Nifty. Also, I bet you had no idea how useful menstrual blood could be. That shit is like the duct tape of magic. Works in applications ranging from bears to cornfields.

Also also, I very much enjoyed the advice given to those who want to make a philosopher's stone (the book presumes that gold is a major motivation here), part of which is that one should not desire too much gold. Delightful.

Chris Feldman says

Basically a rip-off of Agrippa, but interesting nonetheless.

Jennifer says

Full disclosure: I have only skimmed this book. I feel I must write a superficial review here as two of the three present say nothing about the book itself.

This is a 19th century text drawing from various sources (including, and perhaps primarily, but not only Agrippa's Three Books of Occult Philosophy). It is part manual, part overview for the Victorian occultist and covers various topics such as "Natural Magic," "Alchymy," "Cabalistic Magic," and "Magnetism."
