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# Dictionary of Ancient Magic Words and Spells: From Abraxas to Zoar

*By Claude Lecouteux*



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**Dictionary of Ancient Magic Words and Spells: From Abraxas to Zoar** By Claude Lecouteux

A comprehensive handbook of more than 1,000 magical words, phrases, symbols, and secret alphabets

- Explains the origins, derivatives, and practical usage of each word, phrase, and spell as well as how they can be combined for custom spells
- Based on the magical traditions of Europe, Greece, and Egypt and recently discovered one-of-a-kind grimoires from Scandinavia, France, and Germany
- Includes an in-depth exploration of secret magical alphabets, including those based on Hebrew letters, Kabbalistic symbols, astrological signs, and runes

From *Abracadabra* to the now famous spells of the Harry Potter series, magic words are no longer confined to the practices of pagans, alchemists, witches, and occultists. They have become part of the popular imagination of the Western world. Passed down from ancient Babylon, Egypt, and Greece, these words and the rituals surrounding them have survived through the millennia because they work. And as scholar Claude Lecouteux reveals, often the more impenetrable they seem, the more effective they are.

Analyzing more than 7,000 spells from the magical traditions of Europe as well as the magical papyri of the Greeks and recently discovered one-of-a-kind grimoires from Scandinavia, France, and Germany, Lecouteux has compiled a comprehensive dictionary of ancient magic words, phrases, and spells along with an in-depth exploration--the first in English--of secret magical alphabets, including those based on Hebrew letters, Kabbalistic symbols, astrological signs, and runes. Drawing upon thousands of medieval accounts and famous manuscripts such as the *Heptameron* of Peter Abano, the author examines the origins of each word or spell, offering detailed instructions on their successful use, whether for protection, love, wealth, or healing. He charts their evolution and derivations through the centuries, showing, for example, how spells that were once intended to put out fires evolved to protect people from witchcraft. He reveals the inherent versatility of magic words and how each sorcerer or witch had a set of stock phrases they would combine to build a custom spell for the magical need at hand.

Presenting a wealth of material on magical words, signs, and charms, both common and obscure, Lecouteux also explores the magical words and spells of

ancient Scandinavia, the Hispano-Arabic magic of Spain before the Reconquista, the traditions passed down from ancient Egypt, and those that have stayed in use until the present day.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Lecouteux has analyzed more than 7000 spells from numerous magical traditions. We find spells for protection, love, wealth and healing, with a charted evolution showing how a spell can morph down through the centuries. Presenting a wealth of material on magical words, signs and charms, Lecouteux also explores the magical words and spells of ancient Scandinavia, the Hispano-Arabic magic of Spain, the ancient Egyptian traditions and customs that have stayed in use until the present day." (*The Witches' Almanac*, March 2016)

"The anything-but-dry presentation by Lecouteux makes this book a must-add for someone curating careful resources for magic work. This belongs on a shelf between that favorite, oft-used herbal and that collection of favorite spells. The history, illustrations, and above all the words themselves beg for a reintroduction into living use--although, word of warning, few of them are actually rated as valid in Scrabble." (*Facing North*, Diana Rajchel, March 2016)

#### About the Author

Claude Lecouteux is a former professor of medieval literature and civilization at the Sorbonne. He is the author of numerous books on medieval and pagan beliefs and magic, including *The Book of Grimoires*, *The Tradition of Household Spirits*, *A Lapidary of Sacred Stones*, and *The High Magic of Talismans and Amulets*. He lives in Paris.

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### PRAEMBULUS

From Abracadabra to the Avada Kedavra and Rennervate used in *Harry Potter*, everyone has become familiar with magic words; but novels, films, and comic books can provide only a simplified, distorted version of them. Shouted, whispered, chanted, recited, or muttered by a magician, wizard, or witch--using singular and even incomprehensible words to obtain supernatural effects--these perpetually evolving spells come down to us from the dawn of time. Thanks to the efforts of the scholars from a variety of disciplines, we now have a corpus consisting of tens of thousands of accounts at our disposal that can be found in charms, orisons, blessings, conjurations, and medical prescriptions.

### THE USEFUL NATURE OF THE SPELLS

One of the purposes of magical phrases and words was the protection of people and property. It involved the prevention of something from happening or halting an action already at work.

Then there are the spells intended to grant one's wishes. These range from desires for wealth--through the discovery of hidden treasures!--to catching fish, to winning the love of a person one lusts after. That the phrases may have been incomprehensible was of no importance as their use was based on an act of faith, relying first on the magic and authority of the text, then on the tradition. If they have been handed down, it is because they work, and the more impenetrable they seem, the more effective they are!

### WRITING AND CODING

To write magic words or phrases, we are sometimes told it is necessary to use one's own blood or that of animals--the most often cited animals are bats, cats (preferably black ones), roosters, and dogs.

## Dictionary of Ancient Magic Words and Spells

### *From Abraxas to Zoar*

**Ablanathanalba:** A word that means "You are our father," endowed with magical properties and commonly used on Greek amulets and papyri. One on the collection of the National Library of France (n° 177) depicts an armed spirit with serpents for legs and a rooster's head over the palindrome Ablanathanalba on one side. On the opposite side there is a winged god standing on the back of a reclining lion with magical letters. This was all intended to protect the bearer from fear. A Greek papyrus or curse tablet dating from the second to fourth centuries places it at the top of a series of words arranged in a triangle that shrinks one letter every line: *ablanathanalba; aeëiouô; iaeôbaphrenemoun; ôuoiêea; akrammachamarei.*

It can also be found in a Greek charm for obtaining victory in the phrase ABLANATHANALBA AKRAMMACHAMARI PEPHNA PHO'ZA PHNEBENNOUNI NAACHTHIP...OUNORBA.

A Coptic amulet on papyrus that may date from the fourth century, found in Egypt, bears this phrase: AKRAMMAHAMARIAABLANAPHANALBAA. On a gem intended to inspire love, Ablanathanalba is written in a circle around the first name, Faustina. A curse tablet found in Cypress shows the compound ABLANATHANALBASISOPETRON. On a phylactery discovered in Germany that was intended to protect several people, we read:

OYDAEAGANFOZL . . . UNI Ia Ia Iai Sabaôth Adônai Ablanathanlba Akra[machari Semeseilam  
Sêêngembarpharangês, io io io

PGM XXXIII, 1-25; XXXVI, 211-30; D. G. Martinez, *PMich 757: A Greek Love Charm from Egypt*, Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1991; A. Mastrocinque, "Metamorfosi di Kronos su una gemma di Bologna." A. Mastrocinque (ed.) *Gemme gnostiche e cultura ellenistica*, Bologna, 2002, 118.

**Abra:** Word of a spell intended to provide protection against a dwarf who was believed to transmit illnesses. Abra Iesus, Alabra Iesus, Galabra Iesus. This phrase is preceded by the equally widespread thebal guttatim.

Berthouin-Mathieu, 155; Deonna, W., "Abra, Abraca. La croix talisman de Lausanne," *Geneva* 22 (1944), 115-37.

**AB : RA : CA D.A: --B. R: A.:** To chase away a cold fever, these words are written on a piece of bread that is then given to the patient to eat. The letters form the word Abracadabra!

**Abracula/Abraculus:** A word featured in a reductive phrase intended to cure fever. It should be written on a note to be worn around the neck. It appears in a wide variety of ways in the manuscripts.

## Users Review

### From reader reviews:

#### Connie Simpson:

Have you spare time to get a day? What do you do when you have much more or little spare time? Yep, you

can choose the suitable activity to get spend your time. Any person spent all their spare time to take a move, shopping, or went to the Mall. How about open or maybe read a book eligible Dictionary of Ancient Magic Words and Spells: From Abraxas to Zoar? Maybe it is to become best activity for you. You understand beside you can spend your time with the favorite's book, you can more intelligent than before. Do you agree with its opinion or you have additional opinion?

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**Nicholas Poston:**

Exactly why? Because this Dictionary of Ancient Magic Words and Spells: From Abraxas to Zoar is an unordinary book that the inside of the book waiting for you to snap the idea but latter it will zap you with the secret that inside. Reading this book next to it was fantastic author who have write the book in such awesome way makes the content inside of easier to understand, entertaining method but still convey the meaning totally. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this ever again or you going to regret it. This excellent book will give you a lot of benefits than the other book possess such as help improving your expertise and your critical thinking method. So , still want to postpone having that book? If I were being you I will go to the book store hurriedly.

**Oscar Jackson:**

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