



The Complete Book of Spells, Ceremonies and Magic

Migene Gonzalez-Wippler

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This book is far more than a historical survey of magical techniques throughout the world. It is the most complete book of spells, ceremonies, and magic ever assembled. It is the spiritual record of humanity.

Topics in this book include magical spells and rituals from virtually every continent and every people. The spells described are for love, wealth, success, protection, and health. Also examined are the theories and history of magic, including its evolution, the gods, the elements, the Kabbalah, the astral plane, ceremonial magic, famous books of magic, and famous magicians. You will learn about talismanic magic, exorcisms, how to use the I Ching, how to interpret dreams, how to construct and interpret a horoscope, how to read Tarot cards, how to read palms, how to do numerology, and much more. Included are explicit instructions for love spells and talismans; spells for riches and money; weight-loss spells; magic for health and healing; psychic self-defense; spells for luck in gambling; and much more.

No magical library is complete without this classic text of magical history, theory, and practical technique. The author is known for her excellent books on magic. Many consider this her best. Includes over 150 rare photos and illustrations.

The Complete Book of Spells, Ceremonies and Magic Details

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Sasha says

A thoroughly in-depth 'encyclopedia' view of so much more than you think upon first acquiring the book. My favorite section is on palmistry, dream interpretation and astrology (planets, etc) also the historical point of view. (Which was unusual for me to be 'drawn' to a theology side of these aspects).

"It is the spiritual record of humanity" ~ Migene Gonzalez-Wippler

Sasha O'S

Lisa Nikolits says

I read this book as part of research for a novel I am writing and I found it fascinating, succinct and very useful. I will definitely be returning to it again, it was exactly what I was looking for.

Samantha McGuire (Mirror Bridge Books) says

This book thoroughly discusses the cultural history of magic as well as going in to specific magical rituals and spirituality. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in magic lore, as it actually dicusses the magical rites and rituals in a more serious straight to the point tone rather than coming off as "cheesy" and "child-like," as if not taking the study of magic as a serious study.

Kevin Whiteneir says

I was really excited to read Migene Gonzalez-Wippler's *The Complete Book of Spells, Ceremonies and Magic* after reading much of her text on Santeria. However, reading through this book has left a very bad taste in my mouth considering how poorly sourced, ethnocentric, and written through the lens of Western perspectives it is. The citations are utterly lacking, which concerns me considering she should have a more robust bibliography considering her degree in Anthropology from Columbia University. But the straw that broke the camel's back, after 59 pages of being told that magic is about trying to align oneself with God's will (which I tried to justify by reading in my head as one's personal Godhead or a kind of divine force that exists beyond the dogmas of religion, despite the fact that she referred to it by the Christian He/Him pronouns and thus made the implications clear) was the cultural elitism that she falls prey in the following passage:

"Black Magicians are often called sorcerers and black witches Satanists and demonologists are also classified in this category (*comment: she does not distinguish between Luciferian Satanists and Laveyan Satanists and kind of just lumps them together despite critical differences she should be aware of as a scholar on the occult*). The sorcerer, however can hardly be classified as a magician. Although his knowledge of practical magic is usually extensive, the sorcerer seldom has a true understanding of the cosmic laws. He is essentially

an empirical worker who uses magical methods without a theoretical basis. For this reason his type of magic is generally intuitive rather than intellectual. When he fails, and he often does, it is precisely because of his ignorance of natural laws. The African witch doctor, the shaman, the village witch, and the Australian aborigine are all sorcerers rather than magicians. *(comment: so here, basically any type of occultist that isn't coming from the practices of European Ceremonial Magic have no understanding of the greater cosmic laws. This reeks of cultural elitism and also downplays the incredible spiritual magic and empowerment that comes out of these practices that she is basically calling ignorant and primitive.)*

There is another important difference between the sorcerer and the black magician. *(comment: earlier she says that Black magicians are often called sorcerers so this sudden call for distinction is actually confusing and I had to read it multiple times to make sure I didn't miss something.)* The sorcerer is often an honest person who tries to exercise his supernatural gifts to help others *(comment: again, she says Black magicians are often called sorcerers and earlier states that they have no intentions of helping anyone but themselves, so again confusing)*. When he causes harm he always tries to find an excuse for his negative works. The black magician needs no excuse. His aim is personal power, and he could not care less who gets trampled in the process.

I will say that I have to keep reading, and will update as I continue through the text, but so far, I'm incredibly disappointed due to moments like this and poor citations and uniformly stating that good occultists are all trying to reach God that are becoming a little too common.

The Elves says

As a general overview of magick, this book is not bad, however, the author does not always have her facts correct. Among other things, she says that after Osiris' body was cut up and scattered by Set that Isis found and brought all the pieces back together, when, in fact, the story goes that she found everything but his phallus that she then recreated by magic. She also gives incorrect instructions for how to derive an I Ching using coins, and she states that the ancient Celts made yearly sacrifices to the Goddess Artemis. Artemis was a Greek goddess so we find this questionable, although surely they made offerings to their own goddess who was similar to Artemis. But she doesn't point that out.

She is also prone to making broad, generalized statements about magick and magicians that sometimes border on the ridiculous. She says unequivocally that all magicians everywhere recognize Earth, Water, Air and Fire as the four elements of magic, failing to point out that the ancient Chinese believed in five elements of Earth, Wood, Metal, Fire and Water. What makes this so silly is that in the very next section after this declaration of the Universal belief in four elements, she begins to speak of the elements of Earth, Water, Air, Fire and Ether, with no explanation at all relative to her earlier claim.

She does point out, quite correctly, that Crowley sometimes put spurious data in his works to trick the uninitiated. Migene Gonzalez-Wippler does the same thing only without realizing she is doing so. Still, as we said, as an overview of magic, it is not bad if you don't use her as a reference source without double-checking the material.

The Silver Elves authors of *The Elven Star Oracle: A System of Divination for Star Enchanters*.

David Acevedo says

Now, now... settle down... the reason I gave this book 5 stars has to do merely with the author's approach. Migene González-Wippler is (or used to be until she fell into shadows, so to speak) an anthropologist of

decent renown. Her approach is this book is purely scholarly, although one can already see glimpses of what her career as a spiritual bogus will become. Still, this book, from a completely encyclopaedic perspective, is an asset for any atheist in training. And as such, it's awesome.

Sec says

Honestly, I am not sure where to start with this review since this book was a large bundle of different things thrown together from “histories” to techniques to ceremonial studies to divination. I guess it should be expected from the title, but it did and does make it harder to fully discuss everything within this book. As always, allow me to express some of my own shortcomings. Much of the book is dedicated to the ritual aspects of different communities which I have no access to such as African, Indian, Egyptian, Latin American, and many other communities. I cannot comment on the accuracy of the depiction of those communities, though I have my suspicions. The book covers ceremonial magic in depth in some cases, and that just isn't my background. It would take someone who was more familiar with the topics to fully review those items.

One more thing that I should mention before going forward, my book's copy was from 1997 and the original was published in 1978. This means that the book carries forward some of the bad information that had been present at the time of first publication, and is not an updated version of the book. I can't comment on any of the newer editions.

To start off on a good note, one of the biggest boons of this book is that there is a bibliography. In addition, occasionally there are footnotes to referenced sentences. This is not something which is very common in new age resource books, and that should be celebrated for what it is. Similarly I should mention that the author specifically has psychology and anthropology degrees, which is not something that I see very often.

To get into a heavy handed detail, the book has a lot of material that seems to contradict itself, when it comes to psychology and magic. “[People in the past who have done magic]'s wisdom taught me that what we know as magic is a natural state of mind, a concept largely substantiated by modern psychology.” (Acknowledgments page) It states “[p]erhaps no other science stands to benefit more from the still unrevealed but promising secrets of magic than modern psychology. ... The proper understanding and canalization of these unconscious drives could result in great benefits for all mankind.” (p.9) But it does not necessarily seem that the author's argument is that the concept that magic is purely psychological.

The author's opinion seems to be a combined definition that magic is a “unconscious” psychological act, a natural act of human condition because “historically” people performed magic throughout the years to get in touch with deities, and a concrete thing that a magician is performing to exact a change in the world beyond connection with a deity. There have been a couple of examples where the author themselves is participating in a ritual, but is not associating it with a psychological effect. (p.37) The author presents some of the material in the later sections without mentioning anything about the “unconscious connection” like the materials about the different high magic techniques or even some of the cultural specific content. This makes it harder to follow what exactly magic is as a definition, because it is often elusive and changes by section.

Since magic has no specific definition, this allows the book to conflate or correlate every single magical or, in some cases, cultural practices, as the exact same basic thing. As mentioned above, the book has a lot of different things written about the “historical forms” magic. “These universal laws are observed by all practicing magicians, from the Kabbalist to the African Witch doctor..” (p.12) Basically, because everyone was doing “magic” in the past, that means magic is universally the same for all people. That magic is some how a key component of what makes all of us human. Mostly this can be seen when the author discusses

magic and need fulfillment.

The main premise is that there are similar goals for a lot of different magic across cultures, such as looking for love, wealth or success, dealing with enemies, and dealing with matters of health. These similar goals are argued to be the exact same or the same beliefs. "It will be seen that the witch, the black magician, the voodooist, and other magicians throughout the world share the same basic magical beliefs, all of which makes magic a very human experience." (p. 332) Even deities are not above this making them all the same one thing, because the book associates all deities with a singular deity ("There is only one God, and His name is Allah. His name is also Yahweh, Jehovah, Olofi, Marduk, Zeus, Jupiter, Osiris, Brahman, Odin." (p. 29)

Across the board there is another large problem. The author wrote a lot of at worst, racist and at least, culturally insensitive things. The author uses slurs for Romani people. Similarly, the author often uses black as a codified language to mean "evil"; "bad", or "negative." This is something that I've already discussed many times with different reviews of books, but the language of making something black=evil, vile, or morally reprehensible is a problem. I'll only remind everyone that Martin Luther King Jr, has discussed this at length about why it is a problem that black is associated with these negative things, while white is not associated with anything negative at all.

Likewise, the author props up a lot of the discussion of magic using Jewish mysticism in general and Kabbalah as forms of "magic." The author writes, "[k]nown as the Yoga of the West, The Kabbalah is essential in the practice of ceremonial magic." (p.84) I understand that the author is trying to point out a link between ceremonial magic (past and present) and Kabbalah. These ceremonial magic traditions take directly out of Jewish mysticism and appropriates them. The problem lies in that the author does not question or point out any of this. Nothing in this book talks about the fact that there are a lot of ceremonial magicians who were directly antisemitic, including ones that this author uses or talks about. The author happily talks about Kabbalah as just another resource in the wheel house for ceremonial magic and magic in general. This is something that the author often comes back to, time in and time again throughout the book. (p. 287) In fact, the author keeps up the mythology surrounding "Jewish Magic" by giving examples about how Moses's was a great magician who had knowledge of Egyptian Magic and Jewish magic. (p.28, p.171)

In probably one of the most tone deaf points of this book, the author not only talks about Nazis but begins to associate them with different occult practices. On page 108, the author spends a good amount of time talking about the "occult" reasons why Hitler mass murdered the Jews (ignoring other groups that the Nazis murdered and tortured which had nothing to do with occultism). The author makes Hitler out to be someone who was just trying to "get power" from Jews who were "keeping secrets" from him. Then on page 109, the author specifically has a picture of "A group of girls during a Nazi harvest festival in 1933." Absolutely unacceptable. How are you going to publish material in which you spend so much time trying to take things from the Jewish community, and then turn around and talk about Nazism and try to "justify" in some ways what Hitler was ultimately doing. Which was murdering people.

I would also like to comment on the fact that there is weird sexual material. The book has "Tantric Yoga" as sex magic (p75). Associating sex with primarily a heterosexual adventure, which sexual penetration is required. In a weird contradiction to the previous deity example, the author shoehorned ditheism at one point in the "Cosmic Duality" section (p.32), which includes a fun shortening of entire pantheons down to two (heterosexual) mating pairs of deities. In some cases, the author directly talks about women in such a way as to make me uncomfortable. In the initiation section, the author makes the initiate, who is a woman, a timid scared person. The author spends a lot of time describing the placement of a knife which is pointed at a woman's chest, as between her breasts. There are other examples of the author almost erotically writes women in certain roles a part of the ceremonies. The tone is weird, what is being focused on is weird, it's all weird.

Another thing that does bother me, in general about this book, is much of it is a reprint of other people's material with no commentary on the rituals themselves. It is entirely one thing to have a full discussion about why a particular ritual is being done and for what purposes, and what types of paradigms were being used. Or spellwork, it doesn't have to be rituals. It is another thing to basically re-purpose other people's materials without adding anything new to those materials. For example, the entire "part three: magical spells" feels like page filling fodder. If I can sit here and see that you are not providing any commentary or even reasoning why you've published a particular ritual over the many other rituals that exist in the world, then what was the point in showing me these rituals. More importantly, if they were just to be something that someone can look at, as an example, put that into an appendix and reference it.

Even the divination portion of this book is not safe. It filled with lists of dream meanings, tarot card meanings, and other forms of divination and their particular meanings for different things. There is no additional information that the author is providing, it is just a bunch of different things which have been slapped together. There's not even a guide about how to put tarot cards down into layout, which I have seen in other books. There is almost no attempt at providing more contextual information beyond just the lists of meanings of things.

Finally, as a pet peeve this book does not have a good definition of what witchcraft is due to what looks like some forceful discussions about Alex Sanders. The author conflates Wicca and Witchcraft as the same item. I can't help but wonder if this is just a result of the time that the book was originally published. It could be that the author did not have access to much of the refutation that occurred against M. Murray's debunked work on the Witch Cults of Europe. A lot of the examples, especially the pictures are directly out of what looks like an Alexanderian ritual. It's interesting because Alexanderian often does not get to stand in the front of other Gardnerian derived traditions, but still. It is not ultimately what Witchcraft as a whole, and does not give a good idea of how witchcraft can differ from practice to practice.

There are a lot of other things which I did not cover here in this review, because this already was a tiresome book to review. There were definitely a couple fake factoids that I had to actually research (such as the Mummy on page 27 and using Freud and Jung as principal resources on modern psychology on page 9). Even to the point where Yoga was dragged into this. Likewise there were clearly some things which were not mental illness friendly. All in all the book itself seemed to just be meant to be used as a reference book for the purely curious. Even the author said themselves that they did not want this to be a grimoire or some book that seemed like a how to book. (p. xi) So I wrap this book review up with a question of the length of the book for what I was ultimately given at the end of the day, as well as, questions about the tone and choice of content.

Jen says

I had to stop reading this book halfway through. while she is a very hood writer, I became disgusted when I reached her chapter on Witchcraft. She was so egregiously wrong about Wicca that it cast the rest of the book in doubt for me. It was painful.

It's a real shame, because she is very knowledgeable on other topics.

James says

Pretty strong representation of spells and ceremonies from various cultures the world over.

Steven says

Far better than the title implies. There are hundreds of 'Spells' books out there but this is not one of them. This is a concise study of all aspects of occultism put in a very straight forward manner by someone who very obviously knows her subject very well.
