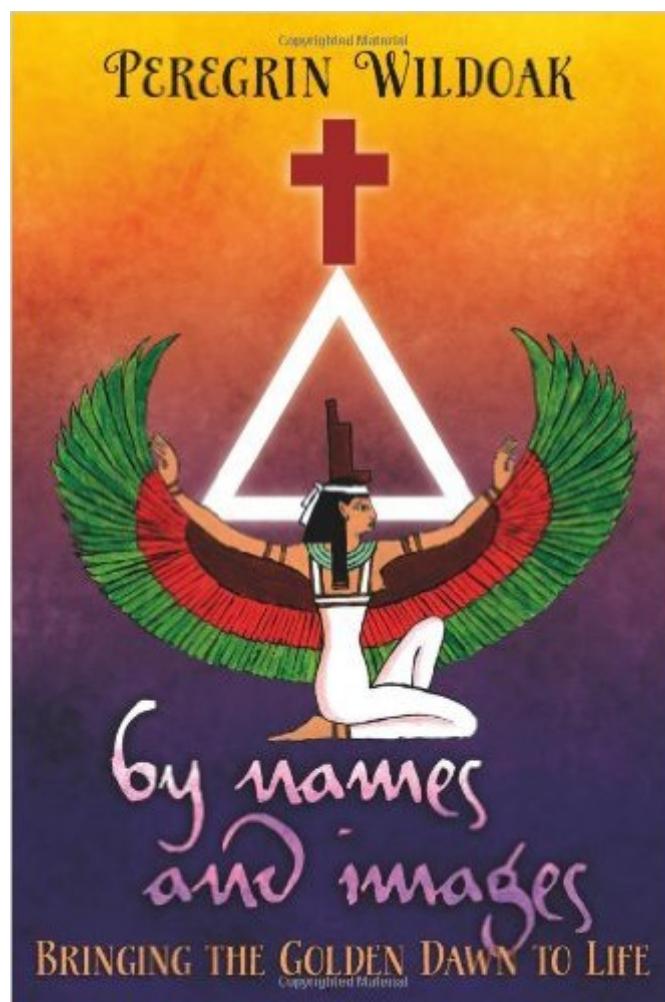


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By Names And Images: Bringing The Golden Dawn To Life



Synopsis

The Golden Dawn (GD) system of magic is the main source of the esoteric and magical wisdom and techniques practiced in the West today. While the rituals and bare teachings of the tradition have been published for sixty years, the inner workings and esoteric keys that empower those rituals have largely remained unpublished or unexplored in contemporary works. By Names and Images remedies this lack by providing detailed and clear instructions for the visualisations, spiritual connections and energetic practices required for every major GD practice and ritual, as well as several unpublished techniques. Focusing on the meanings and use of sacred names and practical techniques of visualisation, the book thoroughly explores meditation and divination, purification ritual, invocation and evocation, grades of initiation, and direct experience of the inner realms. Also covered is an explanation of the Qabalah and its use as a magical framework. While the book is sufficiently practical and clearly explained to be of huge benefit to a newcomer to magic, its primary aim is to allow people already practicing the Golden Dawn system to do so more effectively, and to be touched by the amazing spiritual blessings the rituals offer.

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Customer Reviews

In his review of Names and Images by Peregrin Wildoak, the British esoteric writer Gareth Knight said that the book shows that there is a magical substance in the Golden Dawn after all. The Golden Dawn has become a bit of a joke in land of its birth. It is forever associated with people claiming high grades, flame wars, court cases, using shedloads of magical gear, and wearing the silliest of

robes. In the UK magical scene you would never see a trained magician shove 7=4 under their name in public even if they were entitled to it. It is one of the reasons that the US Golden Dawn orders have had a limited impact in the UK, because phrases like "Power Week" and other hard sell language is seen as belonging to the other side of the pond. Many of the perceptions of the Golden Dawn are based on what has been written and its teachings. So British adepts look at this material and say "interesting... so what?" The rituals, if seen on their own, use dated language and lack magic. In the Golden Dawn, the serious magic was printed in the 5=6 and it is that material which forms the basics of British magic today. But that is the point. It is just the basics. If you were so minded you could go through the pile of 5=6 material and understand it in a weekend. You could probably construct some pretty good experiments to try it out. But it is not magic in the way that the British magic scene works these days. They look at the GD with its huge equipment requirements and think that it is a dinosaur from the past. To be fair they are not the only ones. There are those within the Golden Dawn community who see holes in what is available. There are calls to expand the curriculum and add material which was lacking or under developed.

I haven't read anything by Peregrin Wildoak before, but I liked "By Names and Images" very much and will watch for future titles from this author. This is a particularly good book for students who are approaching Golden Dawn ritual for the first time, because it takes some of the most challenging Golden Dawn rites and practices and puts them in a personalized, easy-to-understand context. While Peregrin Wildoak clearly has an affinity for the practical work of the Golden Dawn, I'd caution students to take some of the author's theories with a grain of salt. For example, the author states that the use of Judeo-Christian god-names in Golden Dawn ritual might be offensive to goddess-worshippers, and seems to suggest that the divine names in these rituals can be casually replaced; this point of view seems to completely miss the Golden Dawn's Qabalistic perspective on the godhead-- namely, that God is both masculine AND feminine, and that the spiritual aspirant must embrace the divine in ALL of its aspects. The divine names invoked in various Golden Dawn rites were selected with great care and specificity, and the serious practitioner shouldn't haphazardly replace them without having both good reason and a clear understanding of any change's Qabalistic implications. While the author is undoubtedly correct in stating that certain Golden Dawn rituals are suitable for adaptation (or even wholesale appropriation) for use in ceremonial worship services, this isn't something that should be done lightly or without a great deal of consideration.

Readers of Peregrin Wildoak's Magic of the Ordinary blog will be familiar with one of the Golden Dawn's wisest, experienced and most compassionate voices, a man who has been bringing the Golden Dawn to life in his own way for years. Despite this being his first published book, By Names and Images has the fluency and veteran insight of someone who has a thorough knowledge of the material. It's a difficult book to describe because it's similar to what's gone before in that it revisits a lot of the same rituals and techniques used in the Golden Dawn that you'll be familiar with if you have one of the Regardie books, but it's also completely different in terms of what it emphasizes. It may be the first of its kind to really stress visualization with a series of exercises that really should be in any manual designed to be used. In an era where magic is often confused with Harry Potter movies, curses and spells, it stresses the point that the rote repetition of a ritual will get you nowhere, what's important is what is going on in one's imagination. Every ritual and meditative technique written about from this point onwards is wonderfully descriptive in what a person should be concentrating on as they perform, say, a Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram. Perhaps the only close correlate already published would be the lengthy visualization instructions in Israel Regardie's The Middle Pillar (in particular the Cicero edited version). But despite what might be some of the best annotated ritual descriptions in print, there are some chapters and sections in this book that go deeply into areas less touched upon elsewhere.

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