

## Valac

The demon called Valac is a minor demon that is first described in the fifteenth-century Latin grimoire **Munich Manual of Demonic Magic** (*Liber incantationum, exorcismorum et fascinationum variarum* - CLM 849). The “Volach” entry in the manuscript describes Volach as a cherubic winged boy riding a two-headed dragon. The entry also claims that Valac can be invoked to find hidden treasures and control serpents.

Unlike other major demons, Valac is believed to travel alone even though several grimoires claim he rules between thirty and thirty-eight legions of demons. Because of the linkage to treasure, this demon, historical, is one of the most frequently summoned. However, any advice has very negative results as payment.



Figure 1 Sigil of Valac

Following the Munich Manual, **The Book of the Office of Spirits** (*Liber Officiorum Spirituum*) is this next major grimoire to mention Valac. In this work, Valac is included as one of the twenty-seven named demons.

The next significant reference to Valac appears in the appendix listing of a hierarchy of demons (*Pseudomonarchia Daemonum*) in the 1577 Johann Weyer book, *De praestigiis daemonum*. The Book of Office Spirits seems to be the primary source for this work. The entry in the list of 69 demons has the name “president” Volac as the fiftieth entry out of sixty-nine. The title of “president” should not infer high importance since all the demons in list are kings, princes, Dukes, et cetera.

Parallel to the Weyer book, three other authors contributed to a grimoire called the **Book of Oberon** (circa 1577). In Oberon, there is a demon named Coolor which is believed to be another name for Valac. The entry reads:

*Coolor, a greate prince, he appeareth like a child, and he hath whings like to a gooshaweke, and he rideth upon a dragone that hath 2 heades, and he giveth true answers for hid treasures and he hath under him 13 legions.*

The Oberon used the **Book of the Office of Spirits**, as its primary source and copied the entire book contents (even those excluded in Weyer’s book).

In 1584, Reginald Scot published one of the earliest English books that mentioned Valac. Scot’s grimoire, the **Discoverie of Witchcraft**, reproduced the core of the Oberon description with an entry for Valac that reads:

*Valac is a great president, and commeth abroad with angels wings like a boie, riding on a twoheaded dragon, he perfectlie answereth of treasure hidden, and where serpents may be seene, which he delivereth into the conjurors hands, void of anie force or strength, and hath dominion over thirtie legions of divels.*

The most cited early appearance of Valac is found in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century **Lesser Key of Solomon** (*Clavicula Salomonis Regis*). The Lesser Key is in many ways a rewrite of the Weyer works combined with Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim's **Three Books of Occult Philosophy**, the thirteenth century grimoire allegedly written by Pietro d'Abano called the *Heptameron* and the 1620 grimoire *Calendarium Naturale Magicum Perpetuum*. With many differing versions of the work still existing, it is important to note that Valac is also referred to as Ualac, Valak, and Valu. While there are several errors and omission in the Lesser Key when compared to Weyer, for the most part, the Weyer frame work is followed. One change for Valac is found when "President Valac" is demoted from fiftieth to sixty-second (out of seventy-two). This seems to be the result of four additional demons being added, one (Prufias) being omitted, and the hierarchy restructured.

### Blurring the Lines

During the eighteenth century, a great number of writers included Valac in their magic texts as being the cause of many of history's failed efforts. Several writer's claim that it was Valac that inspired two teenagers (Nicholas of the Rhineland in Germany and Stephan of Cloyes in France) to lead the two 1212 Children's Crusades to the Holy Land. In both cases, most of the thousands of teenagers in the crusade were sold into slavery.

A second disaster attributed to Valac was the 1284 incident involving the Pied Pier and the village of Hamelin in Germany. The story revolves around the piper eliminating the cities rat problem and the town not paying him the promised reward. Here is where Valac writers assert that Valac told the town's mayor not to pay the bill. As a result of the broken agreement, the piper steals the children away. Surprisingly, while the story is embellished there are contemporary reference to the loss of the children, a 1300 stained glass in the Church of Hamelin and an entry in towns history written in 1384 commemorating 100 years since the children less. Of course, neither source describes a demon being involved.

Valac makes an appearance in the early nineteenth century as being the inspiration behind the Reign of Terror in France from June 1793 until July 1794.



Figure 2 Eighteenth Century woodcut featuring Valac

## Movie Star

In 2016, Valac finally achieved his eternal dream of becoming an ambiguously defined demon in the movie *the Conjuring 2*. The movie version of the demon fails to reflect a relationship to the historical records and portrays Valac as a demonic nun. The only linkage between the movie Valac and the grimoiric Valac, beyond the name, is the use of the term “Marquis of Snakes” that is used in several minor modern derivative magic books.