

CHALDAEAN ORACLES

A revelatory poem, written in [Greek](#) hexameter verse, composed or edited by a certain magician named Julianus, who lived during the reign of Marcus Aurelius. Its importance is twofold: it is the last major sacred book of [pagan](#) antiquity, and it had major influence on the development of Neoplatonism from [Porphyry](#) to Psellus.

Only fragments exist, although quotations are scattered in the writings of Proclus, Damascius, Psellus, and other Neoplatonists. Magical rites were based on the precepts of this purported divine revelation.

The fragments, best studied by Hans Lewy, contain much borrowed Platonism, some material common to gnosticism, and an account of the [creation](#) and the descent of the cosmic soul. Hypostases, gods, and daemons of Greco-Oriental cults are fused into a strange mass in the “Chaldaean theology.”

Some rituals or sacraments have been identified, including a symbolic burial, an initiation, and a purification of the soul. Although Christian writers quoted the text in collections and anthologies, there is no certain influence of the “Chaldaean Oracles” on Christian magic.

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