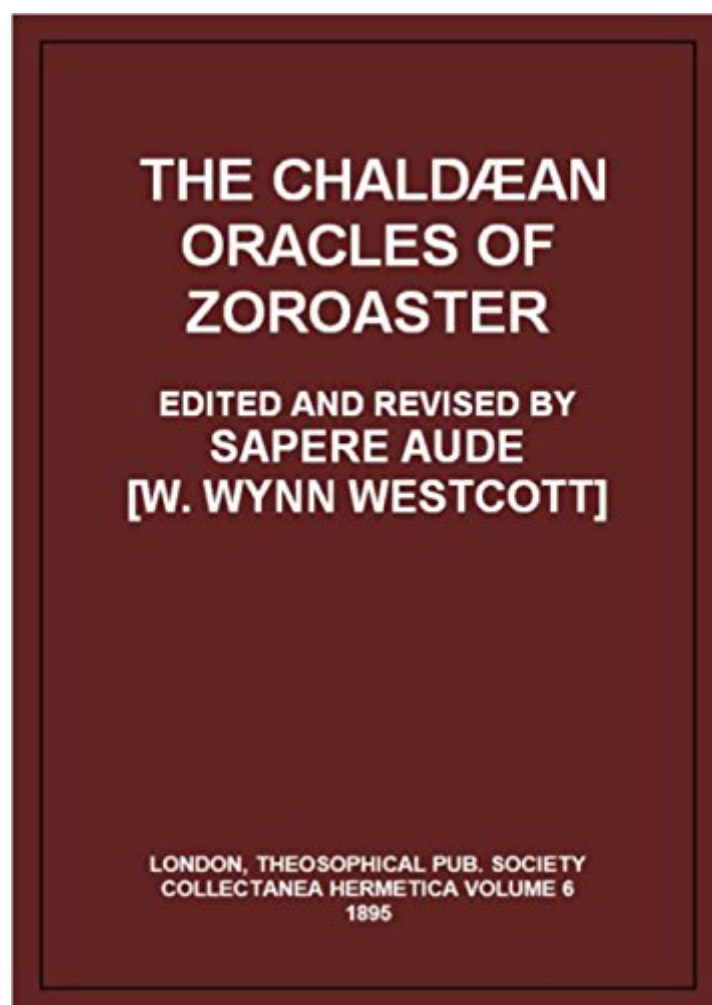


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The Chaldean Oracles Of Zoroaster



Synopsis

The Chaldean Oracles have survived as fragmentary texts from the 2nd century AD, and consist mainly of Hellenistic commentary on a single mystery-poem (which may have been compilations from several oracular sources, considering the random subject changes) that was believed to have originated in Chaldea (Babylonia). They appear to be a syncretic combination of Neoplatonic elements with others that were Persian or Babylonian in origin. Later Neoplatonists, such as Iamblichus and Proclus, rated them highly. The 4th-century Emperor Julian suggests in his Hymn to the Magna Mater that he was an initiate of the God of the Seven Rays, and was an adept of its teachings. When Christian Church Fathers or other Late Antiquity writers credit "the Chaldeans", they are probably referring to this tradition. The main text here was translated by the 19th century Neo-Platonist Thomas Taylor, and I. P. Cory in his *Ancient Fragments*. This edition was published and introduced by the Theosophist W. W. Westcott in his series *Collectanea Hermetica* in 1895. Despite the twisted background of this text, it has a definite resonance which students of the Esoteric will enjoy. Indeed, W.B. Yeats, who moved in Theosophical circles, was an admirer of this text.

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Customer Reviews

"The Chaldean Oracles of Zoroaster" edited and revised by Sapere Aude, with an introduction by L. O. (Percy Bullock) was first published by the London Theosophical Publishing Society in 1895. Wynn Wescott's role in this book is uncertain, as he's not given credit anywhere in the text. This edition is published by Gina Fanning in 2009. The fly-leaf is suspiciously absent of identifying information commonly seen in most books. The entire book, from front to back, is printed in a ghastly, sadistic, painful-to-read ALL-CAP font. Typos don't even wait for the second line: the word "Chaldaean" comes out as "Chald-an". Apparently this font doesn't include an "ae". The fun doesn't stop there. The word "oracula" at first glance looks like "Dracula." Once the reader has gone through a teeth-grinding adjustment to the hell-font (and believe me, this is like adapting to the sound of a concerto for fingernails on a blackboard with orchestra), the reader must next adapt to L.O.'s sworn fealty to the Kabbalah. One enduring feature of the secret society folks of the 1890s was their relentless attempt to make everything fit into the Kabbalah, or conversely, to shoehorn the Kabbalah into every possible occult system (the tarot is a prime example). This isn't to say that the Chaldean schema doesn't have similarities to that of the Kabbalah. It does. But the obligatory Kabbalistic shoehorning takes away from the unique features of the Chaldean view of the cosmos. L. O. subjects readers to statements like, "In considering this schema, it must be remembered that the supramundane Light was regarded as the primal radiation from the Paternal Depth and the archetypal noumenon of the Empyr-um (without the hell-font: Empyraeum), a universal, all-pervading -and, to human comprehension-ultimate essences." L.O.

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