



# CHALDEAN MAGIC

Its Origin and Development

François Lenormant

Chaldean Magic  
*Its Origin and Development*  
Author: François Lenormant  
1877

Original title: *La Magie chez Les Chaldeens* (1874)  
Cover image: *Queen of the Night* relief (1800 - 1750 BCE), British Museum in London  
Lay-out: [www.burokd.nl](http://www.burokd.nl)

ISBN 978-94-92355-02-7

© 2015 Revised publication by:



VAMzzz Publishing  
P.O. Box 3340  
1001 AC Amsterdam  
The Netherlands  
[www.vamzzz.com](http://www.vamzzz.com)  
[contactvamzzz@gmail.com](mailto:contactvamzzz@gmail.com)

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January 17, 1837 - December 9, 1883

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## Author's Preface

**THIS BOOK** came out in France three years ago. Since that time science has been making rapid strides, and in prosecuting my studies I have found a confirmation of many of my opinions. I could not therefore allow a translation of my studies relating to "Chaldean Magic" to appear without making a new edition of it, subject to various corrections and additions. To this end I have carefully revised all the translations of Cuneiform texts contained in this volume, and in some cases slight modifications have been necessary to bring them into harmony with the latest discoveries. I have added a translation of several interesting fragments which were not comprised in the French edition, and entirely rewritten some of the Chapters. The book which I now offer the English public may, therefore, be regarded as an almost entirely new work, which alone represents the present state of my opinions and studies.



## Editor's Preface

“LA MAGIE CHEZ LES CHALDEENS,” of which this present volume is an enlarged edition, was issued by M. Lenormant in the autumn of 1874; it was preceded by *Les Premieres Civilisations*, and closely followed in 1875 by *La Divination et la Science des Présages*; all these works possessing the same characteristic feature: the exposition of Assyrian thought, as evidenced by the language of the Cuneiform inscriptions themselves, compared with the traditions and usages of other contemporary and descended races, both Semitic and Turanian.

The interest excited in the philosophical world by these treatises was still further increased, by the publication in England, almost immediately afterwards, of the late George Smith's *Chaldean Genesis*, in which for the first time since the era of Assurbanipal, the myths of the ancient Accadians were read in the light of day. By the additional texts thus recovered for the use of students, the premises of M. Lenormant were to a great extent confirmed; and the interest of Biblical scholars in Assyrian mythology showing every sign of increasing, it was deemed advisable to present the general public with an English edition of *La Magie*. This task was at once undertaken by Messrs. Bagster and Sons, and on the MSS. being sent to the author,

he in the most generous manner offered to recast the earlier Chapters of the work, and to rewrite some of the latter. While this was being done, the researches of Prof. Sayce and other Assyriologists elucidated new facts, and discovered fresh parallels between the Accadian and Ugro-Finnic theologies. These discoveries had all to be considered and incorporated with the original text of M. Lenormant, and the result was, in the end, an almost entire remodelling of the French edition. To the editor was assigned, with the consent of the author, the office of adding references from English authorities to the citation already given from Continental writers, especially as *La Magie* was, in its new form, designed for a larger circulation than that of scholars alone. The various texts issued in the *Records of the Past*, and the *Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, had to be cited wherever it was possible to do so; and further, such various readings noted as had been adopted by English translators. These numerous emendations, while they increased the value of the work, delayed its progress through the press far longer than was anticipated, and even now, at the last moment, it has been judged expedient by M. Lenormant to add an Appendix bearing upon the ethnographical meaning of the term "Sumirian," in reply to a pamphlet by Dr. Oppert, which has become the centre of a controversy, the waves of which have begun to reach our shores.

These circumstances will account for one or two apparent discrepancies in the present translation: viz., the use of the syllable "dug" for "khi," in the ideograms composing the name of the god Marduk, from p. 19 to p. 64, and its subsequent abandonment by the

author in favour of the older reading in p. 108, *et seq.* The expansion of the note from Berosus on p. 157, regarding the deity Oannes into an Appendix to Chapter XIII., at p. 201, is another example of the progressive revision which this translation has undergone.

These revisions and corrections, both of the original work and the present translation, as passed by M. Lenormant, are only such as from the nature of the theme, and the advancing condition of Assyrian philology might be expected. Of Assyriology it may truly be written, “day unto day uttereth knowledge.” There is probably no section of the science of comparative mythology of which, till recently, less has been known, or of which, at present, more authentic materials remain, than the subject of “Chaldean Magic: its Origin and Development.”

W.R.C. VENTNOR, *November 1877*



## PART ONE





## CHAPTER I

# The Magic and Sorcery of the Chaldeans

A GENERAL, but tolerably complete idea of the magic conjuration of the Chaldeans, its processes and its principal applications, may be obtained from a document which Sir Henry Rawlinson and Mr. Edwin Norris published “in facsimile” in 1866, in the second volume of their collection of the *Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*. This document is a large tablet from the library of the royal palace at Nineveh, containing a succession of 28 formulae of deprecatory incantations, unfortunately partly destroyed, against the action of evil spirits, the effects of sorcery, disease, and the principal misfortunes which may attack man in the course of his daily life. The whole forms a litany of some length, divided into paragraphs, which all finish with the same solemn invocation. It would seem, judging from the concluding paragraph, that the intention was not to use the detached formulae of this litany on special occasions, but to recite the whole as a protection from all the fatal influences against which it provides. This tablet, however, like all the other works on magic from Assyria and Chaldea, is written in Accadian, that is, in the Turanian language, which was related to the Finnish and Tartaric dialects spoken by the primitive population of the marshy plains round the lower Euphrates. An Assyrian translation accompanies the ancient Accadian text, and is placed opposite to it. Centuries

## *The essentials of magic in Chaldea*

*La Magie chez Les Chaldeens*, of which this present volume is an enlarged English edition, was issued in the autumn of 1874. It was preceded by *Les Premieres Civilisations* and closely followed in 1875 by *La Divination et la Science des Présages*. All these works possess the same characteristic feature: the exposition of Assyrian thought, as evidenced by the language of the cuneiform inscriptions themselves.

Lenormant had revised his book to such an extent, he regarded *Chaldean Magic* not as a translation, but as a publication on its own. The essentials of magic in Chaldea are presented within the context of comparison or contrast to Egyptian, Median, Turanian, Finno-Tartarian and Akkadian magic, mythologies, religion and speech. Interesting is the Chaldean demonology, with its incubus, succubus, vampire, nightmare and many Elemental spirits, most of them coalesced with the primal powers of nature.

*Chaldean Magic* dwells on the threshold of predated sjamanistic lore and the later systemization of the occult. This makes the work of Lenormant an invaluable and fascinating source for both the academic and the modern occultist.

