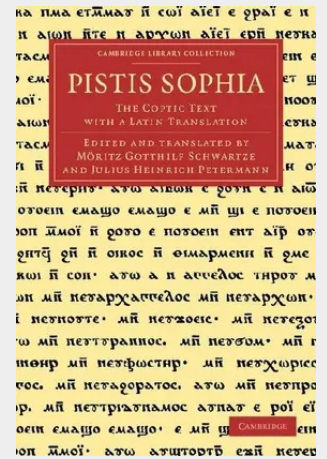


Pistis Sophia

The Coptic Text with a Latin Translation

Published in 1851, this edition of an important second-century Gnostic work presents the Coptic text derived from codices held in the British Museum and originally ascribed to the authorship of a certain Valentinus. These manuscript sources were scrutinised and translated into Latin by the German scholar Möritz Gotthilf Schwartz (1802–48) at the behest of the king of Prussia, but he died before the book could be completed. The task of preparing Schwartz's work for publication fell to Julius Heinrich Petermann (1801–76), professor of oriental literature at the University of Berlin. The arcane and difficult text describes esoteric Gnostic teachings which – just as in the traditional Gospels – are delivered by Jesus to his disciples. At the beginning, he is said to have spent eleven years after the resurrection teaching them this mysterious higher knowledge. Both the annotated Coptic text and Schwartz's Latin translation are frequently interspersed with Greek.

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