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978-1-108-05091-3 - Pistis Sophia: The Coptic Text with a Latin Translation

Edited by Möritz Gotthilf Schwartz and Julius Heinrich Petermann

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### Pistis Sophia

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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# Pistis Sophia

*The Coptic Text with a Latin Translation*

EDITED BY AND TRANSLATED BY  
MÖRITZ GOTTHILF SCHWARTZ  
AND JULIUS HEINRICH PETERMANN



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### LECTORI BENEVOLO S.

**T**radimus hic viris doctis primum, quod in lucem prodit, opus gnosticum a **MAURITIO SCHWARTZIO** e codice manuscripto Askewiano accuratissime descriptum et latine versum, cuius promulgationem ab eo inde tempore, quo innotuit, theologi quam maxime desiderabant.

Idem vir praeterea alios etiam codices manuscriptos in Angliae bibliothecis publicis privatisque adservatos, quosquos ei inspicere licuit, ea qua solebat diligentia descripsit, quos nunc, quum repentina, quod maxime dolemus, morte abreptus sit, **HENR. PETERMANNUS**, defuncti amicus, una cum versione latina edendos curabit, si prior ille liber viris doctis tantum probatus erit, ut posteriorum impensis faciendis sufficiamus. Inter hos praeter fragmenta maioris minorisve ambitus, quae vitas et acta Sanctorum, duas epistolas Sti. Athanasii, aliaque partim gnostica continent, reperiuntur fragmenta multa Sacrae Scripturae tam Veteris quam Novi

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Testamenti Sahidica, deinde Canones Apostolici, porro tractatus de mysteriis literarum Graecarum (in quo auctor, qui Atasius Presbyter vocatur, omnia creationis, providentiae et redemptionis opera e literis Graecis educit atque elicit, ductis argumentis ex dicto illo: „Ego sum  $\alpha$  et  $\omega$ , principium et finis“), ac denique liber Gnosis Sahidice e codice Bruciano, qui in bibliotheca Bodleiana adservatur, comparato apographo Woidiano, quod multis in locis correxit, descriptus.

BIBLIOPOLÆ.

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OPUS GNOSTICUM  
VALENTINO ADIUDICATUM  
E CODICE  
MANUSCRIPTO COPTICO LONDINENSI

DESCRIPSIT ET LATINE VERTIT

M. G. SCHWARTZE.

EDIDIT

J. H. PETERMANN.

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**CHRISTIANO CAROLO JOSIAE BUNSENIO**

**VIRO SUMMO**

**SACRUM.**

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## PRAEFATIO.

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Mauritius G. Schwartzius, vir mihi amicissimus, qui regia munificentia adiutus in Anglia codices manuscriptos Copticos, quosquos ei inspicere licuit, ea qua solebat diligentia partim descripserat, partim perscrutatus fuerat, quum in patriam reversus iam in eo esset, ut hos simul cum grammatica linguae Copticae, quam antea elaboratam nunc, postquam codicibus illis usus erat, animadversionibus novis et additamentis auxerat, publici iuris faceret, praematura, quod maxime dolendum est, morte repente abreptus, quos inchoaverat labores, ad finem perducere non potuit. Quo facto vidua eius, quae mariti dilectissimi memoriam pie colit, ut in scriniis non laterent, curavit, quae summa ille industria undecunque collegerat, et quorum editionem praeparaverat, mihique maximam manuscriptorum partem, ac praesertim „Πιστιν Σοφίαν,” librum a viris doctis iam diu desideratum, edendi munus demandavit. Iam quum regia Scientiarum Academia, quae Berolini est, opem suam in publicandis illis operibus benevole promisisset, bibliopola honestissimi, possessores tabernae librariae, quae a defuncto Duemmlero nomen nacta est, Dr. Harrwitz et Grube, hunc librum prae caeteris promulgandum lubentissimo animo susceperunt.

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Equidem quum operis huius a Mauritio Schwartzio quam accuratissime descripti et latine redditi edendi operam me subiturum pollicerer, nondum omnes perspexeram difficultates, quae talem laborem impediunt. Experientia enim edoctus sciebam, quanta sedulitate ille et, ut ita dicam, ἀριβεια in omnibus esset versatus. Quare, quum librum ab ipso descriptum translatumque inspicerem, primo oculorum obtutu putabam, mihi praeter vocabula dirimenda nonnisi correctoris quem dicunt partes agendas esse. Sed, quum accuratius rem investigarem, animadverti, eum ipsum in locis haud paucis haesitasse, nonnulla in versione omisisse, aliaque licet non ita multa sic vertisse, ut facile conicerem, eum, antequam librum in publicum emissurus fuisset, iterum iterumque illa perlecturum, novisque curis omnia subiecturum fuisse. Verumtamen haec omnia intelligentem me commovere non poterant, ut promissis non starem, Schwartziique librum ad finem non perducerem. Immo summa cupiditate arripui munus a vidua mihi demandatum tanquam officium manibus amici debitum, vel sacrificium iisdem offerendum sperans, me Dei auxilio difficultates illas superaturum esse, et, si operi huic sane gravissimo impar sim, fore, ut viri docti mihi benevole indulgeant et ignoscant. Ac profecto, si cui alii, mihi certe ad lectorum benevolentiam provocandum est. Nam, licet omni, qua par erat, religione in rebus non minus quam in verbis investigandis versarer, lubenter tamen confiteor, me in multis adhuc dubium haerere. Argumentum enim libri, quae est gnosticorum librorum natura, tam arduum, tamque abstrusum est, ut saepius mihi iterum omnia perlegenti vestigine quasi laborare

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viderer, idque eo magis, quoniam tantum abest, ut ego Valentinum auctorem agnoscam, ut ne ab ullo quidem eius assecla, sed ab Ophita quodam superiori potius scriptum esse arbitrer; qua de re Deo volente mox in libello seorsum edendo fusius et accuratius disputabo. Sed coniecturis, quibus latus ampliusque campus apertus erat, lubenter supersedi, ne libri molem nimis auferem, easque tantummodo, quae sponte sese offerebant, in notis addidi. In textu quem dicunt nihil nisi aperta scribae sphalmata mutavi aut correxi, adeo nonnulla, id quod iam doleo, quae fugiente calamo amicus minus recte scripserat, in notis adiectis emendavi, measque animadversiones a notis M. Schwartzii addita litera „P.” religiose distinxi. Itaque quae notae hac litera carent, ab ipso Schwartzio profectae sunt, inter quas eae, quae literis „Rev.” signatae sunt, iteratam codicis manuscripti perlectionem indicant,

In vocabulis dirimendis — uno enim tenore codex, uti fieri solet, scriptus est, id quod Schwartzius in apographo suo retinuit — regulas sequutus sum, quas amicus in Praef. Evang. Copt. dedit, quasque ipse in illa editione observavit, quoniam hae mirum quantum ad textum bene intelligendum faciunt. Sed, quum aliquoties dubius haeserim, ignoscant velim lectores, si nonnunquam eadem alibi aliter diremta videbunt. Denique peto a lectoribus benevolis, ut mihi indulgeant, quod multa, quae partim in „Addendis et Corrigendis” enotavi, hebescentem oculorum aciem effugerunt. Excusari illud propterea maxime potest, quod Schwartzius minutissimis literis textum et versionem scripsit.



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