



# Corpus Hermeticum

*G.R.S. Mead (translator), Hermes Trismegistus*

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## Corpus Hermeticum G.R.S. Mead (translator) , Hermes Trismegistus

A collection of Greek writings attributed to Hermes Trismegistos, dating from some time before the close of the second century AD, Corpus Hermeticum forms the core of the Hermetic tradition, and was one of the main influences on and motivational factors for the Renaissance. This OMTO edition is based upon the classic translation by GRS Mead, lightly updated into more contemporary English to make the writings more accessible, however, with every effort made to leave Mead's masterful grammatical style intact. This is one of the world's greatest religio-philosophical and spiritual texts. It speaks directly to the human spirit and is the antithesis of an exoteric work, but rather one that aims to promote personal Gnosis. For these reasons, this edition resists the temptation to impose further interpretation or commentary upon the reader.

## Corpus Hermeticum Details

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Author : G.R.S. Mead (translator) , Hermes Trismegistus

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## From Reader Review Corpus Hermeticum for online ebook

### John Kulm says

I like this translation by Meade. The Corpus Hermeticum is the source if you want to read on Hermeticism. But my .99 cent Kindle copy seems to be missing some of the chapters. I'm not certain since online descriptions of various translations seem to break the text into chapters differently. The subject interests me enough that I'll have to look into other translations.

An important note in chapter VI points out the word "good" in the text means "self-caused," "self-sufficient," and not the current idea of good as moral and ethical. Good, in the text, has a somewhat neo-Platonist meaning of an unchanging, incorruptible ideal. Since the word "good" is frequent in the text, you'll need to train yourself to keep it in mind.

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### Claudia says

This is a very old book. One of the oldest surviving Hermetic manuscripts is the Papyrus Vindobonensis Graeca 29456, which dates to the end of the 2nd century AD. This is the review of Mead's translation. This book is described by its editors as the key work standing between the ancient Greek civilisation and the dawn of Christianity.

The first aspect that hits me in this book is the focus on God and all deity things that the thinking man of the second century was preoccupied with. Hence, the book seeks to discuss the nature of the Divine, logos (God's speech), mind and nature itself (including a very sophisticated discussion about motion and rest - physics- within the scope of cosmos); and it does not shy away of building a complicated conceptual framework. It offers very complex answers, depth and surprisingly current explanations to current issues - perhaps issues with which mankind always struggled to comprehend. For a book written millennia ago this is absolutely incredible! If I was starting on philosophical concepts and hermetics I would surely start with this book.

It's a short read and very well written, in a form of a dialogue between a student and his teacher, here understood to be Hermes Trismegistus (the thrice greatest Hermes) - with his thrice greatest book.

Honourable mention goes to the magnificent quote: "

H: God, therefore, is not Mind, but Cause that the Mind is; God is not Spirit, but Cause that Spirit is; God is not Light, but Cause that the Light is."

You will do well to read this. 4 stars.

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### Christine says

not sure if this is the "right" version

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### Berfin Kanat says

Çevirene, basana, dilimize kazandı? rana bin te? ekkür. Tek seferde bütünüyle kavranacak bir metin de? il (bkz. kavrayamadı? :D) bu sebeple mutlaka tekrar okuyaca? ?m.

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### **Karen says**

The text is filled with Truth, but the influence of corruption has obviously changed much of it. I enjoyed Timothy Freke's "The Hermetica" more, which refines this text into a more pure and beautiful read, as I think it was meant to be.

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### **Carlos says**

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### **Matthew says**

This was a challenging text to delve into, which will require rereading of a different translation to understand better. The language Mead used at times was difficult to comprehend. One of the chapters I liked the most was "Mind Unto Hermes" which contained the line *If, then, thou dost not make thyself like unto God, thou canst not know Him. For like is knowable unto like.*

I was not impressed with this Forgotten Books publication as it did not include G.R.S. Mead's commentaries on each of the chapters with his translations. It also listed on the front cover John Michael Greer as the author, but did not even include his introduction to the book. Greer's introduction can be found here. The website, Sacred-Texts, has a complete version of G.R.S. Mead's translation with commentaries available here for those interested.

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I have heard that *The Way of Hermes*, another translation of *The Corpus Hermeticum*, translated by Clement Salaman is a better edition. I'll have to try that one next.

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### **Ralitsa Mitova says**

Mind-blowing book! :)

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### **Marius says**

Asemenea abrambureli fascinante ?i creative n-am mai citit decât pe site-ul Marii Loje Na?ionale din România :)

Bineîn?eles, aceast Corpus de acum 2000 de ani nu e cu nimic inferior fa?? de Science Magazine de azi sau fa?? de oricare carte e popularizare a ?tiin?ei, cum ar fi cele scrise de Hawking.

Bunul meu mentor Montaigne a avut dreptate; sunt cu atât mai convins cu cât încerc s? în?eleg mai mult.

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### **Lesley-anne Brewster says**

So much to think about; so many pathways to follow.....

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### **Desiree Finkbeiner says**

very interesting concepts. thought-provoking, though for students seeking a text with language closer to modern English, yet still touching on Hermetic teachings with weight and understanding; i recommend reading 'the Kybalion'.

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### **Erick says**

I had read John Everard's translation of the *Hermetica* previously, but this is the first time I had read G.R.S. Mead's translation. Because I was curious to contrast the deficiencies and/or merits of each, I decided to read both translations this time in tandem. I will, accordingly, offer my analysis of both and post this review for both versions.

Occasionally one or the other offers a better translation. This is either due to a better grasp of the text or a better source. Supposedly, only Mead had access to a Greek source and Everard relied on Ficino's Latin translation. I have not verified that this was the case. But, I can say, that often Everard provides a more fluid and less cumbersome translation. One should note something about both translators as well: Everard was a 17th century Christian mystic and Mead was a late 19th/early 20th century Theosophist and Neo-pagan. The dispositions of both are manifest here and there in their respective translations. I think both attempted to translate the text honestly but some bias is probable in both cases. Everard has an edge, not only because of the above factor, but he also includes four additional Hermetic treatises that Mead does not include in his version. I will admit that occasionally Mead does offer a better translation, so reading both is highly advisable, but if I were to recommend only one, it would probably be Everard's version; even though the English is a bit more antiquated.

As for the *Hermetica* itself: these represent the earliest Hermetic corpus, but, that being said, these writings probably go back to the late first or early second century and no earlier. They are very similar to texts one finds in the Nag Hammadi library. This really does indicate a common provenance and locale; i.e. Egypt, and probably Alexandria. I have held the opinion for a while that certain texts in the Nag Hammadi corpus are far closer to a form of Christian Hermeticism than a Christian Gnosticism; some examples include the Thomasine texts, and sundry others like the *Apocryphon of James* and the *Sophia of Jesus Christ*. It is clear though that the *Hermetica* is post Christian and was influenced by Christianity, as well as by Platonism and Greek philosophy in general. It does have great philosophical value as an example of Middle Platonism and as a precursor to Neo-Platonism. For that alone it is worth reading.

I am often torn in rating ancient texts. I'm a bit of an antiquarian and have a scholarly interest in any writing that is old and paradigmatic, so in the past I have rated a book according to that standard. A better barometer would be to balance a text's truth value with its scholarly value. For a book like this 3 and a half stars takes into account both I think.

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### **Rex Bradshaw says**

Mead's translation is not my favorite, but reading these ancient treatises was more pleasurable than I expected. They are a great deal more interesting and intelligible than much of the Hermetic tradition since, shining a light on the religious mood of the Hellenistic age while also presenting inherently worthwhile philosophical material for consideration.

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