



NEWROME
PRESS

PHILOKALIC LIBRARY

THE KOLLYVADES FATHERS IN TRANSLATION

PRESS RELEASE—NEW SERIES ANNOUNCED

NEWROME PRESS is pleased to announce a new series, *The Philokalic Library: The Kollyvades Fathers in Translation*, under the general editorship of the V. Rev. Archimandrite Maximos Constatas (University of Austin, Texas).

The *Philokalia* is often treated as an independent, freestanding collection of writings, but it was in fact the first volume in a much larger publication project that was part of a remarkable revival of Orthodox Christianity in the eighteenth century.

From the late eighteenth to the early nineteenth centuries, the leaders of this revival—Saint Makarios of Corinth, Saint Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain, and Saint Athanasios Parios—published dozens of major works, many of them more than one thousand pages long, covering virtually every aspect of Orthodox Christian faith, belief, and practice.

The revival movement began as a response to a controversy over whether it was proper to hold memorial services for the dead on Sundays. Those opposed to the practice were called “Kollyvades” after the “kollyva” or boiled wheat that was offered at these services. The controversy quickly assumed larger dimensions and for the Kollyvades became a question about adherence to the traditional beliefs, theology, and established liturgical practices of the Orthodox Church.

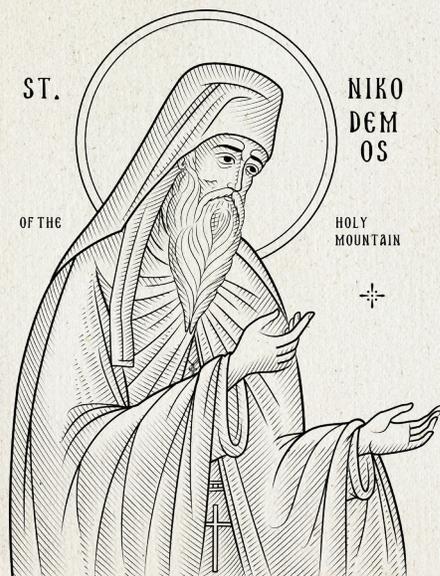
In addition to these liturgical and ecclesiastical matters, epoch-making cultural and political events also played a key role in the work of the Kollyvades Fathers. From the late seventeenth through the eighteenth centuries, Europe was in the throes of the Enlightenment, and the eighteenth century in particular was a time when the Orthodox Church found itself engaged in a complex and challenging encounter with the new philosophies and ideologies arising out of Europe and especially France.

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From the Orthodox point of view, the encounter with the Enlightenment raised essential questions about Orthodox identity: Will we continue to be who we are—or will we adopt mentalities and identities created by individuals and a culture that had violently renounced God and the Church?

For the Kollyvades Fathers, the answer was clear. They rejected the notion that the true unity of humanity could be achieved through the secular ideology of nationalism, which was contrary to the Church's universal mission. This mission could not be replaced by another proclaiming human unity based on secular principles any more than the light of Christ could be replaced by a merely human form of "enlightenment." Neither could true freedom be attained through the ideals of a revolution that had executed fifty-thousand French citizens, including hundreds of priests; or true knowledge through a materialist and atheistic cultural regime that had confiscated Christian houses of worship and rededicated them to the goddess "Reason."

Instead, through their preaching, teaching, and publications, the Kollyvades Fathers called the faithful to a spiritual renewal, knowing that the only true form of enlightenment is illumination by the inner light of God, a gift of grace granted to the faithful through baptism, holy communion, and hesychast prayer, as taught in the pages of the *Philokalia*. This was the path to true freedom: the freedom of the soul from the passions that tyrannized it, and not the freedom of the body from totalizing political systems or external tyrants, real or perceived. The life in Christ, exemplified in the teachings of the *Philokalia*, was the only valid path toward genuine human illumination and freedom—a comprehensive counter-proposal to the Enlightenment expressing a complete Christian philosophy and anthropology.



The Kollyvades clearly saw the Enlightenment for what it was: the proclamation of a false anthropology—not simply a generic secular humanism or anthropocentrism but a reductive understanding of the human person that located the center of the self, not in the heart, but in the mind or the brain, leading to profound alienation both from the self and from the sources of divine life and transcendence. The emphasis on the heart that we find in the *Philokalia*, as well as the call for the mind to descend into the heart—and not for the heart to ascend to the mind—was a direct response to the misconceived anthropology promoted by Western thinkers.

The Philokalic Renaissance that came about through the work of the Kollyvades Fathers represents a crucial moment in the life of the Orthodox Church. The troubled state of Western society today is largely the legacy of the European Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. And while this inheritance has led to undeniable advances in the areas of science, medicine, and technology, the dark side of its spiritual and philosophical underpinnings has been increasingly laid bare through a series of violent revolutions, destructive social experiments, the degradation of the natural environment, the commodification of human life and experience, the creation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, and the dystopic possibilities of genetic engineering and authoritarian social control. In the face of this unprecedented carnage, confusion, and dehumanization, the Kollyvades Fathers provide us with an alternative vision for modernity that they articulated at the Enlightenment's very point of origin: one rooted in the encounter with Christ in the human heart and in the sacramental life of the Church.

Given their profound and timely relevance, it is surprising that the writings of the Kollyvades Fathers have remained largely unavailable in English, while the Kollyvades themselves continue to be marginalized, misrepresented, and misunderstood . . .

. . . WORKING WITH A TEAM of accomplished scholars and translators, Newrome Press will make these writings available to English readers. The first volume of the *Philokalic Library* will contain the lives of Saints Makarios, Nikodemos, and Athanasios Parios, to be followed by Parios' *Christian Apology*, his major work in response to the Enlightenment. Other volumes will include the first-ever translation from the original Greek of Saint Nikodemos' *Unseen Warfare*, along with new translations of his *On Frequent Communion*, the *Exomologetarion*, and his *Confession of Faith*. Newrome Press also plans to publish the first-ever English translations of Saint Nikodemos' *Spiritual Exercises*, the *New Martyrology*, the *New Ladder*, the *Garden of Graces*, and the *Heortodromion*, as well as the letters of Saint Makarios of Corinth, the treatises of Saint Athanasios Parios (the *Antiphonesis*, the *Alexikakon Pharmakon*, the *Dogmatic Theology*, etc.) along with other texts and documents illustrative of this crucial moment in the life of the Church that remains a vital option for us today.

