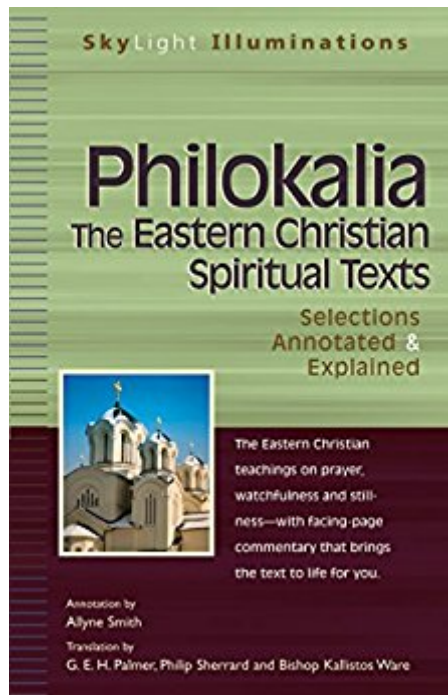


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Philokalia-The Eastern Christian Spiritual Texts: Selections Annotated & Explained (SkyLight Illuminations)



Synopsis

The Eastern Christian "Love of the Beautiful" can be a companion on your own spiritual journey. A collection of writings by monks from the fourth to fifteenth centuries, the Philokalia more than any other text reflects the Eastern Church's interpretation of the Bible's meaning. Simply translated, the title means "love of the beautiful," which reflects the text's emphasis on mystical and contemplative practices to engage all of our senses in the acts of worship and prayer.

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Customer Reviews

Philokalia, the love of beauty, is a body of Greek writings dating from Late Antiquity, collected by Russian monks. Their preserved compilation was finally published in Venice in 1782, according to Diarmaid MacCulloch in his magnum opus "Christianity: The First Three Thousand Pages", I mean 'years'. I read Philokalia because of its central role in the "The Way of the Pilgrim", which I read because of MacCullough (a favorite of Eamon Duffy) and because of "Franny and Zooey". This Sky Light Illuminations edition is a simple sampling with page facing annotations for each selection. The most immediate link from the Philokalia to The Way of the Pilgrim is the hesychia, or the stillness,

created by perpetual prayer. In this case it is the Jesus Prayer. This prayer's focus is repentance as the way back to communion with God. The Greek infinitive 'hesychazo' i.e., to be still (quiet). Noumina does not like jitter and buzz, all a waste of energy. To glow with transcendent light (knowledge), the heart must be open. To be open the heart must be still. As so often in Greek classical philosophy (look, another philo), the key is intellectual, in this case the key to repentance. For these thinkers, sin and repentance fall largely in the domain of the intellect, of reason. The Greek connection to the spiritual is numinous, not so much the emotional: There is within us, on the noetic plane, a warfare tougher than that on the plane of the senses. -- Philotheos Even the mystical is indeed performatively reasonable, even in the repetitious hesychasm. Sin, therefore, is not effectively the emotional and hysterical subject so many seem to enjoy it to be.

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