



Elder Macarius of Optina

Leonid Kavelin

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During the 19th century Optina Monastery became a herald of the spiritual revival in Russia through the publication of spiritual literature by the Elders.

Elder Macarius was instrumental in proposing the independent publication of patristic literature--an enterprise of historical significance, possible primarily through the patronage of Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow and a host of contributing participants, and which was centered in Optina Monastery.

Outstanding philosophers and writers of the time, such as Dostoyevsky and Gogol, began visiting Optina in their search for truth. Among them was Ivan V. Kireyevsky, who would become the most devoted spiritual son of Elder Macarius and his chief collaborator in editing patristic literature. The brief biographies of Kireyevsky and other disciples of Elder Macarius contained in this volume show the amazing influence of this humble elder throughout Russia.

ELDER MACARIUS OF OPTINA is a translation of the prima vita written by one of his closest disciples Archimandrite Leonid Kavelin--a man of a great literary talent. The third volume of The Optina Elders Series contains rare memoirs discovered years later shedding light on the mystical aspect of this spiritual director of uncommon caliber--a modern Church Father who has left a legacy of deeply inspiring letters.

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