

Adamantios Koraes

Adamantios Koraes (27 April 1748 - 6 April 1833) was born and raised in Smyrna, and graduated from the *Evangelical Greek School*. He was passionate about his education; particularly philosophy, literature and linguistics. Koraes continued his studies in Europe, graduating from the *School of Medicine of the University of Montpellier* in France, and living most of his life as an expatriate and classical scholar in Paris. There, he witnessed the French Revolution and was influenced by the liberal sentiments of *The Enlightenment*. He admired Thomas Jefferson and the two had political and philosophical exchanges. Koraes is credited with laying the foundations of Modern Greek literature and was a major figure in the *Greek Enlightenment*. His activities laid the intellectual foundations of the Greek War for Independence.



One of his greatest accomplishments was redefining the Modern Greek Language into a more purified form, known as *Katharevousa*. The Greeks were dispersed across Europe and the Ottoman Empire. Various forms of the language were in use, even in mainland Greece. Koraes wanted to purge the language of foreign elements, bringing it closer to the Classic form of Ancient Greek. These efforts ultimately led to his publishing of the *Atakta*, the first Modern Greek dictionary.

Koraes believed that education would ensure Greek independence, and the establishment of a constitution for the newly liberated Greek state. He envisioned a democratic Greece, recapturing the *Golden Age of Pericles*. He encouraged wealthy Greeks to open libraries and new schools in Greece. He engaged in extensive writing and translations of Greek texts, and his literary contributions are still among the most enduring. He translated ancient Greek authors and produced thirty volumes of those translations including works by Hippocrates, Theophrastus, Strabo, Herodotus, and his main literary work, the seventeen volume *Library of Greek Literature*.

Koraes also influenced Greek Law through his personal relationship with N. I. Saripolos, the first professor of Constitutional Law of the University of Athens, who presided over the committee that drafted the first Greek Constitution. His political writings began with the publication, at the opening of the nineteenth century, of *Asma Polemistirion* (War Chant) and *Salpisma Polemistirion* (Military Bugle Call), celebrating the presence of Greeks fighting alongside the French in Egypt. In 1803 he published his report *The Present State of Civilization in Greece*, based on a series of lectures he had given in Paris, extolling the link between the rise of a new Greek mercantile class and the advantage the Greek Enlightenment or *Diafotismos* could give to national aspirations for independence from the Ottoman yoke.

Koraes was a Greek Orthodox, but was a fierce critic of the policy of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople at the time, against a national uprising; considering it a useful tool in the hands of the Ottomans against the Greek struggle for independence. He was a supporter of religious freedom and tolerance. He was also one of the supporters of the newly established *Autonomous Church of Greece*.

Adamantios Koraes died in Paris at the age of 84 soon after publishing the first volume of his autobiography. In 1877, his remains were returned to Greece and were buried in the First Cemetery in Athens.

Further reading:

1. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adamantios_Korais
2. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/322120/Adamantios-Korais>http://www.uc.pt/fluc/eclassicos/publicacoes/ficheiros/humanitas49/15_Droulia.pdf
3. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Lv6m31vckE&sns=em>

The Greek National Anthem

ΥΜΝΟΣ ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΙΑΝ*

Σε γνωρίζω από την κόψι
του σπαθιού την τρομερή,
σε γνωρίζω από την όψι,
που με βία μετράει τη γη.

Απ' τα κόκκαλα βγαλμένη
των Ελλήνων τα ιερά,
και σαν πρώτα ανδρειωμένη,
χαίρε, ω χαίρε, Ελευθεριά!

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* The Hymn to Liberty (Greek: "Ύμνος εις την Ελευθερίαν") is a poem written by Dionysios Solomos (Διονύσιος Σολωμός, 1798-1857) in 1823 that consists of 158 stanzas and is the longest Hymn in the world, set to music by Nikolaos Mantzaros. In 1865, the first two stanzas officially became the national anthem of Greece.

The American National Anthem

The Star-Spangled Banner**

O! say can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
O! say does that star-spangled banner yet wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

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** It is the first of four verses of the actual poem that *Francis Scott Key*, a 35 year old lawyer, wrote. The lyrics come from "Defence of Fort McHenry", a poem he wrote in 1814 after witnessing the bombardment of Fort McHenry by the British Royal Navy ships in Chesapeake Bay during the Battle of Fort McHenry in the War of 1812. The music was written 34 years earlier by *John Stafford Smith*, an English composer. It was made the national anthem by a congressional resolution in 1931 and signed by President Herbert Hoover.