



УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ У ИСТОЧНОМ САРАЈЕВУ  
ПРАВОСЛАВНИ БОГОСЛОВСКИ ФАКУЛТЕТ  
"СВЕТИ ВАСИЛИЈЕ ОСТРОШКИ" ФОЧА  
UNIVERSITY OF EAST SARAJEVO/FACULTY OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY

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We have the honor to invite you to the 4th scientific conference called:

### **NICAEA - MEETING OF EAST AND WEST**

Faculty of Orthodox Theology “Saint Basil of Ostrog”, as a part of the Christian, Orthodox, and Serbian academic community, celebrates a great jubilee – 1700 years since the First Ecumenical Council was held in Nicaea. This event represents a watershed in the world and Christian history that has determined and shaped our identity – who we are and how we believe. That is why we consider it our duty to the 318 God-bearing Fathers that today we value and celebrate their efforts, gathering together, in the Holy Spirit who also guided them, in order to give theological, philosophical, historical, cultural, literary references to the lasting meaning of the holy Council of Nicaea in 325.

Our Faculty of Orthodox Theology will rank the scientific meeting within the framework of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology of the Republic of Srpska, according to the registered participants. Prominent theologians, scientists, philosophers, and historians from Russia, Greece, Romania, France, Germany, and the former Yugoslavia will be invited. The working languages of the scientific conference are Serbian and English. All participants should send us:

Name, surname, academic affiliation, title of the paper, abstract, keywords, and an active contact (e-mail and mobile phone number). **Please confirm your attendance by April 1st 2025 via email [dekanat@bogoslavski.ues.rs.ba](mailto:dekanat@bogoslavski.ues.rs.ba)**

The scientific conference we kindly invite you to is a continuation of the symposium framework, which we are realizing for the fourth time, always inviting the most prestigious names of our humanities. This time the gathering will be held from June 10 to 12, 2025 (we will send you a more detailed schedule of activities later).

### **Thematic sections are organized as follows:**

#### **1.) Nicaea in 325 - the permanent meaning of the Council**

When in 325, at the invitation of Emperor Flavius Constantine, Christian bishops from the entire Empire – and even beyond its borders – gathered to assess the teachings of the Alexandrian presbyter Arius, the task entrusted to them went beyond theological terminology and often beyond even the most insightful theological insights of previous theologians.

It was necessary to find new, additional force in the Holy Spirit in order to face the challenge that stood before them. Gathered in Nicaea, the Fathers opposed the Arian and Origenist polemicists for a long time, and eventually adopted the Nicene Creed, which will serve as the

basis of all Christian orthodoxy. Celebrated in Christian communities that believe in the Triune God and contested by antitrinitarian heterodoxy, Islam, and contemporary conspiracy theorists in Christianity, the Council of Nicaea even today represents the basis of Christian theological identity and a stumbling block for all those who find its provisions distant or unacceptable.

## **2.) Nicaea and the (post)Constantinian model of the relationship between the Church and the state**

In addition to the theological provisions concerning the dogmatic teachings of the Church, Nicaea also represented the first such council in the history of the Church – it began the era of universal councils and ended the era of local and partial councils, all thanks to the new position in which the Church found itself after the Edict of Milan. Eusebius of Caesarea and Emperor Constantine himself inform us about the reasons for the emperor's new position as “bishop of the external affairs of the Church,” but also about the importance of peace in the Church for the order of the Empire. However, after October 1917, the last self-governing Christian empire built according to the model laid out by Constantine and Eusebius in Nicaea disappeared. What is the permanent legacy of the Constantinian model of the relationship between the Church and the state, what are its problematic aspects, and what remains of it today?

## **3.) Nicaea today: What is East, what is West?**

The uniqueness of the Council of Nicaea in many respects consists in the fact that then, for the first time, bishops from both the Christian East and the West really gathered, and Eastern and Western theological traditions – whose differences were then only details in the overall picture – creatively complemented each other through insights and contributions of Hosius of Cordoba and Alexander of Alexandria. Although the political tendencies and cultural movements of that time indicated the growing distance between the Christian East and the West, Nicaea became the foundation that, long after the division of the Empire and the end of the Western Roman Empire, indicated the unity of Christian civilization. But is the Christian civilization one or at least two? Who is and what is the East, who is and what is the West? Are civilizational differences and antagonisms eternal and impossible to overcome? What is the role of culture and what is the role of dogma today when it comes to the Christian East and West?

## **4.) Nicaea: Divided Christianity before the challenges of post-Christianity**

The jubilee of the Council of Nicaea gave rise to numerous communities that inherit its legacy to open the issue of divisions and schisms in Christianity. If Nicaea was a moment of an Ecumenical Council or, in other words, of a universal gathering, is such gathering possible today? If Nicaea was a gathering in the Truth of Orthodoxy, is it even possible to talk about a gathering of communities that share different theological viewpoints, historical experiences, differences in views of thematic concepts such as marriage, ordination, hierarchy, sacraments, and the relationship between Church and state? In the post-Christian world, will the greater challenge be divisiveness or syncretistic unification in the key of the postmodern irrelevance of theology and ethos?