



UNIVERSITÄT  
ERFURT  
Philosophische  
Fakultät



VOLOS  
ACADEMY for  
THEOLOGICAL  
STUDIES



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Orthodox Christianity between Pre-Modern Commitments,  
Modern Challenges, and Post-Modern Relevance

OCTOBER 19–22, 2023  
“THESSALIA” CONFERENCE CENTRE  
MELISSATIKA, VOLOS, GREECE

CHAIR OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES (ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY),  
FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY, UNIVERSITY OF ERFURT (GERMANY)

VOLOS ACADEMY FOR THEOLOGICAL STUDIES (GREECE)

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“Thessalia” Conference Center  
Melissatika, Volos, Greece

# CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2023

Arrival

19:00–22:00 Evening Together, Roof Garden, Kypseli Hotel, Volos

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2023

Link for remote access (Zoom):  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83162144590>

8:30 Departure from the Hotel to the “Thessalia” Conference Centre;  
Registration

9:00 Opening of the Conference

## I. THE PRE-MODERN COMMITMENTS OF ORTHODOXY

9:00–10:30 First Session:

Moderator:  
Prof. Vasilios N. Makrides  
(University of Erfurt, Germany)

**Dr. Pantelis Kalaitzidis**

(Director, Volos Academy for Theological Studies,  
Volos, Greece)

*When the Desert Becomes an Empire:  
Monasticism, Politics, and Church-State Relations*

**Dr. Vassa Kontouma**

(Professor and Director of Studies in Orthodox Christianity, 15<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> c.;  
Dean of the Religious Sciences Section,  
École Pratique des Hautes Études, PSL, Paris, France)

*An Uncomfortable Compromise?  
The Gradual Adoption of the Sacramental Septenary  
in Orthodox Doctrine and its (In)Adequacy with Practice*

10:30–11:00 Coffee Break

11:00–13:15 Second Session:

Moderator:  
Sister Prof. Tereza Obolevich  
(Pontifical University of John Paul II, Krakow, Poland)

**Dr. Ekaterini Tsalampouni**

(Professor of New Testament, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece;  
Member of the Board of Directors, Volos Academy for Theological Studies)

*Exploring the Role of Women in Orthodox Christianity:  
Past Commitments, Perennial Problems, and Recent Developments*

**Dr. Gregory Tucker**

(Postdoctoral Researcher, Faculty of Catholic Theology,  
University of Regensburg, Germany)

*Ressourcement, Reform, Revolution?  
Liturgical Development in Eastern Orthodox Christianity*

**Dr. Lidiya Lozova**

(Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Exeter, Exeter, UK;  
“Spirit and Letter” Research and Publishing Association, Kyiv, Ukraine)

*Pre-Modern, Anti-Modern, Pro-Modern?  
The Ethos of Icons in Ukraine and Russia Today*

13:15–15:00 Lunch Buffet

15:00–16:30 Third Session:

Moderator:  
Prof. Vassa Kontouma  
(École Pratique des Hautes Études, PSL, Paris, France)

**Georgios Vlantis, MTh**

(Director of the Council of Christian Churches in Bavaria, Germany;  
Research Associate, Volos Academy for Theological Studies, Volos, Greece)

*Church Renewal and the Authority of the Fathers in Orthodoxy:  
A Historical and Systematic Approach*

**Dr. Vasilios N. Makrides**

(Professor of Religious Studies/Orthodox Christianity,  
Faculty of Philosophy, University of Erfurt, Germany)

*Orthodox Anti-Westernism in a Global Age:  
The Burden of the Past and Contemporary Critical Voices*

16:30–17:00 Coffee break

## II: THE MODERN CHALLENGES FOR ORTHODOXY

17:00–19:15 Fourth Session:

Moderator:

Prof. Ekaterini Tsalampouni  
(Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece)

### **Sister Dr. Tereza Obolevich**

(Professor and Head of the Department  
of Russian and Byzantine Philosophy,  
Faculty of Philosophy,  
Pontifical University of John Paul II, Krakow, Poland)

*Russian Religious Thought  
in the Face of Modernity*

### **Dr. Konstantinos Papastathis**

(Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science,  
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece)

*Investigating Modernisation  
in the Orthodox Christian World:  
The Jerusalem Church and the Sacralisation of the Nation*

### **Rev. Dr. Ioan Moga**

(Associate Professor of Orthodox Systematic Theology,  
Faculty of Catholic Theology,  
University of Vienna, Austria)

*Dialectics of a Christian Kairology in Modernity:  
The Case of the Romanian Orthodox Theology*

20:00 Dinner



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2023

Link for remote access (Zoom):  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85000795101>

8:30 Departure from the Hotel to the “Thessalia” Conference Centre

9:00–10:30 Fifth Session:

Moderator:  
Dr. Lidiya Lozova  
(University of Exeter, UK)

**Dr. Mihai-D. Grigore**

(Privatdozent and Research Fellow at the Department of Religious History,  
Leibniz-Institute of European History, Mainz, Germany)

*Orthodoxy Challenged:  
A Church Becomes World's Second Christian Confession*

**Dr. Dimitrios Moschos**

(Professor of Church History and Head of the Department of Theology,  
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece;  
Member of the Board of Directors, Volos Academy for Theological Studies)

*Greek-Speaking Orthodox Theology Facing Modernity*

10:30–11:00 Coffee break

11:00–12:30 Sixth Session:

Moderator:  
Dr. Nikolaos Asproulis  
(Volos Academy for Theological Studies, Greece)

**Dr. Efstathios Kessareas**

(Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Erfurt, Germany)

*The Phenomenon of Orthodox Rigorism/Fundamentalism:  
Its Deep Historic Roots and its Modern Transformations*

**Dr. Maria Hämmerli**

(Lecturer in Religious Studies, University of Fribourg, Switzerland)

*Eastern Christianity in the West:  
Endogenous and Exogenous Challenges of an Encounter*

12:30–14:00 Lunch buffet

### III. THE POST-MODERN RELEVANCE OF ORTHODOXY

14:00–16:15 Seventh Session:

Moderator:

Prof. Dimitrios Moschos

(National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece)

**Dr. Spyridoula Athanasopoulou-Kypriou**

(Religious Education Teacher at the Moraitis School,  
and Psychotherapist, Athens, Greece)

*Gender Theories  
and Constructive Orthodox Theology:  
An Eschato-Christocentric Understanding  
of Sexuality and the Body*

**Rev. Dr. Timothy Boniface Carroll**

(Principal Research Fellow, Department of Anthropology,  
University College London, London, UK;

Director of the Centre for Anthropology and Ethnography  
of Orthodox Christianity,

Institute of Orthodox Christian Studies, Cambridge, UK)

*On the Veracity of Participation:  
Quotidian Mysteries in Orthodox Christianity  
as Means to Certainty*

**Dr. Christopher D. L. Johnson**

(Senior Instructional Designer,  
Walker Center for Teaching and Learning,  
University of Tennessee  
at Chattanooga, USA)

*“Weaving Ropes from Sand”:  
The Role of Orthodox Christianity  
in the Postmodern Age of Intelligent Machines*

16:15–16:45 Coffee break



16:45–19:00 Eighth Session:

Moderator:  
Dr. Pantelis Kalaitzidis  
(Volos Academy for Theological Studies, Greece)

Short Presentation of the RESILIENCE Programme:  
*RESILIENCE Meets International Scholars*

**Dr. Nikolaos Asproulis**  
(Deputy Director, Volos Academy for Theological Studies;  
Lecturer, Hellenic Open University, Patras, Greece)

*Post-Modern Orthodox Theologies:  
Venturing into Uncharted Waters?*

**Dr. Zdenko Š. Širka**  
(Research Fellow and Lecturer, The Ecumenical Institute,  
Protestant Theological Faculty, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic)

*Post-Modern Hermeneutics and Orthodoxy:  
An (Un)Fruitful Encounter*

**Dr. Sebastian Rimestad**  
(Privatdozent and Research Fellow,  
Centre for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences  
“Multiple Secularities: Beyond the West, Beyond Modernities”,  
University of Leipzig, Germany)

*Conversion to the Orthodox Church:  
A Theological or a Political Act?*

19:15–19:45 Concluding Discussion

20:00 Dinner

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2023

Optional Departure Day

8:30–10:00 Divine Liturgy at the parish Church of St. Constantine and Helena

8:30 Optional Daily Excursion to the Meteora Monasteries – Departure from the Hotel