Dear readers,

With the first issue of the new international journal dedicated to the research of Bishop Nicholai Velimirovich's legacy, the circumstances and the context in which he lived and created, and the issues of reception of his ideas and his contribution, we would like to say a word on the main editorial and publishing policies.

We fully endorse academic rules on publishing and publication ethics. Our journal is published both in English and Serbian language; we apply the double-blind unbiased peer-review, including internal review by the Editorial Board and external reviewers, experts on the topic.

We support the principle of international diversity — diversity of the Editorial Board, reviewers, and authors. Editorial

From Editor: Introducing the 1st Issue of the Nicholai Studies

1 Nicholai Velimirovich, in Serbian: Николај Велимировић (before taking monastic vows: Никола Велимировић), in Russian and Bulgarian: Николай Велимирович, in Greek: Νικόλαος or Νικολάι Βελιμίροβιτς. His name in English and other languages written in Latin script can be found in following transcriptions: Nikolaj, Nikola, Nikolai, Nicola, Nicolai, Nicolay, Nicholay, Nichola, Nicholai, Nichola, Nicholas, Nikol, Nikolaus, and his surname as Velimirović, Velomirovic, Velimirovic, Velimirovich, Velimirovitch, Velimirovici or Velimirovitz: this can be confusing, but there was not one standardized form of a transcription of his name from the beginning of publishing of his works in English and other languages written in Latin script. In our journal, we will attempt to use the most common transliteration of his name from Serbian, and also according to his signature — as Nicholai Velimirovich, which is the same as he used to write his own name in English.

The only exceptions could be transliterations of his name in quotations and in references, where we will attend to keep the original form of a transcription of Velimirovich's name and surname.
Board invites and welcomes submissions from around the region and all around the world. In this issue — the first issue of *Nicholai Studies* — we are publishing a guide to authors, where you can find all necessary information for submitting your articles. We would like to underline that our journal follows the publication ethics principles to prevent scientific or ethical misconduct or plagiarism. Therefore authors are required to fill and submit the signed Authorship Statement, and also a brief academic biography along with their manuscripts.

We encourage you to submit responses and reactions to the authors or the editors discussing the results of published studies, communications, and reviews. We are opened to challenging opinions and discussions. We invite you to send your responses regarding debates on different topics — theology, spirituality, history, philosophy, and social sciences in general. We believe that if we all together took responsibility as authors, reviewers, and editors, we could reach our goal and bring your research to the attention of the international scientific community and contribute thus to a better understanding of Bishop Nicholai’s role and contribution, as well as to better knowledge and understanding of the contemporary Church history and streams of theological thought.

Now we will mention the main reasons why we decided to publish a new international peer-reviewed journal, and why we dedicated our journal to the study of Bishop Nicholai’s thought and influence.

December 23rd (O.S.) i.e. January 5th of the year 2021 marks the 140th anniversary since the birth of Nicholai Velimirovich. March 5th / 18th of 2021 marks the 65th anniversary of Bishop Nicholai’s death.

In our opinion, Bishop Nicholai Velimirovich was a remarkable figure in his theological and mystical insights, spiritual reflection and literary creativity, caritative and missionary activity, promotion of Christian ideals, service and witness to Christian unity, and even to an all-human fraternity. His critics would point to certain controversial aspects of his life.
However, he was a remarkable churchman, who influenced the life and mission of the Serbian Orthodox Church a lot. His thought and his reflections and homilies also impacted many Orthodox theologians, authors, priests, monks. His books are interesting to religious people in a wider sense, and also to devoted churchgoers. St. Nicholai continues to motivate people to accept Christian identity, to read the Word of God, to practice Christian virtues even today. More than a half-century after his death, his writings are published and respected worldwide. New translations of his works are produced both in the East and in the West, and collections of his works are published in German, French, Russian, English, Spanish, Romanian, Greek, etc. And Velimirovich's readership is not limited to Orthodox Christians. He enjoys a reputation as a sort of universal Christian sage. He has impacted the lives of Christians for more than 100 years.

The year 2021 is a year to celebrate his legacy. To mark the 2021 anniversary and to motivate critical research of Bishop Nicholai’s contribution, the Editorial Board of the present journal is launching Nicholai Studies, an international journal focused primarily to research the legacy of Bishop Nicholai Velimirovich. Therefore, we are looking forward to your contributions.

The Nicholai Studies are an international journal for the research of theological and ecclesiastical contribution of Nicholai Velimirovich (1881–1956), as well as the wider context in which he lived and created, i.e. the reception of his ideas and his heritage in general. Nicholai Studies are open for research of philosophy and theology, for works on the subject of ecclesiastical and social history, for ecumenical treatises, literary analyses, political science research, sociological and religious studies, and in principle, for every critical research of theological-ecclesiastical, socio-political and cultural climate in which Nicholai Velimirovich lived and worked.

Besides Nicholai Velimirovich, Nicholai Studies also focuses on the individuals who were his friends and associates,
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The journal *Nicholai studies* is focused on the work and thought of Nicholai Velimirovich and on the whole context in which he created and worked — starting with his education and service in the Kingdom of Serbia (1881–1904), then his studies in Western Europe (1905–1909), the beginning of his monastic life, his service in the seminary and study times in Russia (1909–1912), his activities during war times (1912–1918), serving as a diocesan bishop (1919–1940), his destiny during World War II (1941–1945), to his life in exile (1946–1956), and his legacy.

In the eyes of his venerated, Nicholai Velimirovich is one of the most notable figures in the history of the 20th century. Velimirovich is recognized as a saint in the Orthodox Church and he is venerated as an exceptional preacher and outstanding pastor. On the other hand, Nicholai’s critics see him as an anti-Semite, Nazi, misogynist, barbaric and primitive person, and a dark and retrograde figure. His name is entered in the *World Fascism: A Historical Encyclopedia*, and that is not the only place where he is described as a notorious anti-Semite, collaborationist of Nazis, etc. Since his personality is the subject of controversy, the Editorial Board of the journal *Nicholai Studies* addresses the authors to shed the light on his contribution — primarily his theological and ecclesiastical contribution and then his cultural and social contribution in the wider sense, i.e. on the authentic insight of Velimirovich’s role in the history of the 20th century and to do so objectively, by studying the life and work of Nicholai Velimirovich. The critics and apologists of Velimirovich’s personality and opus are also invited to contribute. In this regard, the journal *Nicholai Studies* can be a platform for dialogue and comparison of different research results and different conclusions and opinions to acquire a more objective idea and clearer insights. In the past couple of decades, the life of Nicholai Velimirovich has been actively researched and a lot has been written about him (in the meantime two doctoral theses have been defended, several masters and bachelor theses on Nicholai Velimirovich,
and a few dozens of monographs and thousands of articles about him and his contribution), but it seems that the groups of researchers who made different conclusions did not communicate between themselves enough and had not compared their insights in a critical manner.

The desire to change this and to promote dialogue between researchers was one of the key motives for starting the journal *Nicholai Studies*. The Editorial Board of the journal is facing a great challenge, having an idea like that in mind. As a logical step forward, one of the main tasks of the journal would be to collect and organize current Nicholai’s bibliography. As there are unanswered questions in regard to the authorship, editions, and versions of Nicholai’s work, as well as the materials which are about to be published, creating a bibliography of Nicholai’s work, as well as the articles and journals published in Nicholai’s surroundings, then the work attributed to him, translations, and articles on Nicholai and individuals connected to him, would be a necessary step towards establishing a more systematical methodological framework for the research of Nicholai Velimirovich’s work. The Editorial Board of the journal will make sure that domestic and foreign literary and scientific production is being tracked and to collect and organize bibliographical materials relevant for research of Bishop Nicholai’s contribution.

*Srećko Petrović, Editor*