Conference: The Pattern and the Image: Insights from the Alexandrian Exegetical Tradition

17–18 November 2022
Prague, Czech Republic

Submissions:
We ask you to send an abstract (maximum length 300 words) of your presentation to the e-mail address: pattern-image@ktf.cuni.cz , by 31 May 2022 which is the deadline for abstract submissions.
Please note that the time limit for each presentation is 20 minutes.

The official language of the conference will be English and Czech.

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Catholic Theological Faculty
Charles University, Prague

Catholic Theological Faculty, Charles University in Prague
and the Czech Patristics Society
are pleased to invite you to take part in the conference

The Pattern and the Image:
Insights from the Alexandrian Exegetical Tradition
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Philo of Alexandria presented Moses as a Platonic philosopher, indeed as the first revelator of the Platonic truth that the sensible world was created according to an intelligible pattern. Allegorical interpretation allowed Philo to take this idea as the hidden message of a number of biblical passages. Through the Alexandrian school of exegesis, that is, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and those who followed them in various ways in various times (Eusebius, Cappadocian Fathers, Ambrose, and others), this Platonic reading of Scripture became an unmissable part of patristic theology. Establishing a harmonious correspondence between the conception of the world as an image of an intelligible pattern and Christian orthodoxy is by no means easy (let us just recall the belief in the resurrection of the body), yet it cannot be denied that the interpretation and reinterpretation of various biblical passages through the prism of the relationship between pattern and image has generated a number of remarkable and fruitful speculations in Christian theology.

We would like to approach this topic at this conference focusing on the various ways in which the relationship between pattern and image has been explored, described, and reflected upon within patristic exegesis.

Venue

Catholic Theological Faculty, Charles University,
Thákurova 3, Praha 6, CZ 160 00, Czech Republic

Because of the current uncertainties regarding travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the conference might take place in the on-line or hybrid form.

Within the conference, the following questions may be discussed:

- What is the relationship between the pattern by which it is formed and the creator himself?
- Is the pattern created or uncreated?
- If the image is something ontologically derived from the pattern, is not the notion of the created world as an image in conflict with the value that the Judeo-Christian tradition ascribes to creation? In what ways have various authors dealt with this contradiction?
- Could understanding humans and the world as images also be a way of revealing some hitherto overlooked quality of them?
- How and to what extent has the original Timaean account of the creation of the world been transformed by the way it has been used to interpret various biblical passages?
- By what biblical terms was the doctrine of pattern and image expressed? What role was played by the shift between the Hebrew original and the Greek translation, or between the use of terms in their original biblical context and their theological reinterpretation? How has the meaning of key terms been affected by the allegorical revelation of a higher meaning, connection with other biblical passages, or actualization of another possible meaning of the term?
- In what ways did the idea of pattern and image form the Christian speculation of the Trinity?
- What must a reception of the Platonic model of the world satisfy in order to be considered orthodox?
- What is the similarity of the image to its model? What role does beauty play here?
- Which elements of the patristic doctrine of the creation of the world according to the image can be considered as bearing today? Does it have any echoes in the patristic interpretation of the Hexameron?

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Inquiries

In case of any inquiry (accommodation, travel), please do not hesitate to contact us at the e-mail address pattern-image@ktf.cuni.cz.

Yours sincerely,
David Vopřada
conference organizer