

The Pattern and the Image

INSIGHTS FROM THE ALEXANDRIAN EXEGETICAL TRADITION

Prague, 17th–18th November 2022



VENUE:

Vratislav Hall
Royal Collegiate Chapter of Sts Peter and Paul
K Rotundě 100/10, Prague – Vyšehrad

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THURSDAY, 17TH NOVEMBER

Registration

9:00 – 9:30

*Registration takes place at the Conference Venue, i.e., K Rotundě 100/10,
Prague 2 – Vyšehrad*

Opening and Morning Session

9:30 – 10:35

David Vopřada Greeting on behalf of the Organisers

Ondřej Krása

World as an Image in Plato

Ota Gál

The Pattern and the Image in Plotinus: Plato's Heritage

Coffee Break

Keynote Lecture

11:00 – 12:00

Lenka Karfíková:

Image Structure of Reality in Platonic Tradition and Its Christian
Reinterpretation

12:15 – 13:30

Marcela Andoková:

Moses as the Model of a Hellenistic King in Ezekiel the Tragedian

Adrian Flores Lopez:

The "human body" on the Philo's interpretation of Gn 1–3: a testimony
to the polysemy of images in his allegorical exegesis

Markéta Dudzíkóvá

The Image Ascending to Its Archetype according to Philo of Alexandria

Lunch Break

Keynote Lecture

15:00 – 16:00

Gregory E. Sterling

Day One and the Intelligible World: An Alexandrian Exegetical Tradition?

Coffee Break

Afternoon Session

16:15 – 17:55

Pierluigi Banna

The Copy and the Revelation. Protagonists and Contents of partial truths
in Clement of Alexandria

Sincero Mantelli

‘Servant mysterium Trinitatis’.

The role of Seraphim (Is 6, 2-3) in concealing and revealing
the nature of God in the Origenian work and its sources

Matteo Monfrinotti

Εικῶν and ὁμοίωσις in the anthropology of Clement of Alexandria and
Gregory of Nyssa. Theological convergence?

Pavel Dudzik

Origen of Alexandria and His Use of Prov 8:22-25 LXX

Conference Dinner

FRIDAY, 18TH NOVEMBER 2022

Keynote Lecture

10:00 – 11:00

Justin M. Rogers

Platonic Patternism and the Ideal Creation: The *Nachleben* of Philo's *De Opificio Mundi* 15–25 in Alexandrian Christianity

Coffee Break

Morning Session

11:15 – 12:30

Viacheslav V. Lytvynenko:

From Created Realities to Prototypes: Partitive Exegesis in the Pseudo-Athanasian *Disputatio contra Arium* (CPG 2250)

David Vopřada:

World as an Idea and Reality: Ambrose's Concept of Creation

Michele Cutino:

The *imago dei* in Ambrose of Milan between Alexandrian Tradition and Augustinian 'Anticipations'

Lunch Break

Afternoon Session

14:30 – 15:20

Vito Limone:

The Relation Pattern/Image in Eusebius' Letter to Constantia: The Origenian Roots of the Iconoclastic Controversy

Magdalena Marunová:

The Pattern and the Image in Gregory of Nyssa's Searching for the Perfect Virtue

Option A:
Guided Tour of Prague
16:00 – 18:00

or:

Option B:
Czech and Slovak Section
16:00 – 17:15

Veronika Černušková:

Viděl jsi svého bratra, viděl jsi svého Boha. Spasitel jako obraz Otcův
u Klementa Alexandrijského

Róbert Horka:

Latinské ekvivalenty termínu Logos/Verbum a ich interpretačný význam
v kázňach sv. Augustína

Petr Havlík:

Maria a Trojice: Trojiční rysy Božího obrazu v člověku u Řehoře z Nyssy

ABSTRACTS

Moses as the Model of a Hellenistic King in Ezekiel the Tragedian

Marcela Andoková

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Among the Hellenistic Jewish poets Ezekiel the Tragedian occupies a particular place. His tragedy entitled Exodus which represents the most extensive set of literary remains from this period is preserved chiefly in seventeen separate excerpts in Eusebius' work *Praeparatio Evangelica* IX, 28-29. A small portion of the fragments is also found in *Stromata* I, 23, 155 by Clement of Alexandria. For the purpose of this article fragments 6 and 7 of Ezekiel's Exodus are of great importance since they recall Moses' dream of the throne vision (fr. 6) and consequently its interpretation by Raguel (fr. 7). These and other related passages have been studied closely by contemporary scholars who tried to examine possible biblical and extra-biblical inspiration sources that could influence Ezekiel when writing his tragedy which reflects mostly the biblical story found in Exod 1 – 15. At the same time, the classicists attempt to see the parallels between the Exodus and classical Greek tragedies, especially those of Aeschylus and Euripides. However, it is hard to decide whether this apologetic drama was designed more for Hellenistic Jewish or pagan audience. There are some indications which could speak in favour of both the opinions. Nevertheless, unlike historian Hecateus of Abdera (4th century BCE) whose work was preserved by Diodorus of Sicily in his *Bibliotheca Historica* 40, 3,5 and Josephus (*Antiquity* 14, 41-45) who both depicted the priests not only as those chosen by Moses for an involvement in all the matters related to the cult but also as political representatives of the Jews, Ezekiel the Tragedian seems to present Moses with the attributes of Hellenistic kings. Therefore this article attempts to examine to which extent this might have been a possible aim of the mentioned Hellenistic tragedian.

The Copy and the Revelation.

Protagonists and Contents of partial truths in Clement of Alexandria

Pierluigi Banna

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Clement is the author that more than others in early Christianity quoted non-Christian authors. In relation to Christianity, the condition of the truths foretold by these authors is often expressed by the contrasts between conjecture and revelation, reflection and light, research and discovery, probability and certainty, copy and revelation. The role of the model is therefore occupied by Christian revelation and the partially intuited truths, even if earlier in time, are compared to copies of this revelation. It is possible to find this clementine procedure in three directions: in the history of salvation, in personal and community assistance and, finally, in the content of the intuited truths.

The biblical datum of creation in image and likeness is proposed by Clement through the revival of the Platonic concept of man as a celestial plant (Ti. 90A). The comparison between the biblical image and the act of sowing is not only limited to the moment of creation, but also concerns the providential care of the cosmos and, finally, the time of harvesting the dispersed seeds, when the “celestial plant” will be restored to the divine likeness.

On a personal level, the figure of Plato stands out. From the intuitions of the truth derive also ethical norms, prophecies, miracles and unconscious prefigurations of Christian rite. At the community level, there are practices that have been arranged by God for the good of humanity. This is the vast Clementine field of “barbarian philosophy”. Some elements of Egyptian religiosity, usually criticized by other Apologists, are here well valued.

The contents that are found in the pagan image from the Christian model concern: the recognition of a single Creator God and His provident government of the cosmos. Consequently, the intuition of a pure conception of the divinity, devoid of any human form. Some prefigurations even pertain to specific realities of Christian revelation: the Trinity (Plato), the crucifix-

ion of Christ (Euripides and Plato), although the preferred form to express the divinity is that of enigma and allegory.

The *imago dei* in Ambrose of Milan between Alexandrian Tradition and Augustinian 'Anticipations'

Michele Cutino

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In this study an attempt will be made to provide a homogeneous doctrine of the *imago dei* in Ambrose's various treatises in relation to the sources that are in any case of Alexandrian origin (Philo and Origen are primary sources of his works), but also with respect to certain elements that seem to anticipate Augustine's much more complex and original position on this theme.

Viděl jsi svého bratra, viděl jsi svého Boha. Spasitel jako obraz Otcův u Klementa Alexandrijského

Veronika Černušková

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Na dvou místech svého díla cituje Klement agrafon dochované také u Tertuliána: „Viděl jsi svého bratra, viděl jsi svého Boha“, které podle jeho porozumění vypovídá o Spasiteli jako o Bohu a je inspiračním zdrojem tajupného delfského nápisu „Poznej sám sebe.“ Ve svém příspěvku bych chtěla ukázat, v jakém smyslu Klement chápe Spasitele jako Otcův obraz a co pohled na tento obraz znamená pro spásu člověka.

The Image Ascending to Its Archetype according to Philo of Alexandria

Markéta Dudzíkova

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In Philo of Alexandria's Platonic interpretation of the Biblical story, the creation of humankind according to the image of God (Gen 1:26f) means that people as well as the whole world are made according to the Logos of

God or the intelligible world, *kosmos noetos*. At the same time, human mind has a specific relationship to the Creator himself, having a similar position in the body as God, the Great King, has in the whole world. It is precisely this connection of human mind to the intelligible and uncreated that enables its ascent through the universe to God himself. In the paper, I will show how different aspects of human likeness to God and to his Logos make the ascent possible.

Origen of Alexandria and His Use of Prov 8:22-25 LXX

Pavel Dudzik

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In the pre-Origenian Christian thinking, Prov 8:22-25 LXX had not been expounded, as far as we know, with reference to three verbs (“to create”, κτίζειν, “to establish”, θεμελιῶν, and “to beget”, γεννᾶν) which all are used in the Biblical passage in question and could have been regarded as expressions for coming forth of Wisdom of God according to the same Biblical witness. In the paper, I would like to, first, survey context(s) in which Origen of Alexandria uses Prov 8:22-25 in his writings. Then, I plan to focus on the interpretation of the forementioned Biblical passage within Origen’s notion of the Wisdom of God as the pattern for future creation, the notion of the Wisdom “forming beforehand and containing within herself the species and reasons of the whole creation” (*De Princ.* I,2,3) and being “the structure of the contemplation of all things and thoughts” (*Comm. In Ioan.* I,III), which notion seems to have served as Origen’s explanation for the occurrence of the verb κτίζειν in the Septuagint translation of Prov 8:22.

The ‘human body’ on the Philo’s interpretation of Gn 1–3: a testimony to the polysemy of images in his allegorical exegesis

Adrian Flores Lopez

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The narrative of the creation of the world and of the human being, rich in images and symbols, was for Philo an important source for the development of an allegorical exegesis of the biblical text. Philo proposes an allegorical

meaning to each element of the biblical text in order to give what was for him the true meaning of the Scriptures, these meanings are sometimes very far from the literal meaning. Does an image in Philo's work always have the same meaning or is it variable?

We will try to show that for Philo the same image can take on several meanings, these meanings can be similar or completely opposite depending on the context and the purpose of the treatise in question. For Philo images do not have a fixed meaning, they are polysemous.

We shall see this polysemy in Philo's allegorical interpretation of the biblical text in the different meanings he gives to the "human body" in his commentaries on the creation narrative. For Philo, the « human body » is: the accomplishment of God's work, which allows the human being to reveal himself worthy of the divine power, as we read in the *Quaestiones in Genesim* I, 53; a work of art which possesses in itself the reflection of the characteristics of the whole universe as we read in the *De Opificio Mundi* 135-139; but also, a prison, a tomb, a corpse as we read in the *Legum Allegoriae* III, 69-77. These are the three different meanings used by Philon in order to designate a single reality that we will propose to analyze.

The Pattern and the Image in Plotinus: Plato's Heritage

Ota Gál

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In my talk, I will present parallels between Plato's and Plotinus' understanding of the notion of an image within the context of the arts and cosmology. I will argue for the rejection of the widespread cliché according to which Plotinus was an advocate of the arts transgressing against Plato's banishment of the poets from the polis and his condemnation of the arts as *μίμησις μιμήσεως*. This simplification distorts the doctrines of both philosophers which are in fact very close to each other. Plato as well as Plotinus distinguished two types of images depending on their paradigm. On the one hand, both philosophers recognise images which imitate the sensibles and have a detrimental impact on soul. On the other hand, they are also aware of potentially beneficial images which have the intelligible as their paradigm.

In this sense, the mere fact that something imitates something else cannot justify any critique of the arts or of anything else. In fact, the whole cosmos is an image, imitating the Intellect as much as it can making it thus the most beautiful living being. Understanding this was for Plotinus a crucial aspect of being faithful to the heritage of Plato. This can be shown in his debate with the Gnostics whose despising of the sensible cosmos Plotinus considered dull and arrogant.

Maria a Trojice: Trojiční rysy Božího obrazu v člověku u Řehoře z Nyssy

Petr Havlík

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Ačkoli ve spisech Řehoře z Nyssy nenacházíme mnoho pasáží věnovaných Matce Boží, jeho mariologie je důsledně trojiční. Analýza různých mariánských témat v jeho díle umožňuje velmi originální pohled na Matku Ježíšovu jakožto ženu charakterizovanou vztahy s jednotlivými Osobami Trojice. Ve svém příspěvku bych se chtěl věnovat tomu, jakým způsobem biskup z Nyssy transformuje klasickou metafyziku, aby odpovídala trojičnímu obrazu Boha, a jaké důsledky tento krok má pro antropologii. Právě na příkladu Marie lze ilustrovat Řehořovo pojetí stvoření člověka k obrazu Božímu z trojičního hlediska. Díky své jedinečné roli při vtělení Slova se tato Žena stává prototypem vykoupeného a zbožštěného lidstva, které tak může participovat na vnitřním Božím životě a být jím proměněno. Zvláště patrné je to na příkladě Božích atributů jako *ἀπάθεια, ἀφθαρσία, καθαρότης* nebo duchovní plodnost, které Nysský nachází jak v Trojici, tak v osobě Matky Páně. Vycházel bych převážně z vánoční homilie *In diem natalem*, z traktátu *De virginitate* a homiletického komentáře k Velepísni *In Canticum canticorum*, tedy z děl, která dobře ilustrují Řehořovu práci s biblickými texty.

Latin Equivalents of the Term *Logos/Verbum* and their Interpretative Meaning in the Sermons of St Augustine

Róbert Horka

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In interpreting the Prologue of the Gospel according to John, Augustine mainly used the Neo-Platonic philosophical concept. But when he wanted to explain this biblical text to his hearers in a sermon, he faced a serious problem, for his hearers were not only not philosophically educated, but often had no education at all. Nevertheless, Augustine wanted to explain the text to them in a way they could understand. He, therefore, translated the content-rich Greek term *λόγος* not only with the Latin term *verbum*, but also with other semantic alternatives, such as *ars* or *consilium*. These textual equivalents allow us to guess retrospectively how Augustine viewed the divine Logos, what he saw in this term, and how he dealt with its incarnation in the material world, something that Plotinus' philosophical speculation no longer envisaged.

Image Structure of Reality in Platonic Tradition and Its Christian Reinterpretation

Lenka Karfíková

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The myth in Plato's *Timaeus* narrates the process of organising the chaotic traces of ideas, mirroring in the medium of chora, into the cosmic order, the beautiful corporeal world as the divine image. In his exegesis of *Timaeus*, Plotinus enlarges the image structure applying it to the whole of reality, including Intellect as the image of the One, soul as the image of Intellect and the cosmos as the image of the soul. Inheritors of this tradition and interpreters of the Bible, the early Christian authors present not only human being as the image of God (Gen 1:26f.) or Christ but, at the same time, Christ as the privileged Image of God (Col 1:15).

World as an Image in Plato

Ondřej Krása

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Why does Plato regard the world, both in its entirety and its many constitutive parts, as an image? In this paper, I will try to show two answers to this question.

In the *Timaeus*, Plato gives his account of the creation of the world and speaks of the world as an image (εἰκῶν). The benevolent Demiurge created the world by looking at the perfect paradigm and created the world as the best image of the eternal paradigm. Thus the Demiurge's goodness (ἀγαθός ἦν) is the most important cause (ἀρχὴ κυριωτάτη) of the creation of the world as an image. However, this account is somewhat ambivalent. Is the existence of the most beautiful image of the paradigm the best state of affairs *tout court*? Or is it best only because the alternative would be worse, namely that if such a most beautiful image did not exist, something less beautiful would be in its place? Some passages in Plato lean towards an affirmative answer to the first question: the idea of the Good is the only cause needed to explain the existence of the world (autobiography passage from the *Phaedo*, the simile of the sun from the *Republic*). Other passages, especially from the *Timaeus*, argue that if we want to analyse the nature of the world, we must consider not only the Reason or the Good, but also Necessity and precosmic becoming. In either case, the perspective of goodness is essential to understanding the world as an image.

The second perspective on the image that I want to introduce in this paper concerns the insufficiency of material things. If we carefully analyse our perception of two equal sticks (*Phaedo*) or beautiful things (*Phaedrus*) or any sensible objects in general (*Timaeus*), we realise that we do not perceive these corporeal entities in themselves but always in relation to something else. If we take a closer look at our perception, it turns out that we always perceive individual objects as similar to the corresponding idea, but at the same time, we see a lack of identity with it. This double relation is not only present in our perception of objects but is equally present in material things themselves; physical things are not self-contained but always relate to what

they only imperfectly imitate. The perceived dependence of sensible objects on ideas is thus the second reason why Plato regards the world as an image.

The Relation Pattern/Image in Eusebius' *Letter to Constantia*: The Origenian Roots of the Iconoclastic Controversy

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The theological question about the relationship between pattern and image is at the heart of the iconoclastic controversy in the VIII century. As well known, the council of Nicaea II, in 787, allows the Christians to make use of the images and refutes the condemnation against the images formulated by the council of Hieria, in 754. The proceedings of the council of Nicaea II contain the horos of the council of Hieria, in particular the rejection of the use of images which is substantiated by the reference to some Patristic sources. Among these Patristic sources a key role is played by some excerpts of the Letter of Eusebius of Caesarea to Constantia, sister of Constantine and wife of Licinius. The scholars have already studied this document with focus on its authorship, which is still controversial. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate that the theological conception of pattern and image which is found in the Letter of Eusebius goes back to the view of Origen of Alexandria about image, in particular eidos, namely, the corporeal form of beings. By evidencing the Origenian background of the Letter of Eusebius, the paper will shed further light on the contribution of Origen and his theology to the iconoclastic controversy.

From Created Realities to Prototypes: Partitive Exegesis in the Pseudo-Athanasian *Disputatio contra Arium* (CPG 2250)

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Disputatio contra Arium (DCA) offers an extensive dialogue in which Athanasius and Arius focus on a series of biblical texts relating to Christ and the Trinity. In this presentation, I will argue that most of the exegetical points in DCA come from Athanasius' genuine writing *Orationes contra Ar-*

ianos and represent a simplified re-telling. More specifically, I will demonstrate that DCA uses Athanasius' partitive exegesis and reflects his idea of the Christological scope of Scripture. Furthermore, I will show that DCA makes much use of different patterns and examples (*paradeigmata*) to defend the Orthodox understanding of Christ and the Trinity based on the interpretation of Scripture that proceeds from created realities to prototypes, reflecting the Alexandrian exegesis. The presentation will focus on several specific examples of this kind of exegesis in DCA and draw connections with Athanasius and some other patristic writers.

The Pattern and the Image in Gregory of Nyssa's Searching for the Perfect Virtue

Magdalena Marunová

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The aim of this contribution is to point out the relationship between uncreated and unchangeable God and created and changeable human beings in the anthropology of Gregory of Nyssa, and to focus on Gregory's ethical application of the problem of perfect virtue, which he searches for especially in his treatise *De perfectione*, where he explains Christ's names. For him, Christ is the beginning of the new creation, as well as the fundament of the Christian life. The human being is Christian thanks to his or her participation in Christ. For those who strive for virtue, there is one path to a pure and divine life, i.e. to know what the name of Christ means, and to imitate Christ's names, which must shine forth in the Christian lives. Perfection in the Christian life means to keep in soul, word, and thought participation in all the names by which the name of Christ is signified.

‘Servant mysterium Trinitatis’.

The role of Seraphim (Is 6, 2-3) in concealing and revealing the nature of God in the Origenian work and its sources

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Focusing on the *Homilies on Isaiah* we aim at investigating the exegesis of the Vision of the Seraphim (Is 6, 2-3), together with the Cherubim (Es 25, 19) and the two Animals (Hab 3, 2) as associated by Origen himself and in the revivals of said interpretations in the exegetical work of Jerome.ⁱ On the basis of a Jewish source to which some recent developments in research enable us to add precious clarifications, Origen interprets the prophet’s vision in a trinitarian key, in particular seeing in the two Seraphim placed on either side of the throne the Logos and the Holy Spirit, who reveal and at the same time conceal the divine reality (Pattern), as hypostasis leaning towards the material world (Images). Our investigation aims at reconsidering the Origenian exegesis of the Seraphim, but mainly at detecting the philosophical-theological basis allowing the Alexandrian Master to articulate such a trinitarian interpretation on the basis of a Jewish precedent, and eventually assessing the change of the intellectual paradigm that has led to the exclusion and condemnation of such a prophetic image, as a qualifying point of the Origenian dogmatic thought.

Εἰκὼν and ὁμολοῖσις in the anthropology of Clement of Alexandria and Gregory of Nyssa. Theological convergence?

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The starting point of this presentation proposal are *εἰκὼν* and *ὁμολοῖσις*. We will try to show the interpretation offered first by Clemente Stromateo and later by Gregorio Niseno with the aim of investigating whether or not the two authors share the same theological and specifically propotological and anthropological approach.

**Platonic Patternism and the Ideal Creation:
The Nachleben of Philo's *De Opificio Mundi* 15–25
in Alexandrian Christianity**

Justin M. Rogers

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In this paper I will explore the Alexandrian Christian reception of Philo's *De Opificio Mundi* 15–25. Here Philo sets forth his understanding of “day one” (Gen 1:3–5) as the creation of the Intelligible World. Philo seems to follow Hellenistic interpretations of Plato's *Timaeus* which integrate both Aristotelian and Stoic conceptions of divine activity. In particular, Philo's association of the Platonic Forms with the thoughts of God, along with his Stoic Logos theology, provide Alexandrian Christians with a model easily applied to God and Jesus. Philo initiates an interpretive tradition of viewing the Logos as God's actionable power that creates the sensible world according to divinely conceived patterns. After surveying the Philonic text, I will explore the ways in which Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Didymus the Blind received and adapted the Philonic material to their own Christian theologies.

**Day One and the Intelligible World:
An Alexandrian Exegetical Tradition?**

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In *De opificio mundi*, Philo appears to draw the line between the creation of the intelligible world and the sense-perceptible world in two different places in Genesis: the first is the distinction between day one and the second through the sixth days and the second is the distinction between the first and second creation accounts. The relationship between the two has been the source of significant discussion among Philonists. This paper will explore the tradition of the identification of the intelligible world with day one in the Alexandrian tradition, particularly in the works of Clement, Origen, and Eusebius of Caesarea who was significantly influenced by the Alexandrian tradition. We will explore the influence of the tradition in two

directions. First, we will explore the influence of the tradition recorded in Philo on the later Christian tradition. Second, we will reverse the perspective and ask whether the Christian tradition helps us to understand whether the identification of day one with the intelligible world was a distinct exegetical tradition.

World as an Idea and Reality: Ambrose's Concept of Creation

David Vopřada

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Ambrose follows the basic intuition of the Alexandrine authors, according to which this visible world is an image and *typus* of the invisible and heavenly world, which is the true reality. This principle is visible especially in Ambrose's biblical exegesis, where he follows, among others, Philo and Origen: as the Old Testament realities relate as *imago* or *umbra* to the New Testament reality (*veritas*), so the New Testament reality, as lived in the time of the Church, relates as an *umbra* and *imago* to the eschatological realities of the world to come. The paper aims at assessing the value given by Ambrose to the created world and to the existence and history of humankind.