

Reconsidering Philoxenos of Mabbug

Saturday, May 3, 2008

A Symposium Organized by Center of Theological Inquiry and Princeton University

This symposium brings together new research on the often neglected late antique bishop Philoxenos of Mabbug (c. 440-523). Philoxenos was the metropolitan bishop of the eastern Roman province of Euphratensis from 485-519 and a senior leader of opposition to Chalcedonian theology in Syria and Mesopotamia. Over the course of his ecclesiastical career, Philoxenos played the many roles of an experienced bishop: ascetic leader, theologian, exegete, patron of a revised Syriac New Testament, polemicist, and would-be imperial counselor. Philoxenos wrote voluminously leaving works in a variety of genres: polemics, Biblical commentary, homilies, doctrinal theology, letters, and ascetic paranaesis. In a few cases, first or second hand manuscript copies of these works survive from the early sixth century. In spite of Philoxenos' diverse career and prolific writings, he remains relatively unknown to historians and theologians studying late antiquity. This symposium brings together scholars working on Philoxenos with the aim of re-evaluating his life and works and positioning them in contexts larger than the history of Syriac Christianity.

The symposium will be held on the campus of Princeton Theological Seminary at the Center of Theological Inquiry, 50 Stockton Street. The event is free and open to the public. Those planning to attend are encouraged to register by e-mail with the symposium organizers, David Michelson or Robert Kitchen: dmichels@princeton.edu or 609-258-2281

The symposium is co-sponsored by Center of Theological Inquiry, Princeton, N.J. and by the following academic units at Princeton University: Center for the Study of Religion, Group for the Study of Late Antiquity, and Program in Hellenic Studies.

Session One: Philoxenos in Context

1:00-1:30 David Michelson, Princeton University, "Philoxenos of Mabbug: Prospects for Future Research"

1:30-2:00 Dan King, Cardiff University, "New Evidence on the Philoxenian Versions of the New Testament and Nicene Creed in the Context of the History of Graeco-Syriac Translations"

2:00-2:30 Robert Kitchen, Center of Theological Inquiry, "The Lust of the Belly is Beginning of All Sin: A Practical Theology of Asceticism in the Discourses of Philoxenos of Mabbug"

2:30-3:00 Discussion

3:00-3:30 Coffee Break

Session Two: Philoxenos and Theological Controversy

3:30-4:00 Iuliana Viezure, University of Toronto, "Philoxenos of Mabbug and the Defense of the Theopaschite Trisagion"

4:00-4:30 Karl Pinggera, Philipps-Universität Marburg, "Philoxenos and Julianism"

4:30-5:00 Discussion

5:00-6:00 Reception sponsored by Gorgias Press