

Paul A. Patterson

Visions of Christ

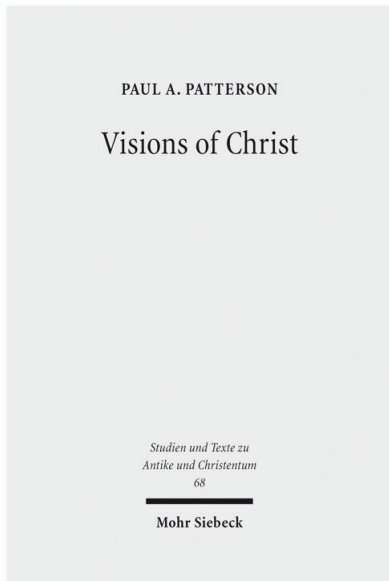
The Anthropomorphite Controversy of 399 CE

[Visions of Christ]

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In the late fourth century, tales began to circulate of 'anthropomorphites' dwelling in the Egyptian desert —uneducated monks who crudely believed God to have a body. This characterization was accepted until the nineteenth-century discovery of »The Life of Apa Aphou of Pemdje«. Although clearly defending the 'anthropomorphites,' this text does not promote any sort of anthropomorphism. Further analysis led many scholars to conclude that what the anthropomorphites were actually defending was the legitimacy of forming images of the Incarnate Christ in prayer. However, this view fails to fully explain numerous anti-anthropomorphite writings (those of Theophilus, Jerome, Cassian, Cyril and Augustine). Taking these into account, as well as certain Nag Hammadi texts and the works of Philo, Paul A. Patterson shows that the anthropomorphites were bearers of an ancient tradition, seeking in prayer the vision of the eternal, divine body of Christ.

Paul A. Patterson Born 1971; 1994 Bachelor of Arts in Ministry; 1999 Master of Arts in Church History ; 2000 enrolled in the Historical Theology program at Saint Louis University; 2011 Doctor of Philosophy; since 2005 volunteer coordinator for New City Fellowship Church in St. Louis.



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