



PROTESTANT
THEOLOGICAL
FACULTY
Charles University

XXXII. Colloquium Biblicum on April 23–25, 2025 in Prague

“The Pattern of the Tabernacle – תבנית המשכן” (Ex 25:9): Functions and Forms of Biblical Sanctuaries according to Textual and Material Evidence

The conference deals with the sanctuaries operating in the Levant before and after the exile and how the Hebrew Bible speaks of them. Given the role that cult plays in many biblical texts, the way in which sanctuaries are referred to says much about their literary history. Special attention will be given to the “tabernacle” as described in the Pentateuch, especially in Exodus 25-40. Assuming that these chapters reflect the struggles surrounding the existing temple(s), an analysis of them will shed light on the cult and the people involved, as well as the nature of the formation of the Bible.

The conference is part of the project *Cult and Law in the Book of Exodus: A Contribution to the Literary History of the Pentateuch (GA24-13045S)* supported by the Czech Science Foundation.

Prof. Dr. Martin Prudký (prudky@etf.cuni.cz)
and Assoc. Prof. Petr Sláma, Ph.D. (slama@etf.cuni.cz)



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Programme

Wednesday, April 23, 2025 (Material Evidence)

Chaired by Martin Prudký

- 14:30–15:00** Arrival and registration at PTF CU
(Černá 9, Prague 1, room E in 3rd floor)
- 15:00–15:30** **Petr Sláma:** *Welcome address and introduction*
- 15:30–16:00** **Anselm Hagedorn:** *Sanctuaries without Cities – an Eastern Mediterranean Perspective on Tel Moza and the Tabernacle Account*
- 16:00–16:30** **Filip Čapek:** *From Where to Where and When: The Ark Narrative Revisited?*
- 16:30–17:00** **Break**
- 17:00–17:30** **Axel Bühler:** *The Models of the Biblical Sanctuaries*
- 17:30–18:00** **Christian Frevel:** *„Sanctuary“ at Eliachin in the Sharon Plain in the Persian period*
- 18:00–18:30** **Bohdan Hroboň:** *Let them Make for me a Sanctuary – שְׁמֵי לִי מִקְדָּשׁ (Ex 25:8): Challenges to Recreate the Tabernacle according to Exodus 25-31*



Thursday, April 24, 2025 (Textual Dependencies)

Chaired by Joep Dubbink

8:50–9:00 **Matins** (Rainer Albertz)

9:00–9:30 **Garret Haddock:** *Achronology and the Tabernacle: Narrative Disorder in Exodus 40*

9:30–10:00 **Noelle Johnson:** *Is the Ordination of the Priests and Consecration of the Altar Supposed to Occur Annually?*

10:00–10:30 **Rainer Albertz:** *Literary and Ritual Problems of the Golden Altar in the Tabernacle*

10:30–11:00 **Break**

11:00–11:45 **Peter Dubovský:** *Strange Similarities and Differences: A Comparative Analysis of Measures of Sacred Structures in Biblical Texts*

11:45–12:30 **Nathan MacDonald:** *The Tabernacle Lists*

12:30–15:00 **Lunchtime**

Chaired by Uwe F. W. Bauer

15:00–16:30 **Eva-Martina Kindl:** *Close reading of Exodus 40:17-38*

16:30–17:00 **Break**

17:00–17:30 **Jürg Hutzli:** *The Place of the Tabernacle Account in the Priestly Composition*

17:30–18:00 **Petr Sláma:** *Non-priestly Texts about the Tent of Meeting*

18:00–18:30 **Jozef Tiño:** *The Transfer of the Tabernacle Account in Exodus to Chronicles*



Friday, April 25, 2025 (Aspects & Applications)

Chaired by Filip Čapek

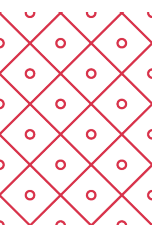
- 8:50–9:00** **Matins** (Edgar Kellenberger)
- 9:00–9:30** **Uwe Bauer:** *An Alternative Understanding of Psalm 73:17-20*
- 9:30–10:00** **Joep Dubbink :** *Something Like a Temple*
- 10:00–10:30** **Jan Rückl:** *How to Really Change the World by placing a Stone next to the Stone: Temple Founding in Haggai*
- 10:30–11:00** **Break**
- 11:00–11:30** **Christoph Berner:** *A Heavenly Archetype? The Motif of the תבנית (Exod 25:9, 40) and its Place in the History of 'Biblical' and Early Jewish Literature*
- 11:30–12:00** **Edgar Kellenberger:** *Staying in the Sanctuary – a Danger to Life*
- 12:00–12:30** **Markus Saur:** *Ezekiel's Vision of a New Temple and its Literary Contexts*
- 12:30–15:00** **Lunchtime**

Chaired by Jan Rückl

- 15:00–15:30** **Break**
- 15:30–17:30** **Albertz, Dubovský, Frevel, Hutzli, MacDonald:**
In search of meaning: panel discussion of the key speakers
- 18:00** **Final dinner**

Saturday, April 26, 2025 (Excursion)

- 9:00–13:00** *Guided and commented visit to the national shrine of St. Wenceslas in Stará Boleslav*



Abstracts

Wednesday, April 23, 2025 (Material Evidence)

Sanctuaries without Cities – an Eastern Mediterranean Perspective on Tel Moza and the Tabernacle Account

Prof. Dr. Anselm Hagedorn (University of Osnabrück, Germany)

The excavations at Tel Moza have significantly challenged our understanding and portrait of the cult in Iron Age Israel and Judah. The exact extent of the implications of the discoveries are yet to be determined as excavations and publication are ongoing but first studies (Moulis 2022; Čapek 2023) have demonstrated the importance of the site for biblical studies. This paper will investigate whether and how the evidence from Tel Moza can contribute to our understanding of a literary description of a sanctuary as found in Exodus 25–40. We will focus our attention on the lack of (permanent) settlement structures as well as the rich material culture described in the Biblical text needed for the adornment of the tabernacle. It will be argued that the lack of a city in Exodus 25–40 is more than just a narrative trope and that the temple at Moza can help to decipher the texts setting. By looking at comparative evidence from sanctuaries 'on the way' from the Eastern Mediterranean we hope to offer a better understanding of cultic places that are imagined beyond an urban setting and how these conceptions of sanctuaries shape our understanding of the theological implications put forward by such concepts.

From Where to Where and When: The Ark Narrative Revisited?

Prof. Dr. Filip Čapek (Charles University, Czechia)

Not only in classical discussion going back at least to Leonhard Rost, The Ark Narrative has received new attention in recent years, not only textually but also archaeologically through new excavations at the sites of Tel Mozah and Kiriath-jearim. The aim of this paper is to critically present this discussion in a new perspective that sheds light on the broader political and historical contexts.

Wednesday afternoon
(Material evidence)



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The Models of the Biblical Sanctuaries

Axel Bühler, Ph.D. (Senior lecturer at the Protestant Institute of Theology in Paris, France)

In this presentation, I will discuss the architectural categorization of the Tabernacle, Solomon's Temple and Ezekiel's Temple. While certain similarities between the three descriptions imply a literary dependency, the differences, particularly in materials and architectural structure, show that the descriptions are based on different types of temples. In a second step, I will discuss the reasons why the redactors chose these different models, with a particular focus on the tabernacle.

„Sanctuary“ at Eliachin in the Sharon Plain in the Persian period

Prof. Dr. Christian Frevel (Ruhr University Bochum, Germany)

This paper examines the „religious landscape“ of the Sharon Plain during the Persian period, focusing on the site of Eliachin. A few inscribed artifacts found in Eliachin suggest the existence of a local sanctuary, yet to be precisely located. This sanctuary appears to have been established and used by a predominantly Phoenician mixed population during the late 6th and early 5th centuries BCE, coinciding with Phoenician expansion into the Sharon Plain. The votive offerings predominantly employed conventional dedicatory inscriptions in Phoenician and Aramaic. There is no substantial evidence of North or South Arabian influence. The hypothesis that the deity worshipped in Eliachin originated from the Arabian Peninsula, based on mimation, does not hold. The only epigraphic evidence supporting a South Arabian origin is from the temple of Raybūn, where a goddess named ʾttrm is attested. However, establishing a connection between this goddess and the Sharon Plain is improbable. The alternative hypothesis of a North Arabian origin relies on the absence of the male counterpart ʾštr in Phoenicia, contrasted with the broader attestation of ʾttr in North Arabia. Nonetheless, it is difficult to explain why an Arabian god would dominate Phoenician and Aramaic inscriptions in the Sharon Plain. Therefore, the most plausible explanation remains a local variant of the god ʾttr/ʾštr within the Phoenician context.

Let them Make for me a Sanctuary – וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ (Ex 25:8):

Challenges to Recreate the Tabernacle according to Exodus 25-31

Bohdan Hroboň MA, Ph.D., (Assoc. prof. at the University of Trnava, Slovakia)

A model of the Tabernacle according to Bohdan Hroboň. The shape of the regular קֹרֶשׁ (Ex 26,15-16), the shape of the two corner קֹרְשֵׁים (Ex 26,23-24), and the arrangement of the

goats' hair curtains (Ex 26,7-13) are proposed, suggestions of some omitted parts (e.g. the ceiling) are made, and specific questions related to the construction of the Tabernacle are raised.

Thursday, April 24, 2025 (Textual Dependencies)

Achronology and the Tabernacle: Narrative Disorder in Exodus 40

Garret Haddock (Ph.D. candidate, University of Notre Dame, USA)

Exodus 40 plays a central role in the Sinai pericope. It represents a watershed moment in the narrative of the Priestly writings. By the end of this chapter, God dwells on earth in the Tabernacle in the midst of his people. Exodus 40 contains clear instances of narrative disorder or achronology. Whereas in Exod 40:18–33a Moses completes the actions commanded by YHWH earlier in Exod 40:2–8, the actions of vv. 9–15—the consecration of the Tent of Meeting and the ordination of the priesthood—are absent in Exodus 40 (one must wait until Lev 8 for their fulfillment). Nevertheless, at the end of Exod 40, a theophany occurs. This theophany seemingly fulfills the promise of YHWH in Exod 29:43–46 to dwell among his people. How is it that this occurs without the narrative report of the consecration of the Tabernacle and ordination of the priesthood? How does this theophany relate to that in Lev 9:23–24? In this paper, I argue that the narrative disorder between Exodus 40 and Leviticus 8–9 is a result of scribal arrangement of the priestly Tabernacle material according to theme.

Is the Ordination of the Priests and Consecration of the Altar Supposed to Occur Annually?

Noelle Johnson (Ph.D. candidate, University of Notre Dame, USA)

The discovery of an annually prescribed consecration of the altar and priests in the Temple Scroll (11Q 19 XV, 03–XVII, 4) has highlighted an exegetical ambiguity attendant to Exodus 28–29 and Leviticus 8–9. Is the ordination of the priests and consecration of the altar supposed to occur annually? What is the relationship of the ordination of the priests to the consecration of the altar, which here seem to be closely intertwined? While such an observance or festival is not mentioned in any of the Pentateuchal festival lists (the shorter lists in Exod 24:14–19, Exod 34:18, 21–24 and Deut 16:1–18, and the full calendars of Lev 23 and Num 28–29), and rabbinic interpretation views the event as a one-time occurrence (B. Sukka 43a), a purification of the altar is indeed listed in Ezekiel's festival calendar (45:18–25) and other biblical narratives utilize the theme of a consecration at particular events in Israel's history (1 Kgs 8; 2 Chron 5:7–11; 2 Chron 29; Ez 43:18–27; Ezra 3; Ezra 6:16–18; Neh 9–10; 1 Macc 4 and 2 Macc 1–2, 10). This paper aims to sketch a status quaestionis on the topic to systematize

further research: does Exodus 28-29/ Lev 8-9 itself offer a perspective on the once-for-all or annual nature of this ceremony? Why can some rabbinic interpretation read the event as a once-for-all occurrence, while other perspectives, such as that of the Temple Scroll, interpret it as annual?

Literary and Ritual Problems of the Golden Altar in the Tabernacle

Prof. a.D. Dr. theol. Rainer Albertz (Prof.em. at the University of Münster, Germany)

For the Jerusalem Temple a golden altar within the temple building is attested (1 Kings 7,48; cf. 6:20.22) apart from the bronze altar on the court in front of the house (8:64). Similarly, two little stone altars were archaeologically found at the cult niche of the Arad sanctuary beside to a huge brick altar in the court. Thus, it seems that the juxtaposition of at least one inner and one outer altar belonged to the normal equipment of temples in the Levant during the Iron Age. In contrast to this result, an inner or golden altar is missing the main revelation report of the Tabernacle (Exod 25–27), which came to its end with the consecration of the outer altar and the priests in Exod 28–29. It is also missing in the instructions for the Yom-Kippur ritual in Lev 16:1–28. The making of a golden altar inside the tent, however, is only mentioned in a smaller revelation report (Verses 1–10 of Exod 30) following the final theological statement (29:43–46). Moreover, its ritual use is narrowly restricted (V. 9). What are the reasons for that strange displacement and for those narrow restrictions?

Strange Similarities and Differences: A Comparative Analysis of Measures of Sacred Structures in Biblical Texts

Prof. Dr. Peter Dubovský, S.J., S.S.L. (Professor ordinarius and President of the Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome, Italy)

This paper will investigate the differing measures of temples and tabernacles as presented in Greek and Hebrew texts. A comparison of these texts reveals that the measures of the sacred structures underwent significant redactional work. The scribes adjusted the measures and harmonized them across various biblical texts. Consequently, the final texts in Greek and Hebrew represent a textual construct unifying three major structures: the ark, the tabernacle, and the temple.

The Tabernacle Lists

Prof. Nathan MacDonald, Ph.D. (Professor of the Interpretation of the Old Testament at the University of Cambridge, England)

One of the most striking features of the Tabernacle account is the repeated listing of the tabernacle, its furniture, and utensils (Exod 31.6–11; 35.10–19; 39.32–41; 40.1–8; 40.18–33).



In the Masoretic Text the items are mostly presented with the same description and in the same order, though there are also some small variations. In the Greek translation, however, there is significant variation in order. The reasons for these different orders has never been fully explained and their potential for shedding light on the possible development of the tabernacle account has not been exploited. In this paper, I will examine the variations within the tabernacle lists and seek to demonstrate their potential value for a deeper understanding of the tabernacle account and its growth.

Close Reading of Exodus 40:17-38

Eva-Martina Kindl (Lecturer in Biblical Hebrew at the University of Bonn, Germany)

Workshop on the reading of the Hebrew text together, with on-site participant observations

The Place of the Tabernacle Account in the Priestly Composition

Jürg Hutzli, Ph.D. (Lecturer in the Hebrew Bible at the University of Lausanne and University of Geneva, Switzerland)

The present paper aims to reassess the place of the tabernacle account within the comprehensive Priestly composition which includes texts in Genesis, Exodus and Leviticus. Existing studies of P emphasize the presence of corresponding elements at the end of the opening text (Gen 1:31–2:3) and the end of the tabernacle account (Exod 39–40). The parallel between the accomplishment of God's creation and the tabernacle's construction at Sinai creates an inclusio, with the shared motifs of achievement of the work, final approbation, and God's and Moses's blessing, using common expressions. In a first step the proposed paper attempts to retrace the redaction history of the tabernacle account. Secondly, it reassesses the meaning and relevance of the correspondences between Gen 1:1–2:4a and Exod 39–40 in the context of the Priestly composition. It takes into account further intertextual contacts to other texts (also outside of P). On the basis of these observations, the paper aims to infer conclusions for the literary nature and the formation history of the Priestly composition.

Non-priestly Texts about the Tent of Meeting

Petr Sláma, Ph.D. (Associate Professor at the Charles University, Czechia)

This paper surveys the non-priestly thematization of the tabernacle as the tent of meeting within the Pentateuch. It examines the semantic variability of the term **מִקְדָּשׁ**, considering the possible interplay between priestly and non-priestly texts. Particular attention is paid to the account of the tent of meeting in Exodus 33:7-11, which is understood as a direct polemic against the priestly concept of a sanctuary.

Thursday afternoon
(Textual dependencies)

The Transfer of the Tabernacle Account in Exodus to Chronicles

Jozef Tiño, Ph.D., S.S.L. (Associate Professor at the University of Trnava, Slovakia)

Even though the Sinai Pericope itself, with its narrative of the plan and construction of the tabernacle does not stand out as a theme in Chronicles' narrative, the author nevertheless incorporated it into his project of rewritten history. The aim of this paper is to show how the aforementioned theme is reflected in Chronicles, and to explain its function in the overall plan of the book.

Friday, April 25, 2025 (Aspects & Applications)

An Alternative Understanding of Psalm 73:17-20

Dr. Uwe Bauer (Senior lecturer at the Protestant University Wuppertal-Bethel, Germany)

Since de Wette's commentary of 1811, there has been a broad consensus in Old Testament Psalm research that *מִקְדָּשׁ יְהוָה* either means the temple in Jerusalem or must be understood figuratively, and that the personal pronoun of the 3rd person plural at the end of v. 17b refers back to the apostates in vv. 3-12. Here we will now take up and argue in favour of the thesis briefly put forward by Harris Birkeland in 1955 that vv. 17-20 refer to the destroyed sanctuaries of El, which were run by the apostates.

Something Like a Temple

Prof. Dr. Joep Dubbink (Professor at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Netherlands)

We all know that the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 587 BCE and rebuilt between 520 and 515 BCE – at least according to some major sources like the books of Haggai (1:1-15) and Ezra (3:1-6:15). How did the Judaeans worship in between? Did they restrict themselves to reading, singing and praying as in the synagogue, or was there some kind of continuity of the temple liturgy? Is the *מִקְדָּשׁ מַעֵט* mentioned in Ezekiel 11:15 meant purely spiritual, or does it refer to a real object? An exegetical and biblical-theological investigation about the or a temple during the Babylonian exile.

How to Really Change the World by lacing a Stone next to the Stone: Temple Founding in Haggai

Jan Rückl, Ph.D. (Associate Professor at the Charles University, Czechia)

The chief theme of the book of Haggai is unquestionably the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. Quite typically, Haggai's treatment of this theme is a mixture of traditional elements of preexilic Judean religion with some contextual innovations. For instance, in pre-

exilic Judah, the Davidides' concern for the sanctuary in Jerusalem most likely played an important role in their royal ideology, and Haggai seems to perpetuate and reconstitute this traditional, legitimizing relationship between the Davidic kingship and the Jerusalem temple by linking the rebuilding of the temple with Zerubbabel's elevation. Similarly, the prophet's arguments for embarking on the temple reconstruction project (Hag 1:5-11; 2:15-19) reflect the traditional view that the presence of a deity in a sanctuary brings fertility to the land. However, the paper will mainly focus on Haggai's presentation of the act itself of founding the temple. Comparing the relevant passages in Haggai with both biblical and extrabiblical ancient Near Eastern texts related to temple construction, the paper will ask both about the form of the ritual referred to in Haggai as well as about its meaning in the book. Laying the foundation of a temple was doubtlessly a traditional ritual, yet (at least) its textual depiction in Haggai may be an innovation adapted for the needs of its particular historical context. Despite a noteworthy similarity with a passage in the Gudea cylinder A, the accent on the revolutionary impact of the sole act of the founding of the temple in Hag 2:15-19 is relatively specific. It may have been linked to the limited material resources of the agents of the reconstruction, and perhaps also their (i.e., notably Zerubbabel's) need to discursively utilize an immediately practicable action. Finally, the paper will also address the tensions between how the foundation of the Second Temple is described in Haggai, Ezra 1-3, and Ezra 5:13-17, inquiring into which course of events is most plausible historically.

A Heavenly Archetype? The Motif of the תבנית (Exod 25:9, 40) and its Place in the History of 'Biblical' and Early Jewish Literature

Prof. Dr. Christoph Berner (Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, Germany)

While the tabernacle texts in general take the form of a divine speech offering a detailed description of the tabernacle and its cultic equipment, Exod 25:9, 40 take a different stance in claiming that, on Mount Sinai, Moses was shown a model (תבנית) of the tabernacle. The verses thus introduce a distinct visionary element that has left hardly any traces in the bulk of the material in Exod 25-31; 35-40 and should, therefore, be addressed as a very late addition. The paper explores the literary place of the motif and its purpose in relation to parallels from the Hebrew Bible (e.g., 1 Chr 28) and the Qumran texts (e.g., the Shirot Olat ha-Shabbat). In so doing, it attempts to shed new light on the literary and conceptual development of Exod 25-31; 35-40 in the context of early Jewish 'temple literature'.

Staying in the Sanctuary – a Danger to Life

Edgar Kellenberger-Sassi, Dr. theol. (Visiting researcher at the University of Basel, Switzerland)

The fact that the numinous exhibits a dangerous aspect is a cross-cultural phenomenon, observable not only in the Old Testament. Uzzah's well-intentioned attempt to steady the swaying Ark of the Covenant leads to his death (2 Samuel 6); comparable is the rescue of the Palladium from the burning Temple of Vesta in Rome by L. Caecilius Metellus, which resulted in his blindness. Whoever sees God's face risks death (Exodus 33:20 and other passages). Comparable in Greek-Roman mythology are humans who unintentionally see a naked goddess bathing (Actaeon is then transformed into a stag and torn apart by his own dogs; Tiresias is blinded). Semele wants to see Zeus during their lovemaking and is incinerated by his lightning epiphany. It is particularly noteworthy when priests or other sanctuary personnel are affected, as is especially the case with the fire-death of the priestly sons Nadab and Abihu during the incense offering (Leviticus 10; Uzzah in 2 Samuel 6 is also possibly a priest or Levite). Fatal consequences for ritual or sacral-legal misconduct are also evident in the case of Eli's sons in Shiloh (1 Samuel 2-4). However, I am unaware of any analogies from the ancient Near East or antiquity. Incantation and oracle specialists protected themselves prophylactically from potential ritual errors through prayers (numerous examples from the Neo-Assyrian period). The Old Testament statements (cf. also Numbers 16; Isaiah 6:5-6) seem to be a proprium of Israel; and this line continues in the New Testament as well (1 Peter 4:17: 'For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household').

Ezekiel's Vision of a New Temple and its Literary Contexts

Prof. Dr. Markus Saur (University of Bonn, Germany)

Ezekiel 40–48 offers insight into post-exilic ideas about a sanctuary. In the Book of Ezekiel, this vision in Ezekiel 40–48 is linked to the vision of the temple presented in Ezekiel 8–11 and to expectations of an imminent period of salvation as outlined in Ez 34–37. The paper will first provide a brief reconstruction of the profile of Ezekiel 40–48. Secondly, it will examine the contexts of Ezekiel 40–48 within the Book of Ezekiel. Finally, it will analyse the concept of a new temple in the context of comparable conceptions of the post-exilic period.

Temple Construction as a Literary Scheme

Dr. Thomas Wagner (Senior lecturer at the Bergische Universität Wuppertal, Germany)

The architecture and construction of sanctuaries and temples is described in the Hebrew Bible and Early Jewish literature. It is noticeable that the measurements are repeated, so that scholarship has repeatedly surmised literary dependencies between the depiction of the building instructions for the sanctuary in Exod. 25-31, Ezek. 40-43 and 11Q 19 col. 30-46. The relationship between Exod 25-31 and Ezek. 40-43 is particularly controversial, as the parallels are visible but the direction of literary dependence is not clear. In addition to the biblical texts, the Mesopotamian Esagila documents – the tablets date from the late Babylonian period – contain a comparable text that indicates that the description of sanctuaries to be built is based on fixed formative elements that the biblical authors also used for orientation. In my contribution, I will pursue the question of which parallels between the texts can be explained in terms of textual form.

Saturday, April 26, 2025 (Excursion)

Guided and commented excursion to the national shrine in Stará Boleslav

Saturday morning half-day trip to Stará Boleslav, the location of St. Wenceslas' martyrdom by his brother Boleslav (approximately 20 km from Prague). Visit to the Basilica of St. Wenceslas and its crypt. Lunch at a local restaurant. Travel together via public transport, accompanied by Martin Prudký and Petr Sláma.

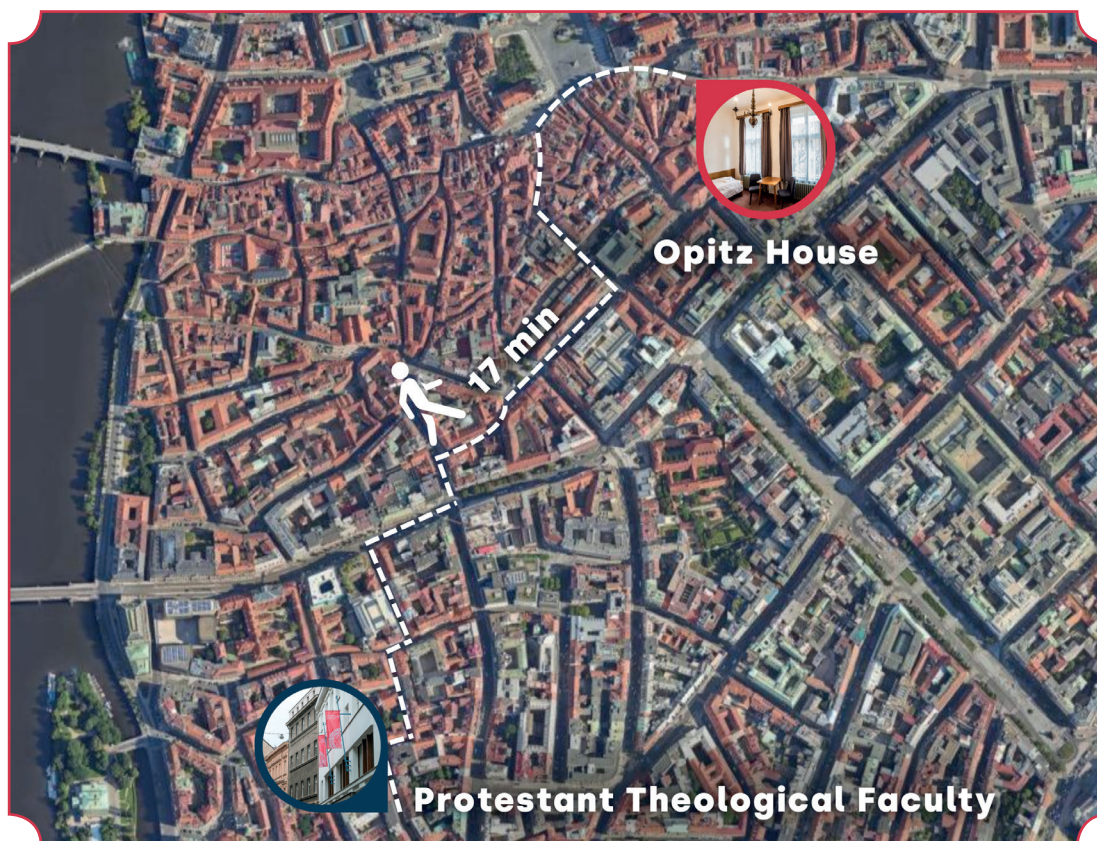
Friday afternoon
(Aspects & Applications)

Saturday morning
(Excursion)



**Charles
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Map



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