

The Great Schism

The Church Divided Part III

Events, Causes and Controversies
which led to the Church's division
East and West

The Story

- Background ... Definition & Early Structure 21 Apr
- Christological Controversy & Conflict 28 Apr
- Divergence of Thought & Approach **5 May**
- Attempts at Reconciliation & Continuing Conflict 12 May

Which Schism?

- **Christological (Chalcedonian) schism**
 - Chalcedon 451 CE (4th Ecumenical Council)
 - Nature(s) of Christ
- **East –West Schism**
- **Great Western Schism** (1378 – 1417)
 - Avignon ... Rome ... Pisa
 - Council of Constance 1417-18
- **Protestant schisms** (beginning 15th – 16th cent)

To Date

- Persecution and response
 - Rigorism ... shadow churches
 - Meaning of *ecclesia*
 - Ecclesial offices ... Clerical positions ...
 - *Didache*
 - Christological Controversies and Ecumenical Councils
-
- Different roads ... other conflicts

Other Conflicts

Church and State
The New Rome
Quest for Authority

Church and State

The conflicts of Ambrose (b 339 CE) of Milan.

- "Christians" burn a synagogue in Callinicum.
 - Emperor demands that the Christians rebuild the structure.
 - Ambrose protests that the emperor has no authority over what Christians do.
 - Emperor backs down.
- Riots in Thessalonica
 - Imperial army kills seven thousand.
 - Ambrose forces emperor into public penance.

The emperor is the Church's sponsor, not its ruler.

Acacian Schism

Acacian Schism

- After the Council of Chalcedon (451 CE) when "monophysitism" was condemned ... the schism in the East became a reality.
 - In 475 CE, a new Emperor, Basiliscus, with monophysite leanings took control in Constantinople. He reigned for only 20 months.
 - When Zeno, a previous Emperor, returned to power, the Church was seriously divided between Chalcedonian Orthodox and Monophysites.
 - Zeno wanted the church in the East reunited.
 - The Patriarch of Constantinople, Bishop Acacius, drafted a proposed letter of reunion ... the *Henoticon* (Act of Union).
 - This letter affirmed the creed of Nicea-Constantinople ... condemned Nestorius and Eutyches ... and approved the anathemas of Cyril of Alexandria.
 - Chalcedon ... and its decisions were not mentioned.
 - Most Monophysite bishops accepted the Henoticon ... but John Talaia ... a previously deposed bishop of Alexandria ... appealed to Rome.

Acacian Schism

- John Talaia ... Chalcedonian ... but no friend of Acacius of Constantinople ... a Chalcedonian ... appeals to the bishop of Rome ... Simplicius ... a Chalcedonian. Simplicius rejects the Henoticon because it does not reaffirm Chalcedon.
 - Simplicius sends representatives to Constantinople and says that Patriarch Acacius must answer charges made against him.
 - The Emperor and Patriarch reject this “interference” from Rome.
- In 482, the Henoticon is published ... as a letter of reunion ... between Chalcedonian Orthodox and Monophysites.
- A synod meets in Rome in 484 ... bishop Felix of Rome excommunicates the Patriarch of Constantinople ... Acacius.
- Acacius removes the Bishop of Rome from the *diptychs* ... officially for dealing with the Monophysites ... who had been declared heretics at the Council of Chalcedon.

Acacian Schism

- The schism ... really a mutual ignoring of each other ... lasts until 519 CE
 - The East supports a Roman anti-pope ... Laurentius.
 - The Emperor dies ...
 - The Bishop of Rome dies ...
 - The Patriarch of Constantinople dies ...
 - A new Emperor ... Justin ... together with Bishop John of Cappadocia negotiate with Bishop Hormisdas of Rome ... and agree to a reconciliation.
- The Acacian Schism was the first significant “break” between the Eastern and Western churches.
 - No lasting doctrinal differences emerged.
 - Lasted ~ 35 years ... absolutely no incentive to reunite.
 - Began to clearly point to the significant underlying differences of Eastern and Western ecclesiology.

Events

- Fall of Rome 410
 - Vandals sack Rome 455
 - End of Western “Roman” Empire 476
- Emperor Justinian 527-565
 - Some of Italy restored to Empire (554) ... bishops given responsibility to “supervise” civil, educational and financial systems.
- Gregory the Great (Pope) 590-604
- Rise of Mohammed 632
 - Antioch falls 637
 - Jerusalem falls 638
 - Alexandria falls 642

Church and State

The popes, patriarchs, and bishops did not always win, however:

- Patriarch of Constantinople, John Chrysostom, died during a forced movement to exile under emperor Honorius in 407 CE.
 - Chrysostom simply preached against the corruption and hypocrisy of the imperial court.
- Pope Vigilius was carried off to imprisonment and death (555 CE) by the eastern emperor Justinian for arguing against the emperor’s compromises with the Monophysites.
- In the west, the pope of Rome became the early medieval power.
 - Crowning of Charlemagne in 800 CE by Pope Leo III.

Generally ... the government was growing weary of ecclesial interference in what they thought of as their matters.

Missionary Rivalries

Rome vs Constantinople

An example: Cyril & Methodius

- Two brothers of Thessalonica ... Methodius b. 815 ... Constantine (Cyril) b. ~ 826-7.
- Slavs “imported” into eastern empire to help fight Arabs. Methodius becomes governor of a “Slavic province.” Cyril, at age 15, goes to Constantinople to study philosophy.
- Cyril and Methodius are sent by Constantinople as missionaries to the Slavs in Greater Moravia.
 - Develop a Slavic alphabet called “glagolica,” meaning verb.
 - Liturgies performed in “Slavonic.”
- Germans complain about these “Eastern” missionaries.
 - “Three sacred languages.”

Missionary Rivalries

Rome vs Constantinople

An example: Cyril & Methodius

- Cyril and Methodius summoned to Rome ... meet bishop of Rome (867) ... Hadrian II.
 - Participate in liturgy using Slavonic books.
 - Cyril dies in Rome at 42 in 869.
 - Methodius is made archbishop by the Pope and sent to Pannonia northwest of Belgrade.
- Methodius is held in a German prison in Swabia for two years...released in 873.
- Upon release, continues missionary activity as far north as Krakow, Poland.
- Cyrillic is probably actually developed by Constantine of Preslav, a follower of Methodius, in Bulgaria after the death of Cyril and Methodius.

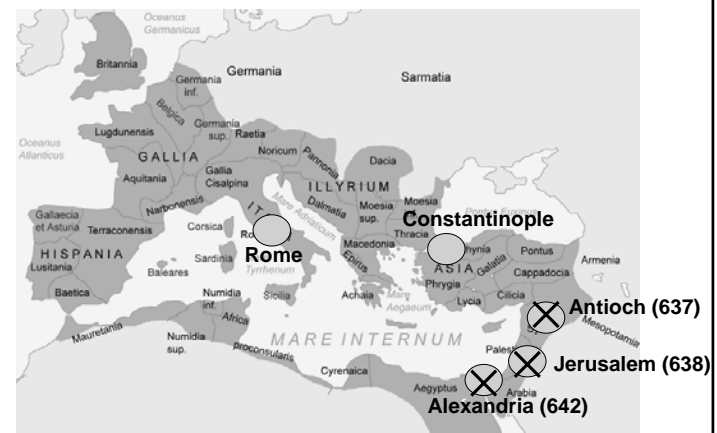
Missionary Rivalries

Rome vs Constantinople

An example:

- Boris of the Bulgars was fearful of the Germans.
 - Appealed to the eastern emperor to be a “czar” within the empire ... rejected.
 - Appealed to Rome to be granted an archbishop, i.e., a patriarch ... rejected.
 - Simeon, son of Boris, names himself czar (917 CE), raised his own clergy in status and this was eventually accepted in the East.
- Russian example similar.

Roman Empire



Summary

Differing World Views

Rome

- In the 5th century, Rome is overrun by barbarians ... imperial structure collapses.
- Bishop of Rome now not only represented the “Church of Peter and Paul” but also becomes the new power center in a changing Western Europe.
- In Church affairs, Tome of Leo, is accepted as a statement of orthodoxy in the formulation of the Christological definition that emerged from Chalcedon in 451 CE.

Rome

- The church in Rome came to believe that without it there was no Church (and no Western Empire).
- At one time or another, the Eastern Patriarchs of Constantinople, Antioch and Alexandria appealed to the Patriarch in Rome ... to find support in disagreements with other Patriarchs.
- Rome did come to believe that it did have the final word.

Constantinople

- The New Rome
- By the 8th century, Moslem incursions had overrun Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem.
- Constantinople felt that it stood alone against forces acting against the Church

The Iconoclast Controversy

The Question of “Images”

Iconoclast Controversy

- Emperor Leo III (716-741 CE) had leanings toward Islam. He stated, however, that icons were the chief hindrance to the conversion of Jews and Moslems to Christianity.
- In 726 CE Leo published an edict declaring images to be idols forbidden by the first commandment of the Jewish decalogue.
- Soldiers are sent to churches to destroy all images.
- The emperor had the support of bishop Xenaecus of Hierapolis.
- Germanus the bishop of Constantinople protested and was removed and replaced by the Iconoclast bishop Anastasius. Germanus appeals to the bishop of Rome, Gregory II.
- Monasteries are closed and destroyed. Shrines are destroyed and bodies of saints are exhumed and burned.

Iconoclast Controversy

- Gregory II, bishop of Rome, refuses to destroy icons and writes to Leo III criticizing the emperor for removing Germanus as bishop and for interfering in ecclesiastical affairs.
- Leo III states that no council had ever supported the use of images and therefore, he could make a decree on the matter (as a priest of the Church).
- Leo III threatens to come to Rome himself to destroy the images and to arrest Gregory II.
- Gregory II basically says, come if you would like but you will never find me.
- Gregory II states that he prays to Christ that a demon will torture the emperor’s body but that his soul will be saved. (1 Cor 5:5)

Iconoclast Controversy

- Gregory II dies in 731 CE and is replaced by Gregory III.
- In 731 CE Gregory III holds a synod in Rome (93 bishops).
- All persons who “broke, defiled or took images of Christ, His Mother, the Apostles or the saints” were declared excommunicate.
- Leo III sends a fleet to Italy to punish the Pope but it is destroyed in a storm.
- Eventually, controversy is settled by Seventh Ecumenical Council, Nicea II. Icons are to be used by the Church and are to be venerated but not adored.

Rationale

The argument (*apologia*):

Iconodules

- God, although invisible by nature, can and must be represented in his human nature, as Jesus Christ. To the Orthodox iconoclasm amounted to a denial of the incarnation.

Iconoclasts

- A representation of Christ implied a denial of his divinity which is inseparable from his humanity, or a separation of Christ into two beings (Nestorianism).
 - A misrepresentation of the “hypostatic union” of the human and divine in the person of Jesus.

Icons

“We, therefore, following the royal pathway and the divinely inspired authority of our Holy Fathers and the traditions of the Catholic Church ... define with all certitude and accuracy that just as the figure of the precious and life-giving Cross, so also the venerable and holy images, as well in painting and mosaic as of other fit materials, should be set forth in the holy churches of God, and on the sacred vessels and on the vestments and on hangings and in pictures both in houses and by the wayside, to wit, the figure of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, of our spotless Lady, the Mother of God, of the honorable Angels, of all Saints and of all pious people. For by so much more frequently as they are seen in artistic representation, by so much more readily are men lifted up to the memory of their prototypes, and to a longing after them; and to these should be given due salutation and honorable reverence, **not indeed that true worship of faith which pertains alone to the divine nature**; but to these, as to the figure of the precious and life-giving Cross and to the Book of the Gospels and to the other holy objects, incense and lights may be offered according to ancient pious custom. For the honor which is paid to the image passes on to that which the image represents, and he who reveres the image reveres in it the subject represented ...”

Interpretation

The original Greek text has a distinct advantage over the Latin or English.

In the Greek, there is a “general” word (*latreia*) used for “an affectionate regard” or “veneration” for any person or thing.

There is another word (*proskynisis*) which is properly used to denote worship due only to “the most High God.”

Unfortunately, in Latin *latreia* was oftentimes translated as *adoro* ... to adore ... and this resulted in accusation of idol worship.

“Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.” (Matt 4:10)

The Photian Schism

Who is in Charge?

Photian Schism

- Ignatius made Patriarch of Constantinople ... 847-858.
- New emperor forces Ignatius to resign ... Photius becomes Patriarch.
- Rebels opposed to new emperor declare Ignatius Patriarch ... 858.
- Photius calls synod of bishops and deposes Ignatius ... 859.
- Bishop of Rome, Nicholas I, challenges Photius. In 862-3, a synod of bishops in Rome declares Ignatius to still be Patriarch ... letters sent to Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem.
- Photius holds synod of bishops deposing Pope Nicholas I of Rome.
- Basil the Macedonian kills the emperor, Michael III, and restores Ignatius ... 867-877.
- But relations with Rome are strained.

Photian Schism

- Emperor (Basil) calls **Council of Constantinople** (869-870)
- Issue: What is the status of the bishops and priests ordained by Photius during his tenure as Patriarch of Constantinople?
 - Photius condemned ... he is equal to Dioscorus.
 - Everything done "in his person and by him ... has been abrogated." (Canon IV)
 - He is "anathematized," i.e., turned over to Satan. (Canon VI)
 - Those clergy who were properly ordained (pre-Photius) "must be deposed and suspended." "On no account are such men to be readmitted into the ranks of the clergy, even if they ... change their ways." (Canon XXV)

East never accepts this council as ecumenical. West considers this the eighth Ecumenical Council (beginning in 11th century).

Photian Schism

- Ignatius dies (877) ... Photius again selected as Patriarch ... but relations with Rome are good.
- A council of "reconciliation" is called in Constantinople (879-880) and presided over by Photius.
 - Roman delegates sent by Pope John VIII say Photius can be "recognized" if he apologizes for his earlier unlawful activities in 858. Pope claims to be able to "release Photius and his clergy from penalties previously imposed." (from previous council at Constantinople)
 - Photius refuses and says that he was never legally deposed (by Nicholas I) and has been Patriarch since 858.
- The anti-Photian measures of Constantinople IV are considered annulled.
- Both sides declare victory but neither side makes an issue of it. Relations are restored.

The Incident

Traditional date of schism: 16 July 1054.

- Patriarch Michael Cerularius (1043-1058)
- Constantinople makes gains against Moslems ... Armenia brought back into Empire.
- Non-Chalcedonian Churches under pressure by Emperor and Patriarch.
- Peter I, Catholicos of the Armenian Church stands firm.
- Antioch cleared of non-Chalcedonian Monophysites.
- Moves against Latins in the East.
- Italy threatened by Normans.
- Patriarch writes to Rome as "Universal Patriarch of the New Rome."
- Pope replies ... sends Cardinal Humbert ... 16 July 1054.
- Humbert excommunicates Patriarch ... Patriarch excommunicates Humbert.
- Real short term affect is minimal.

Situation After 1054

- The West was fast developing a monarchical style of leadership centered in the Pope and the Curia while the East professed episcopal collegiality ... conciliarity. Peter was prime ... but the fullness of the priesthood is in each and every bishop.
- Remember ... 6th Ecumenical Council (Constantinople III, 680-1 CE) had condemned the teachings of Pope Honorius (d 638).
 - *Monothelitism* ... single will (*thelesis*).

Situation After 1054

Greeks and Romans are not in schism through the 12th century ... do not consider each other heretics.

- No real theological differences are emphasized, although the *filioque* problem does exist.
- However, Byzantines begin to write against papal primacy during the 12th century.
 - Eastern view – No one bishop or patriarchate – including the primary see in Christendom – possessed universal jurisdiction as an exclusive prerogative.
 - No confusion of “primacy” with universal authority or infallibility.
- Cordial public debates:
 - Anselm of Havelberg vs. Nicetas of Nicomedia 1136.
 - Primacy, type of bread in liturgy, *filioque*.

The “New Rome”

To Rome, there is only one Rome, the seat of Peter.

- “You are Peter, and on this rock (*petra*) I will build my church ... whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven ...” (Matt 16:18-19)
- Early schisms/heresies in the East were “settled” by Rome.
- Primacy is one of power, jurisdiction and authority.

The East rejects the idea of personal, universal primacy.

- Why would anyone think that Peter’s leadership would be passed down to his successors ... and only his successors in Rome?
- The Church, by the power of Christ, “binds and loosens.”
- Only councils, made up of bishops, have authority over individual bishops.
- Primacy has to do with prestige (honor) not authority.
- No Roman bishop ever even attended the first general councils of the Church