

The Great Schism

The Estrangement of Eastern and Western Christendom

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from his book, *The Orthodox Church*

One summer afternoon in the year 1054, as a service was about to begin in the Church of the Holy Wisdom (Hagia Sophia) at Constantinople, Cardinal Humbert and two other legates of the Pope entered the building and made their way up to the sanctuary. They had not come to pray. They placed a Bull of Excommunication upon the altar and marched out once more. As he passed through the western door, the Cardinal shook the dust from his feet with the words: 'Let God look and judge.' A deacon ran out after him in great distress and begged him to take back the Bull. Humbert refused; and it was dropped in the street.

It is this incident which has conventionally been taken to mark the beginning of the great schism between the Orthodox east and the Latin west. But the schism, as historians now generally recognize, is not really an event whose beginning can be exactly dated. It was something that came about gradually, as the result of a long and complicated process, starting well before the eleventh century and not completed until some time after.

In this long and complicated process, many different influences were at work. The schism was conditioned by cultural, political, and economic factors; yet its fundamental cause was not secular but theological. In the last resort it was over matters of doctrine that east and west quarreled - two matters in particular: the Papal claims and the Filioque. But before we look more closely at these two major differences, and before we consider the actual course of the schism, something must be said about the wider background. Long before there was an open and formal schism between east and west, the two sides had become strangers to one another; and in attempting to understand how and why the communion of Christendom was broken, we must start with this fact of increasing estrangement.

When Paul and the other Apostles travelled around the Mediterranean world, they moved within a closely knit political and cultural unity: the Roman Empire. This Empire embraced many different national groups, often with languages and dialects of their own. But all these groups were governed by the same Emperor; there was a broad Greco-Roman civilization in which educated people throughout the Empire shared; either Greek or Latin was understood almost everywhere in the Empire, and many could speak both languages. These facts greatly assisted the early Church in its missionary work.

But in the centuries that followed, the unity of the Mediterranean world gradually disappeared. The political unity was the first to go. From the end of the third century the Empire, while still theoretically one, was usually divided into two parts, an eastern and a western, each under its own Emperor. Constantine furthered this process of separation by founding a second imperial capital in the east, alongside Old Rome in Italy. Then came the barbarian invasions at the start of the fifth century: apart from Italy, much of which remained within the Empire for some time longer, the west was carved up among barbarian chiefs. The Byzantines never forgot the ideals of Rome under Augustus and Trajan, and still regarded their Empire as in theory universal; but Justinian was the last Emperor who seriously attempted to bridge the gulf between theory and fact, and his conquests in the west were soon abandoned. The political unity of the Greek east and the Latin west was destroyed by the barbarian invasions, and never permanently restored.

During the late sixth and the seventh centuries, east and west were further isolated from each other by the Avar and Slav invasions of the Balkan peninsula; Illyricum, which used to serve as a bridge, became in this way a barrier between Byzantium and the Latin world. The severance was carried a stage further by

the rise of Islam: the Mediterranean, which the Romans once called *mare nostrum*, 'our sea', now passed largely into Arab control. Cultural and economic contacts between the eastern and western Mediterranean never entirely ceased, but they became far more difficult.

The Iconoclast controversy contributed still further to the division between Byzantium and the west. The Popes were firm supporters of the Iconodule standpoint, and so for many decades they found themselves out of communion with the Iconoclast Emperor and Patriarch at Constantinople. Cut off from Byzantium and in need of help, in 754 Pope Stephen turned northwards and visited the Frankish ruler, Pepin. This marked the first step in a decisive change of orientation so far as the Papacy was concerned. Hitherto Rome had continued in many ways to be part of the Byzantine world, but now it passed increasingly under Frankish influence, although the effects of this reorientation did not become fully apparent until the middle of the eleventh century.

Pope Stephen's visit to Pepin was followed half a century later by a much more dramatic event. On Christmas Day in the year 800 Pope Leo III crowned Charles the Great, King of the Franks, as Emperor. Charlemagne sought recognition from the ruler at Byzantium, but without success; for the Byzantines, still adhering to the principle of imperial unity, regarded Charlemagne as an intruder and the Papal coronation as an act of schism within the Empire. The creation of a Holy Roman Empire in the west, instead of drawing Europe closer together, only served to alienate east and west more than before.

The cultural unity lingered on, but in a greatly attenuated form. Both in east and west, people of learning still lived within the classical tradition which the Church had taken over and made its own; but as time went on they began to interpret this tradition in increasingly divergent ways. Matters were made more difficult by problems of language. The days when educated people were bilingual were over. By the year 450 there were very few in western Europe who could read Greek, and after 600, although Byzantium still called itself the Roman Empire, it was rare for a Byzantine to speak Latin, the language of the Romans. Photius, the greatest scholar in ninth-century Constantinople, could not read Latin; and in 864 a 'Roman' Emperor at Byzantium, Michael III, even called the language in which Virgil once wrote 'a barbarian and Scythic tongue'. If Greeks wished to read Latin works or vice versa, they could do so only in translation, and usually they did not trouble to do even that: Psellus, an eminent Greek savant of the eleventh century, had so sketchy a knowledge of Latin literature that he confused Caesar with Cicero. Because they no longer drew upon the same sources nor read the same books, Greek east and Latin west drifted more and more apart.

It was an ominous but significant precedent that the cultural renaissance in Charlemagne's Court should have been marked at its outset by a strong anti-Greek prejudice. In fourth-century Europe there had been one Christian civilization, in thirteenth century Europe there were two. Perhaps it is in the reign of Charlemagne that the schism of civilizations first becomes clearly apparent. The Byzantines for their part remained enclosed in their own world of ideas, and did little to meet the west half way. Alike in the ninth and in later centuries they usually failed to take western learning as seriously as it deserved. They dismissed all Franks as barbarians and nothing more.

These political and cultural factors could not but affect the life of the Church, and make it harder to maintain religious unity. Cultural and political estrangement can lead only too easily to ecclesiastical disputes, as may be seen from the case of Charlemagne. Refused recognition in the political sphere by the Byzantine Emperor, he was quick to retaliate with a charge of heresy against the Byzantine Church: he denounced the Greeks for not using the Filioque in the Creed (of this we shall say more in a moment) and he declined to accept the decisions of the seventh Ecumenical Council. It is true that Charlemagne only knew of these decisions through a faulty translation which seriously distorted their true meaning; but

he seems in any case to have been semi-Iconoclast in his views.

The different political situations in east and west made the Church assume different outward forms, so that people came gradually to think of Church order in conflicting ways. From the start there had been a certain difference of emphasis here between east and west. In the east there were many Churches whose foundation went back to the Apostles; there was a strong sense of the equality of all bishops, of the collegial and conciliar nature of the Church. The east acknowledged the Pope as the first bishop in the Church, but saw him as the first among equals. In the west, on the other hand, there was only one great see claiming Apostolic foundation - Rome - so that Rome came to be regarded as the Apostolic see. The west, while it accepted the decisions of the Ecumenical Councils, did not play a very active part in the Councils themselves; the Church was seen less as a college and more as a monarchy- the monarchy of the Pope.

This initial divergence in outlook was made more acute by political developments. As was only natural, the barbarian invasions and the consequent breakdown of the Empire in the west served greatly to strengthen the autocratic structure of the western Church. In the east there was a strong secular head, the Emperor, to uphold the civilized order and to enforce law. In the west, after the advent of the barbarians, there was only a plurality of warring chiefs, all more or less usurpers. For the most part it was the Papacy alone which could act as a centre of unity, as an element of continuity and stability in the spiritual and political life of western Europe. By force of circumstances, the Pope assumed a part which the Greek Patriarchs were not called to play, issuing commands not only to his ecclesiastical subordinates but to secular rulers as well. The western Church gradually became centralized to a degree unknown anywhere in the four Patriarchates of the east (except possibly in Egypt). Monarchy in the west; in the east collegiality.

Nor was this the only effect which the barbarian invasions had upon the life of the Church. In Byzantium there were many educated laymen who took an active interest in theology. The 'lay theologian' has always been an accepted figure in Orthodoxy: some of the most learned Byzantine Patriarch Photius, for example - were laymen before their appointment to the Patriarchate. But in the west the only effective education which survived through the Dark Ages was provided by the Church for its clergy. Theology became the preserve of the priests, since most of the laity could not even read, much less comprehend the technicalities of theological discussion. Orthodoxy, while assigning to the episcopate a special teaching office, has never known this sharp division between clergy and laity which arose in the western Middle Ages.

Relations between eastern and western Christendom were also made more difficult by the lack of a common language. Because the two sides could no longer communicate easily with one another, and each could no longer read what the other wrote, misunderstandings arose much more easily. The shared 'universe of discourse' was progressively lost.

East and west were becoming strangers to one another, and this was something from which both were likely to suffer. In the early Church there had been unity in the faith, but a diversity of theological schools. From the start Greeks and Latins had each approached the Christian Mystery in their own way. At the risk of some oversimplification, it can be said that the Latin approach was more practical, the Greek more speculative; Latin thought was influenced by juridical ideas, by the concepts of Roman law, while the Greeks understood theology in the context of worship and in the light of the Holy Liturgy. When thinking about the Trinity, Latins started with the unity of the Godhead, Greeks with the threeness of the persons; when reflecting on the Crucifixion, Latins thought primarily of Christ the Victim, Greeks of Christ the Victor; Latins talked more of redemption, Greeks of deification; and so on. Like the schools of Antioch and

Alexandria within the east, these two distinctive approaches were not in themselves contradictory; each served to supplement the other, and each had its place in the fullness of Catholic tradition. But now that the two sides were becoming strangers to one another - with no political and little cultural unity, with no common language - there was a danger that each side would follow its own approach in isolation and push it to extremes, forgetting the value in the other point of view.

We have spoken of the different doctrinal approaches in east and west; but there were two points of doctrine where the two sides no longer supplemented one another, but entered into direct conflict - the Papal claims and the Filioque. The factors which we have mentioned in previous paragraphs were sufficient in themselves to place a serious strain upon the unity of Christendom. Yet for all that, unity might still have been maintained, had there not been these two further points of difficulty. To them we must now turn. It was not until the middle of the ninth century that the full extent of the disagreement first came properly into the open, but the two differences themselves date back considerably earlier.

We have already had occasion to mention the Papacy when speaking of the different political situations in east and west; and we have seen how the centralized and monarchical structure of the western Church was reinforced by the barbarian invasions. Now so long as the Pope claimed an absolute power only in the west, Byzantium raised no objections. The Byzantines did not mind if the western Church was centralized, so long as the Papacy did not interfere in the east. The Pope, however, believed his immediate power of jurisdiction to extend to the east as well as to the west; and as soon as he tried to enforce this claim within the eastern Patriarchates, trouble was bound to arise. The Greeks assigned to the Pope a primacy of honour, but not the universal supremacy which he regarded as his due. The Pope viewed infallibility as his own prerogative; the Greeks held that in matters of the faith the final decision rested not with the Pope alone, but with a Council representing all the bishops of the Church. Here we have two different conceptions of the visible organization of the Church.

The Orthodox attitude to the Papacy is admirably expressed by a twelfth-century writer, Nicetas, Archbishop of Nicomedia:

My dearest brother, we do not deny to the Roman Church the primacy amongst the five sister Patriarchates; and we recognize her right to the most honourable seat at an Ecumenical Council. But she has separated herself from us by her own deeds, when through pride she assumed a monarchy which does not belong to her office . . . How shall we accept decrees from her that have been issued without consulting us and even without our knowledge? If the Roman Pontiff, seated on the lofty throne of his glory wishes to thunder at us and, so to speak, hurl his mandates at us from on high, and if he wishes to judge us and even to rule us and our Churches, not by taking counsel with us but at his own arbitrary pleasure, what kind of brotherhood, or even what kind of parenthood can this be? We should be the slaves, not the sons, of such a Church, and the Roman See would not be the pious mother of sons but a hard and imperious mistress of slaves.'

That was how an Orthodox felt in the twelfth century, when the whole question had come out into the open. In earlier centuries the Greek attitude to the Papacy was basically the same, although not yet sharpened by controversy. Up to 850, Rome and the east avoided an open conflict over the Papal claims, but the divergence of views was not the less serious for being partially concealed.

The second great difficulty was the Filioque. The dispute involved the words about the Holy Spirit in the Nicene Constantinopolitan Creed. Originally the Creed ran: 'I believe . . . in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and together glorified.' This, the original form, is recited unchanged by the east to this day. But the west

inserted an extra phrase 'and from the Son' (in Latin, Filioque), so that the Creed now reads 'who proceeds from the Father and the Son'. It is not certain when and where this addition was first made, but it seems to have originated in Spain, as a safeguard against Arianism. At any rate the Spanish Church interpolated the Filioque at the third Council of Toledo (589), if not before. From Spain the addition spread to France and thence to Germany, where it was welcomed by Charlemagne and adopted at the semi-Iconoclast Council of Frankfort (794). It was writers at Charlemagne's court who first made the Filioque into an issue of controversy, accusing the Greeks of heresy because they recited the Creed in its original form. But Rome, with typical conservatism, continued to use the Creed without the Filioque until the start of the eleventh century. In 808 Pope Leo 111 wrote in a letter to Charlemagne that, although he himself believed the Filioque to be doctrinally sound, yet he considered it a mistake to tamper with the wording of the Creed. Leo deliberately had the Creed, without the Filioque, inscribed on silver plaques and set up in St Peter's. For the time being Rome acted as a mediator between the Franks and Byzantium.

It was not until 860 that the Greeks paid much attention to the Filioque, but once they did so, their reaction was sharply critical. The Orthodox objected (and still object) to this addition to the Creed, for two reasons. First, the Creed is the common possession of the whole Church, and if any change is to be made in it, this can only be done by an Ecumenical Council. The west, in altering the Creed without consulting the east, is guilty (as Khomiakov put it) of moral fratricide, of a sin against the unity of the Church. In the second place, most Orthodox believe the Filioque to be theologically untrue. They hold that the Spirit proceeds from the Father alone, and consider it a heresy to say that He proceeds from the Son as well. There are, however, some Orthodox who consider that the Filioque is not in itself heretical, and is indeed admissible as a theological opinion - not a dogma - provided that it is properly explained. But even those who take this more moderate view still regard it as an unauthorized addition.

Besides these two major issues, the Papacy and the Filioque, there were certain lesser matters of Church worship and discipline which caused trouble between east and west: the Greeks allowed married clergy, the Latins insisted on priestly celibacy; the two sides had different rules of fasting; the Greeks used leavened bread in the Eucharist, the Latins unleavened bread. Around 850 east and west were still in full communion with one another and still formed one Church. Cultural and political divisions had combined to bring about an increasing estrangement, but there was no open schism. The two sides had different conceptions of Papal authority and recited the Creed in different forms, but these questions had not yet been brought fully into the open.

But in 1190 Theodore Balsamon, Patriarch of Antioch and a great authority on Canon Law, looked at matters very differently:

For many years [he does not say how many] the western Church has been divided in spiritual communion from the other four Patriarchates and has become alien to the Orthodox ... So no Latin should be given communion unless he first declares that he will abstain from the doctrines and customs that separate him from us, and that he will be subject to the Canons of the Church, in union with the Orthodox.'

In Balsamon's eyes, communion had been broken; there was a definite schism between east and west. The two no longer formed one visible Church. In this transition from estrangement to schism, four incidents are of particular importance: the quarrel between Photius and Pope Nicolas I (usually known as the 'Photian schism': the east would prefer to call it the 'schism of Nicolas'); the incident of the Diptychs in 1009; the attempt at reconciliation in 1053-4 and its disastrous sequel; and the Crusades.

From Estrangement to Schism (858-1204)

In 858, fifteen years after the triumph of icons under Theodora, a new Patriarch of Constantinople was

appointed - Photius, known to the Orthodox Church as St Photius the Great. He has been termed 'the most distinguished thinker, the most outstanding politician, and the most skillful diplomat ever to hold office as Patriarch of Constantinople.' Soon after his accession he became involved in a dispute with Pope Nicolas I (858-67). The previous Patriarch, St Ignatius, had been exiled by the Emperor and while in exile had resigned under pressure. The supporters of Ignatius, declining to regard this resignation as valid, considered Photius a usurper. When Photius sent a letter to the Pope announcing his accession, Nicolas decided that before recognizing Photius he would look further into the quarrel between the new Patriarch and the Ignatian party. Accordingly in 861 he sent legates to Constantinople.

Photius had no desire to start a dispute with the Papacy. He treated the legates with great deference, inviting them to preside at a council in Constantinople, which was to settle the issue between Ignatius and himself. The legates agreed, and together with the rest of the council they decided that Photius was the legitimate Patriarch. But when his legates returned to Rome, Nicolas declared that they had exceeded their powers, and he disowned their decision. He then proceeded to retry the case himself at Rome: a council held under his presidency in 863 recognized Ignatius as Patriarch, and proclaimed Photius to be deposed from all priestly dignity. The Byzantines took no notice of this condemnation, and sent no answer to the Pope's letters. Thus an open breach existed between the Churches of Rome and Constantinople.

The dispute clearly involved the Papal claims. Nicolas was a great reforming Pope, with an exalted idea of the prerogatives of his see, and he had already done much to establish an absolute power over all bishops in the west. But he believed this absolute power to extend to the east also: as he put it in a letter of 865, the Pope is endowed with authority 'over all the earth, that is, over every Church'. This was precisely what the Byzantines were not prepared to grant. Confronted with the dispute between Photius and Ignatius, Nicolas thought that he saw a golden opportunity to enforce his claim to universal jurisdiction: he would make both parties submit to his arbitration. But he realized that Photius had submitted voluntarily to the inquiry by the Papal legates, and that his action could not be taken as a recognition of Papal supremacy. This (among other reasons) was why Nicolas had cancelled his legates' decisions. The Byzantines for their part were willing to allow appeals to Rome, but only under the specific conditions laid down on of the Council of Sardica (343). This Canon states that a bishop, if under sentence of condemnation, can appeal to Rome, and the Pope, if he sees cause, can order a retrial; this retrial, however, is not to be conducted by the Pope himself at Rome, but by the bishops of the provinces adjacent to that of the condemned bishop. Nicolas, so the Byzantines felt, in reversing the decisions of his legates and demanding a retrial at Rome itself, was going far beyond the terms of this Canon. They regarded his behaviour as an unwarrantable and uncanonical interference in the affairs of another Patriarchate.

Soon not only the Papal claims but the Filioque became involved in the dispute. Byzantium and the west (chiefly the Germans) were both launching great missionary ventures among the Slavs.' The two lines of missionary advance, from the east and from the west, soon converged; and when Greek and German missionaries found themselves at work in the same land, it was difficult to avoid a conflict, since the two missions were run on widely different principles. The clash naturally brought to the fore the question of the Filioque, used by the Germans in the Creed, but not used by the Greeks. The chief point of trouble was Bulgaria, a country which Rome and Constantinople alike were anxious to add to their sphere of jurisdiction. The Khan Boris was at first inclined to ask the German missionaries for baptism: threatened, however, with a Byzantine invasion, he changed his policy and around 865 accepted baptism from Greek clergy. But Boris wanted the Church in Bulgaria to be independent, and when Constantinople refused to grant autonomy, he turned to the west in hope of better terms. Given a free hand in Bulgaria, the Latin missionaries promptly launched a violent attack on the Greeks, singling out the points where Byzantine

practice differed from their own: married clergy, rules of fasting, and above all the Filioque. At Rome itself the Filioque was still not in use, but Nicolas gave full support to the Germans when they insisted upon its insertion in Bulgaria. The Papacy, which in 808 had mediated between the Franks and the Greeks, was now neutral no longer.

Photius was naturally alarmed by the extension of German influence in the Balkans, on the very borders of the Byzantine Empire; but he was much more alarmed by the question of the Filioque, now brought forcibly to his attention. In 867 he took action. He wrote an Encyclical Letter to the other Patriarchs of the east, denouncing the Filioque at length and charging those who used it with heresy. Photius has often been blamed for writing this letter: even the great Roman Catholic historian Francis Dvornik who is in general highly sympathetic to Photius, calls his action on this occasion a futile attack, and says 'the lapse was inconsiderate, hasty, and big with fatal consequences'. But if Photius really considered the Filioque heretical, what else could he do except speak his mind? It must also be remembered that it was not Photius who first made the Filioque a matter of controversy, but Charlemagne and his scholars seventy years before: the west was the original aggressor, not the east. Photius followed up his letter by summoning a council to Constantinople, which declared Pope Nicolas excommunicate, terming him 'a heretic who ravages the vineyard of the Lord'.

At this critical point in the dispute, the whole situation suddenly changed. In this same year (867) Photius was deposed from the Patriarchate by the Emperor. Ignatius became Patriarch once more, and communion with Rome was restored. In 869-70 another council was held at Constantinople, known as the 'Anti-Photian Council', which condemned and anathematized Photius, reversing the decisions of 867. This council, later reckoned in the west as the eighth Ecumenical Council, opened with the unimpressive total of 12 bishops, although numbers at subsequent sessions rose to 103.

But there were further changes to come. The 869-70 council requested the Emperor to resolve the status of the Bulgarian Church, and not surprisingly he decided that it should be assigned to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Realizing that Rome would allow him less independence than Byzantium, Boris accepted this decision. From 870, then, the German missionaries were expelled and the Filioque was heard no more in the confines of Bulgaria. Nor was this all. At Constantinople, Ignatius and Photius were reconciled to one another, and when Ignatius died in 877, Photius once more succeeded him as Patriarch. In 879 yet another council was held in Constantinople, attended by 383 bishops - a notable contrast with the meagre total at the anti-Photian gathering ten years previously. The council of 869 was anathematized and all condemnations of Photius were withdrawn; these decisions were accepted without protest at Rome. So Photius ended victorious, recognized by Rome and ecclesiastically master of Bulgaria. Until recently it was thought - that there was a second 'Photian schism', but Dr Dvornik has proved with devastating conclusiveness that this second schism is a myth: in Photius' later period of office (877-86) communion between Constantinople and the Papacy remained unbroken. The Pope at this time, John VIII (872-82), was no friend to the Franks and did not press the question of the Filioque, nor did he attempt to enforce the Papal claims in the east. Perhaps he recognized how seriously the policy of Nicolas had endangered the unity of Christendom.

Thus the schism was outwardly healed, but no real solution had been reached concerning the two great points of difference which the dispute between Nicolas and Photius had forced into the open. Matters had been patched up, and that was all.

Photius, always honoured in the east as a saint, a leader of the Church, and a theologian, has in the past been regarded by the west with less enthusiasm, as the author of a schism and little else. His good qualities are now more widely appreciated. 'If I am right in my conclusions,' so Dr Dvornik ends his

monumental study, 'we shall be free once more to recognize in Photius a great Churchman, a learned humanist, and a genuine Christian, generous enough to forgive his enemies, and to take the first step towards reconciliation.

At the beginning of the eleventh century there was fresh trouble over the Filioque. The Papacy at last adopted the addition: at the coronation of Emperor Henry 11 at Rome in 1014, the Creed was sung in its interpolated form. Five years earlier, in 1009, the newly-elected Pope Sergius IV sent a letter to Constantinople which may have contained the Filioque, although this is not certain. Whatever the reason, the Patriarch of Constantinople, also called Sergius, did not include the new Pope's name in the Diptychs: these are lists, kept by each Patriarch, which contain the names of the other Patriarchs, living and departed, whom he recognizes as orthodox. The Diptychs are a visible sign of the unity of the Church, and deliberately to omit a person's name from them is tantamount to a declaration that one is not in communion with him. After 1009 the Pope's name did not appear again in the Diptychs of Constantinople; technically, therefore, the Churches of Rome and Constantinople were out of communion from that date. But it would be unwise to press this technicality too far. Diptychs were frequently incomplete, and so do not form an infallible guide to Church relations. The Constantinopolitan lists before 1009 often lacked the Pope's name, simply because new Popes at their accession failed to notify the east. The omission in 1009 aroused no comment at Rome, and even at Constantinople people quickly forgot why and when the Pope's name had first been dropped from the Diptychs.

As the eleventh century proceeded, new factors brought relations between the Papacy and the eastern Patriarchates to a further crisis. The previous century had been a period of grave instability and confusion for the see of Rome, a century which Cardinal Baronius justly termed an age of iron and lead in the history of the Papacy. But under German influence Rome now reformed itself, and through the rule of men such as Hildebrand (Pope Gregory VII) it gained a position of power in the west such as it had never before achieved. The reformed Papacy naturally revived the claims to universal jurisdiction which Nicolas had made. The Byzantines on their side had grown accustomed to dealing with a Papacy that was for the most part weak and disorganized, and so they found it difficult to adapt themselves to the new situation. Matters were made worse by political factors, such as the military aggression of the Normans in Byzantine Italy, and the commercial encroachments of the Italian maritime cities in the eastern Mediterranean during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

In 1054 there was a severe quarrel. The Normans had been forcing the Greeks in Byzantine Italy to conform to Latin usages; the Patriarch of Constantinople, Michael Cerularius, in return demanded that the Latin churches at Constantinople should adopt Greek practices, and in 1052, when they refused, he closed them. This was perhaps harsh, but as Patriarch he was fully entitled to act in this manner. Among the practices to which Michael and his supporters particularly objected was the Latin use of 'azymes' or unleavened bread in the Eucharist, an issue which had not figured in the dispute of the ninth century. In 1053, however, Cerularius took up a more conciliatory attitude and wrote to Pope Leo IX, offering to restore the Pope's name to the Diptychs. In response to this offer, and to settle the disputed questions of Greek and Latin usages, Leo in 1054 sent three legates to Constantinople, the chief of them being Humbert, Bishop of Silva Candida. The choice of Cardinal Humbert was unfortunate, for both he and Cerularius were men of stiff and intransigent temper, whose mutual encounter was not likely to promote good will among Christians. The legates, when they called on Cerularius, did not create a favourable impression. Thrusting a letter from the Pope at him, they retired without giving the usual salutations; the letter itself, although signed by Leo, had in fact been drafted by Humbert, and was distinctly unfriendly in tone. After this the Patriarch refused to have further dealings with the legates. Eventually Humbert lost patience, and laid a Bull of Excommunication against Cerularius on the altar of the Church of the Holy Wisdom: among other ill-founded charges in this document, Humbert accused the Greeks of omitting the

Filioque from the Creed! Humbert promptly left Constantinople without offering any further explanation of his act, and on returning to Italy he represented the whole incident as a great victory for the see of Rome. Cerularius and his synod retaliated by anathematizing Humbert (but not the Roman Church as such). The attempt at reconciliation left matters worse than before.

But even after 1054 friendly relations between east and west continued. The two parts of Christendom were not yet conscious of a great gulf of separation between them, and people on both sides still hoped that the misunderstandings could be cleared up without too much difficulty. The dispute remained something of which ordinary Christians in east and west were largely unaware. It was the Crusades which made the schism definitive: they introduced a new spirit of hatred and bitterness, and they brought the whole issue down to the popular level.

From the military point of view, however, the Crusades began with great éclat. Antioch was captured from the Turks in 1098, Jerusalem in 1099: the first Crusade was a brilliant, if bloody, success. At both Antioch and Jerusalem the Crusaders proceeded to set up Latin Patriarchs. At Jerusalem this was reasonable, since the see was vacant at the time; and although in the years that followed there existed a succession of Greek Patriarchs of Jerusalem, living exiled in Cyprus, yet within Palestine itself the whole population, Greek as well as Latin, at first accepted the Latin Patriarch as their head. A Russian pilgrim at Jerusalem in 1106-7, Abbot Daniel of Tchernigov, found Greeks and Latins worshipping together in harmony at the Holy Places, though he noted with satisfaction that at the ceremony of the Holy Fire the Greek lamps were lit miraculously while the Latin had to be lit from the Greek. But at Antioch the Crusaders found a Greek Patriarch actually in residence: shortly afterwards, it is true, he withdrew to Constantinople, but the local Greek population was unwilling to recognize the Latin Patriarch whom the Crusaders set up in his place. Thus from 1100 there existed in effect a local schism at Antioch. After 1187, when Saladin captured Jerusalem, the situation in the Holy land deteriorated: two rivals, resident within Palestine itself, now divided the Christian population between them - a Latin Patriarch at Acre, a Greek at Jerusalem. These local schisms at Antioch and Jerusalem were a sinister development. Rome was very far away, and if Rome and Constantinople quarrelled, what practical difference did it make to the average Christian in Syria or Palestine? But when two rival bishops claimed the same throne and two hostile congregations existed in the same city, the division became an immediate reality in which simple believers were directly implicated. It was the Crusades that turned the dispute into something that involved whole Christian congregations, and not just church leaders; the Crusaders brought the schism down to the local level.

But worse was to follow in 1204, with the taking of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade. The Crusaders were originally bound for Egypt, but were persuaded by Alexius, son of Isaac Angelus, the dispossessed Emperor of Byzantium, to turn aside to Constantinople in order to restore him and his father to the throne. This western intervention in Byzantine politics did not go happily, and eventually the Crusaders, disgusted by what they regarded as Greek duplicity, lost patience and sacked the city. Eastern Christendom has never forgotten those three appalling days of pillage. 'Even the Saracens are merciful and kind,' protested Nicetas Choniates, 'compared with these men who bear the Cross of Christ on their shoulders.' In the words of Sir Steven Runciman, 'The Crusaders brought not peace but a sword; and the sword was to sever Christendom. The long-standing doctrinal disagreements were now reinforced on the Greek side by an intense national hatred, by a feeling of resentment and indignation against western aggression and sacrilege. After 1204 there can be no doubt that Christian east and Christian west were divided into two.

Orthodoxy and Rome each believes itself to have been right and its opponent wrong upon the points of doctrine that arose between them; and so Rome and Orthodoxy since the schism have each claimed to be the true Church. Yet each, while believing in the rightness of its own cause, must look back at the past

with sorrow and repentance. Both sides must in honesty acknowledge that they could and should have done more to prevent the schism. Both sides were guilty of mistakes on the human level. Orthodox, for example, must blame themselves for the pride and contempt with which during the Byzantine period they regarded the west; they must blame themselves for incidents such as the riot of 1182, when many Latin residents at Constantinople were massacred by the Byzantine populace. (None the less there is no action on the Byzantine side which can be compared to the sack of 1204.) And each side, while claiming to be the one true Church, must admit that on the human level it has been grievously impoverished by the separation. The Greek east and the Latin west needed and still need one another. For both parties the great schism has proved a great tragedy.

-Bishop Kallistos Ware

from his book, *The Orthodox Church*

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