PART I

BYZANTINUM AND
BYZANTINE
CHRISTIANITY

A. BYZANTINE CHRISTIANITY

1. The political situation in the Eastern Roman Empire
   a) The eastern Roman empire came to be called the Byzantine Empire.
   b) Its capital was Constantinople and its language was Greek.

BYZANTINE CHRISTIANITY

2. The political situation in the Western Roman Empire
   a) The barbarian invasions resulted in the disappearance of Roman rule and only small barbarian kingdoms were left.

BYZANTINE CHRISTIANITY

c) In the Byzantine empire a government evolved in which the emperor ruled not only the country but Church as well. (caesaro-papism).
   d) It wasn’t long before the emperors tried to extend their influence over the universal Church too.
3. Emperor Justinian I - (482 - 565) the greatest of the Byzantine emperors.
   a) desire was to restore the entire Roman Empire to its former glory.
      i. recaptured all of Roman Africa from the Vandals and most of Italy plus part of Spain, but it all was lost after his death.
   b) He undertook the collection and systemization of all Roman law, and Christianized parts of it.
      i. It is known as the Codex Justinianus and became the basis for Canon Law (Church law) as well as modern civil law.
   c) Church of Hagia Sophia
   d) "Holy Wisdom"
   e) built under Justinian’s sponsorship is considered one of the most perfect buildings in the world.

Byzantine Christianity

Justinian’s relationship with the papacy was marred by his wife, the empress Theodora, who meddled in papal politics and succeeded in having Pope St. Silverius deposed and sent into exile where he died.

THE ICONOCLAST CONTROVERSY (725 - 843)

PART II
A. ICONOCLAST CONTROVERSY

1. Icons
   a) Flat two-dimensional pictures of Christ, His Mother or one of the saints used as an aid to prayer.

2. Iconoclast controversy (icon - image, clast - breaker)
   a) Byzantine emperor Leo III became convinced that many people believed that icons held special powers and that a kind of idolatry was developing.
   b) Leo ordered all icons to be destroyed.

3. Leo’s actions were immediately condemned by the Pope and various bishops around the world.
   i. Leo, however, remained adamant and, in this matter, the Eastern Church was no longer in communion with Rome.

4. Throughout the entire controversy the monks of the Eastern Church opposed the emperors even though they were severely persecuted because of their pro icon stance.

5. Iconoclasm was finally condemned at the Second Council of Nicaea (787)

ICONOCLAST CONTROVERSY

3. St. John of Damascus
   a) Defender of icons & their veneration
   b) Argued that Jesus in coming into the world as human gives implicit permission to depict Him in His humanity.

PART III

THE RISE OF THE CAROLINGIANS AND AN INDEPENDENT PAPACY
A. CAROLINGIANS AND AN INDEPENDENT PAPACY

1. The Origin of the Carolingian Line
   a) As the Merovingian dynasty began to decline, certain Frankish nobles took control of the government and became known as “Mayors of the Palace”.

   Pepin the Short (a Mayor of the Palace and son of Charles Martel) under the guidance of St. Boniface wrote to Pope St. Zachary requesting that since he had all the responsibilities and power of a king he should be made king of the Franks in place of the present ineffectual Merovingian king.

   The pope gave his permission and St. Boniface anointed Pepin king in 751.

2. The Papal States - the Donation of Pepin
   a) Once again the Lombards were threatening Rome.
   b) The Pope, Stephen II, knew he could not count on the Byzantine Empire for aid so he turned to Pepin who agreed to help.

   Pepin marched to Italy, defeated the Lombards and gave to the papacy all the lands he had conquered making the Pope a temporal ruler as well as a spiritual one.

   i. Advantages - independence from the Byzantine emperors and the territory would be a physical barrier against the Lombards.
   ii. Disadvantages - political abuses arose within the Church which would do great harm.

3. Charlemagne (reigned 768-814)
   a) Grandson of Charles Martel and son of Pepin the Short
   b) greatest of the Frankish kings
   c) By the time of his death Charles had unified most of Western Europe.
His public policy was explicitly Christian.

i. used Canon Law as a model for his own civic legislation, chose bishops to serve in his civic posts and as diplomats.

ii. tried to reform the clergy, established new dioceses, made Latin the official language of worship and appointed bishops.

iii. renewed his father’s gift of the Papal States to the papacy and defended Pope Leo against charges of corruption.

iv. In turn Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne emperor during Christmas Mass at St. Peter’s in 800

This action placed the Carolingian Empire in a direct line of descent from the old Roman Empire.

And this same action infuriated the Byzantine emperors who still regarded themselves as the rightful rulers of Western Europe.

Charlemagne emphasized the importance of education and artistic excellence.

He commanded that every monastery and parish had to have a school.

He insisted that the clergy be better instructed in classical and biblical texts.

He invited Alcuin, a noted English scholar, to come to his court and teach there.

The Emergence of Differences

The causes of the split (schism) between the Eastern and Western halves of the Church:

a) Greek language (East), Romance Languages (West)

b) In the East the emperors had control of the patriarchate and thus of the Eastern Church; in the West the Pope was the head of the Church.

c) Doctrinal differences made for constant difficulties.

d) The crowning of Charlemagne as emperor by the pope.
The Emergence of Differences

2. The Filioque Controversy
   a) Third Council of Toledo in 589,
      i. added the words “and the Son” to the Nicene Creed in order to clarify that the Holy Spirit proceeded from both the Father and the Son.
   b) The Eastern Church absolutely refused this addition to the Creed and continues to refuse to acknowledge it to this day.

   

The Emergence of Differences

3. The Great Schism (1054)
   a) The spark that set the whole affair ablaze was an order by the Pope that Latin should be used in some formerly Greek speaking churches in Italy.
   b) In Constantinople the patriarch Michael Cerularius retaliated by closing some Latin parishes and consecrated hosts from Latin churches were trampled upon.
   c) The pope then sent Cardinal Humbert and another legate to Constantinople to discuss the situation.
   d) Humbert didn’t want to discuss anything; he told Michael Cerularius he was to do as he was told by the Pope.
   e) Cerularius refused Humbert & excommunicated him.
   f) The patriarch then excommunicated Humbert and the pope and the break was complete and hasn’t been mended to this day.

B. Conclusion

1. Conclusion
   a) Two distinct forms of Christianity came into being - the Orthodox Churches in the East and the Roman Catholic Church in the West.
   b) The major difference between the two Churches primarily involves the teaching authority and jurisdiction of the papacy established by Jesus Christ Himself through His apostle Peter.