

Nicaea II & Constantinople IV: The Last of the Ancient Eight
January 8th, 2024

- I. The last two councils of the East — Nicaea II (787) and Constantinople IV (869)
- II. Nicaea II — the different concerns of East and West
 - A. The buddy film: Charlemagne and Pope Adrian I
 - 1. The Germanic nations: Goths, Franks and Lombards
 - 2. Pope Adrian, 772 to 795 and Charles (Charlemagne), King of the Franks in 768, and eventually Holy Roman Emperor.
 - 3. Charlemagne Easter in Rome in 774 and the “Donation of Pepin.”
 - B. Meanwhile in the East, a controversy over the veneration of images.
 - 1. In 730, emperor, Leo III condemned the veneration of images.
 - a) The a heretical synod at Hieria in 754.
 - 2. In the East, icons are a big part of worship — different than in the West.
 - 3. Resistance to iconoclasm by the empress Irene.
 - C. She and Pope Adrian called the second council of Nicaea in 787.
 - 1. Pope Adrian’s treatise.
 - 2. Other canons on Tradition and the importance of the Psalms.
 - D. Charlemagne’s surprising resistance
 - 1. The reconciling Synod of Frankfort in 794.
 - 2. His coronation by Pope Leo III in 800.
- III. Constantinople IV (869)— a harbinger of things to come
 - A. Photius named Patriarch of Constantinople in 857.(Scheming uncle Bardas)
 - 1. The triple whammy; Pope St. Nicholas (858-867) refuses to recognize him.
 - 2. In 867, Photius excommunicated Pope Nicholas
 - B. The Fourth Council of Constantinople — a new Emperor in town.
 - 1. The emperor Basil I and Pope Adrian II (867-872) call Constantinople IV in 869.
 - 2. Eventually 102 Bishops attended and the other patriarchs came, condemning the “cunning and evil machinations of the wretched **Photius**.”
 - a) The conciliatory canon 21 on precedence of the five patriarchs.
 - 3. Recognized as ecumenical by the west, but not the east.
 - 4. Photius was named patriarch again in 877 and in 879, called a pseudo-synod,.
 - C. Epilogue — 1054, the great Schism
 - 1. 1054 — Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I.
- IV. Doctrines and ideas
 - A. Images in worship:
 - 1. “You shall not make for yourself an idol...” — Exodus 20:4
 - 2. Nicaea II: “pictorial representations of Christ, of the Mother of God, the angels, and the Saints, are lawful, for by this means the beholder is put in mind of their prototypes, and encouraged to imitate them...”
 - 3. Aquinas on images, *Summa Theologiae* IIIa, q. 25 (I.e., the Third Part, Question 25)

- a) The key connection to the humanity of Christ— in article 1: “Whether Christ's humanity and Divinity are to be adored with the same adoration?”
 - (1) *Latria* means worship — as opposed to *doulia* or veneration.
 - B. Reasons Photius excommunicated Nicholas:
 - 1. Westerners fast on Saturday; start Lent with Ash Wednesday; have clerical celibacy; don't allow priests to administer confirmation; and added the *Filioque* to the creed.
 - C. Change and difference are big issues.
 - 1. “In essential things unity, in non-essential things liberty, in all things charity.” An ancient quote of unknown origin, quoted by St. John XXIII at the time of Vatican II.
- V. Characters
 - A. Irene (752-803)
 - B. Photius (820 to 890?) Brilliant but ambitious.
 - C. Cyril and Methodius (Cyril: c. 827 – February 14, 869 | Methodius: c. 815 – April 6, 884). Co-patrons of Europe and saints of unity. Translating Bible and liturgy into Slavonic. The “Apostles to the Slavs.”
- VI. The Catholic Church was to become very much Western and Latin.
 - A. But the Church needs to breath with both lungs.

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