ICONOCLASM IN THE WEST

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The great theological controversy of the eighth and ninth centuries in the Greek East was the question of image worship.[1] The religious and political turmoil resulting from the iconoclast movement affected, however, not only Byzantine domestic policies but also her relations with the Latin West. In response to the Eastern conflict, the West was forced to define more strictly its own theory of the role of images in worship. Remaining aloof from the extreme iconoclast and iconodule positions, the West, under the leadership of Charles the Great, adopted by conciliar decision the theory previously expressed by Gregory I in which images were restricted to a purely educational and didactic function. Although later churchmen, specifically Claudius of Turin and Agobard of Lyons, advocated iconoclastic policies, their reasoning was based upon Western conceptions of religious imagery and was independent of Eastern iconoclasm. The West was never confronted with the problem of excessive veneration paid to religious images as in the East. The christological controversies of the first five centuries were also largely Eastern in origin, and thus the West, being less conscious of their theological subtleties, was less inclined to apply them to the question of iconoclasm. Eastern theology also emphasized salvation from death as opposed to the Western emphasis upon salvation from sin, and their respective use of religious imagery points up this difference. The Eastern eucharistic liturgy was seen as a reenactment of the passion and triumph of Christ in which the church images played a role only slightly less important than that of the sacraments.[2] The Western conception of sin, however, stressed the perfection of the life of the individual Christian, and so imagery did not possess the liturgical function it had in the East, or its sacred nature.[3] Unable to grasp or to sympathize with the theological complexities of Eastern iconoclasm and iconodulism, the Latins responded in a spirit of pragmatism built upon their own traditions of imagery. In addition, both the papacy and Charles the Great reacted with a large degree of political opportunism.

The earliest extant examples of Christian art in the West are found in the Roman catacombs. This artwork tends to be symbolic, alluding to sacramental and scriptural subjects. Little was depicted that could become an object of idolatrous veneration. Oppostion to religious imagery was largely due to this fear of idolatry. Christian writers in the period prior to the Edict of Milan, such as Tertullian, inveighed against the dangers inherent in pictorial representation, and

cited the Second Commandment in support of their position.[4] Others, such as Minucius Felix, writing in a more neo-platonic manner, described the impossibility of depicting the divine nature.[5] Respecting this need to keep Christianity free from associations with pagan image worship, early Christian funerary art restricted itself to symbolic and narrative themes which served to instruct the viewer in the tenets of the faith.[6]

With the expansion of Christianity first as a tolerated and then as the state religion in the fourth century, the use of religious imagery became more pronounced. Symbols of Christ and the Virgin were replaced by actual representations. In the aftermath of the persecutions, the cult of relics began to flourish. Christian writers during this period were divided upon the issue of iconography, some supporting it for its instructional and commemorative value and others opposing it on Mosaic and christological grounds.[7] Both currents of thought can be found among the Latin churchmen engaged in the dispute. The early fifth century bishop Paulinus of Nola decorated his church with illustrations from the Old Testament and of the saints in order to instruct the newly-converted and illiterate peasantry.[8] On the other hand, the Spaniard Vigilantius, upon visiting the Holy Land, denounced the practice of image worship and further decried the growing cult of relics and excessive asceticism.[9] Of the two greatest Western theologians, Jerome disapproved of the use of imagery whereas Augustine valued its instructional purposes while warning of the possible dangers of image worship.

This concept of veneration extended to an image itself was crucial. By the sixth and seventh centuries, Christianity had been firmly established in the East for generations. Oriental traditions of *proskynesis* before cult statues of the Emperor were naturally extended to the religious imagery. Lulled by its security and dominion, the Eastern Church took little official action to prevent popular devotion from worshipping the icons as intrinsically sacred images which served as intercessors to Christ and the saints. This indeed later became orthodox doctrine, but the theology only developed as an explanation of the practice. For many, the distinction between the image and its prototype was obliterated. The West, however, surrounded by pagan barbarians and actively involved in missionary efforts from the time of Gregory I (590-604), seems to have been more alive to the dangers of idolatry inherent in veneration paid to images. Whereas Eastern missionary efforts were limited to the hinterlands of the Empire, the West, even in its most established regions, such as the later Frankish kingdom, was exposed more often to pagan practices and beliefs. It was all too likely that recent converts would simply transfer their allegiance from a pagan idol to a Christian image. Therefore, the role of religious imagery as an educational tool, not as an object of devotion, was stressed. Bede recorded that St. Augustine and his monks first approached the pagan King Ethelbert of Kent bearing a silver cross and an image of Christ.[10]

Even this limited iconographic role had not always been the case in the West. The earliest synodal record on the question of religious imagery is found in

the canons of the Council of Elvira, held in Spain sometime during the early part of the fourth century. The thirty-sixth canon prohibits the use of pictures in churches, lest what is cherished and worshipped should be depicted on the walls.[11] Various reasons have been advanced to explain this canon. Most of these hinge upon the fact that the Spanish Church was surrounded by pagans; the canon may have tried to make a sharp distinction between Christian and pagan worship, and it may also reflect the fear that recent converts would simply worship new idols in place of the old.[12]

This strain of puritanism would remain within the Western Church but was soon overshadowed by the more pragmatic view that images could play a legitimate role in religious ceremonies, but only in an instructional and inspirational sense, without becoming cult objects. The classic definition concerning the use of religious imagery in the West is found in a letter from Pope Gregory I to Serenus of Marseilles. This text would become the standard explication of the Western position during the iconoclastic controversy, steering a middle course between the extremes of iconoclasm and iconodulism expressed in the East.

Bishop Serenus had removed images from the churches in his diocese in order to prevent their veneration. Gregory rebuked him, writing:

> Furthermore we notify to you that it has come to our ears that your Fraternity, seeing certain adorers of images, broke and threw down these same images in Churches. And we commend you indeed for your zeal against anything made with hands being an object of adoration; but we signify to you that you ought not to have broken these images. For pictorial representation is made use of in Churches for this reason; that such as are ignorant of letters may at least read by looking at the walls what they cannot read in books. Your Fraternity therefore should have both preserved the images and prohibited the people from adoration of them, to the end that both those who are ignorant of letters might have wherewith to gather a knowledge of the history, and that the people might by no means sin by adoration of a pictorial representation.[13]

In other letters, Gregory stressed the inspirational role of Christian iconography. Beyond serving as the poor man's Bible, religious imagery helped to recall the emotional content of the subject depicted and to cause the viewer to venerate the prototype of the image. Complying with the request of the hermit Secundinus, Gregory sent him various images, writing:

> I know indeed that you do not seek the image of our Savior, in order to worship it as God, but that by bringing to mind the Son of God you may keep warm in the love of Him whose image you desire to have before you. We do not bow down before it as a divinity, but we adore Him whose Birth or Passion or Enthronement is brought to remembrance by the picture.[14]

Both letters set out a very pragmatic and limited use for images, but they also indicate that Gregory was fully aware of the very real danger that the icons

might be worshipped or assume a supernatural cast. This fear was borne out in the works of Gregory of Tours. He described miraculous events associated with religious pictures, such as an image of Christ that bled having been pierced by a Jew.[15] But image worship in the West, strenuously combated by the Latin clergy, never reached the proportions that it did in the Greek East. The Western emphasis was rather upon relics, and these received a veneration similar to that accorded icons in the Byzantine Empire.

The Greek Church would have agreed substantially with the position of Gregory. They went on to elaborate his theory, whereas the West chose to accept Gregory as the definitive and conclusive standard of image use. The Greek clergy, while not approving of worship bestowed upon the images themselves, took little effective action to prevent the practice.[16] Content with Basil the Great's dictum that the veneration shown to the image is conveyed to its prototype, the Eastern Church actively promoted the use of Christian iconography. Canon 82 of the Quinisext Council (692) in Constantinople required that Christ be depicted in his human form and no longer as a lamb. This was done to stress the reality of the Incarnation against widespread Monophysite tendencies.[17] Religious imagery henceforth would be tied to christological doctrines, in a way that the West never shared.

But under the Emperors Leo III (717-741) and Constantine V (741-775), iconoclastic policies were adopted. Citing the Second Commandment and christological arguments by which an artist could be accused of both Nestorianism and Monophysitism,[18] the iconoclasts embarked upon a vigorous anti-imagery and anti-monastic campaign that the papacy watched with dismay.

Inevitably, Rome was forced to participate in the controversy. Her role, however, increasingly came to be determined by political factors. The question of image worship was not as vital in the West, and, throughout the entire debate which lasted until the mid-ninth century, Western arguments never attained the theological complexity that they possessed in the East. The relative unimportance of the christological heresies in the Latin Church[19] served to diminish the dangers in imagery which the Eastern iconoclasts deemed as heretical. The West, though, having defined its position, was fully prepared to defend its doctrines.

The eighth century had witnessed increasing tension between Rome and Constantinople. Leo III levied additional taxes in those areas of Italy under Byzantine control which were repudiated by Gregory II (715-731). The emperor also confiscated the papal patrimonies of Sicily and Calabria. Lombard activity, unchecked, threatened to wrest further lands away from Roman rule. In 727, when Gregory received the first of the iconoclastic decrees from Leo in which he was threatened with deposition unless he accepted them, the pope was determined to resist. In answer to Leo, Gregory defended the traditional use of images and hinted that the emperor ran the possibility of losing the West entirely if he persisted in this heresy:

> Incapable as you are of defending your Roman subjects... Are you ignorant that the popes are the bond of union, the mediators of peace, between the East and West? The eyes of the nations are fixed on our humility; and they revere, as a God upon earth, the apostle St. Peter, whose image you threaten to destroy. The remote and interior kingdoms of the West present their homage to Christ and his vicegerent... These pious barbarians are kindled into rage; they thirst to avenge the persecution of the East.[20]

General unrest against Byzantine rule combined with the new religious issue served to bring Italy into open revolt. Rumors spread that the emperor had attempted to assassinate the pope. Before Gregory was able to restore peace, the Exarch had been killed, the Lombards had invaded once again, and tax collection was permanently disrupted. By the mid-eighth century, it was obvious that the Byzantines could no longer exercise effective rule in Italy.

In 731, Gregory III called a council of Italian bishops at Rome. It decreed that all who destroyed or profaned the sacred images should be excommunicated. In retaliation for this action, Leo III sent a Greek fleet against the Italians. Then in 756, after Stephen II (752-757) had claimed administrative powers over Rome and Ravenna, Leo transferred ecclesiastical control of Illyria, Calabria and Sicily from Rome to the patriarchate of Constantinople. This issue, never resolved to papal satisfaction, served to strengthen Roman opposition to the iconoclastic emperors.

The popes increasingly looked to the Franks for protection against the Lombards and the Greeks. Zacharias (741-752) recognized Pepin's claim to rule, and Stephen and Paul I (757-767) requested aid against the Greeks whom they feared would attack Rome.[21] Stephen III convened the Lateran Council of 769 in which the role of imagery in the churches was reaffirmed. Anathematizing the Iconoclastic Council of 754, the Latin Church upheld the principle stated by Athanasius: "We do not venerate images as God in the way heathen do. We only use the delineation of the images to stimulate our affections."[22]

The restoration of image worship in the East during the reign of Irene offered a chance for reconciliation with the West. Pope Hadrian sent two legates as his representatives to the Second Council of Nicaea (787), called to resolve the iconoclastic disputes. Icons were restored and image worship upheld, with a careful distinction made between the veneration accorded images (*proskynesis timetike*) and the worship given to God alone (*latreia*).[23] Hadrian, although satisfied with the doctrinal pronouncements, was less pleased with the reception given his legates. His request that the three dioceses removed from papal control be returned was ignored. The letter he had sent to the council had been carefully edited when it was translated into Greek. Those sections in which he had asserted papal primacy and in which he had protested as heretical the title "Ecumenical Patriarch" adopted by the Constantinopolitan patriarchs were never read to the council.[24] As a result, Rome did not recognize the council as ecumenical until the late ninth century.[25] Hadrian even considered denouncing the emperor as a heretic unless the papal lands and patrimonies were returned.[26]

The Eastern churches alone proclaimed the Second Council of Nicaea as ecumenical. The largest church in the West, the Frankish Church in the kingdom of Charles the Great, had not even been invited to attend. Slighted, Charles had written for him the *Libri Carolini* which condemned both the councils of 754 and 787. The Council of Frankfurt (794) adopted the views set forth in the *Libri Carolini* and claimed ecumenicity for itself. Charles, in effect, had seized upon the iconoclastic controversy as a forum in which he could assert his claims of political equality and indeed theological supremacy to the Eastern Roman Empire.

To understand the context of the *Libri Carolini,* it is necessary to discuss both the spiritual climate of Frankish Christianity and the nature of Charles' claims to the political overlordship of Europe. Carolingian religious art in the churches was restricted to an educational and decorative function. Relics, on the other hand, were extremely important for popular devotion, and were believed to possess the same miraculous and intercessory powers that icons had in the East.[27] The Franks were a very superstitious people, and at times Christianity seems to have provided only a veneer for pagan beliefs. Men, known as the *tempestarii,* roamed through the kingdom, claiming power to control the weather. Legislation was passed in 789 against these people, as well as witches and enchanters. It was forbidden to use the altar book for divinations or to baptize bells. Due to the large number of martyrs and saints of dubious origin springing up, it was further forbidden to introduce into the liturgy any but officially recognized saints.[28] Seen in this light, it is easy to understand why the Carolingian churchmen would have looked with disfavor upon the Second Council of Nicaea and its decision to permit image worship.

The *Libri Carolini* are as much an attack upon the Eastern emperors as they are upon the Eastern iconoclasts and iconodules.[29] Throughout the books, the Carolingians denounce the heresy countenanced by the emperors who further are denied their proper title and are referred to simply as kings. It was very much in Charles' interests to show that imperial heresy was responsible for divisions within the Christian world. The primary factor binding the nascent Carolingian Empire together was the Christian faith, as defined by the Roman Church. The *Libri Carolini* refer repeatedly to the primacy of Rome, and stress that she had never strayed from orthodoxy. The concept of the ancient Roman Empire had been transformed into the *imperium christianum,* over which there could be properly only one ruler. The Byzantine emperors, by simple historical succession, claimed this role. Charles, as *de facto* ruler in the West, hoped that by proving the emperor to be heretical, his own claim to the title would be strengthened. It would also help to justify his actions in the course of his many military conflicts with the Byzantines in Italy. For this reason, the Carolingians viewed Hadrian's acclamation of the dogmatic pronouncements of the Council of 787 with disfavor. The *Libri Carolini* and the Council of Frankfurt are both, in effect, an attempt to protect the papacy from the pope. Because of Charles' insistence that his realm was defined by the

orthodox faith, the *Libri Carolini* were forced into questioning the orthodoxy of the pope himself.[30] Charles' insistence that he was guardian of the true faith as well as of the pope is here quite evident.

The *Libri Carolini* reject both the councils of 754 and 787. Working from a faulty Latin translation of the proceedings of the Second Council of Nicaea in which many statements were presented out of context or so garbled that their original sense was lost,[31] the Franks accused the Greeks of worshipping images in the same way they worshipped God.[32] The translation rendered both the Greek terms of worship, *proskynesis timetike* and *latreia,* as *adoratio,* thus destroying the distinction made between the image and its prototype. Citing mainly Western authorities, the *Libri Carolini* deny any validity to the arguments of both the image breakers and the image worshippers. The Carolingians regarded these as heretical innovations and thus portrayed themselves as keepers of the true apostolic traditions. The *Libri Carolini* do not deal at all with the christological arguments advanced by both sides. Miracles associated with icons are downplayed. Moreover, the Franks held that since the true image of God is man, [33] relics should be venerated rather than icons. The main thrust of the Frankish position follows closely in Gregory the Great's footsteps.[34] Images are to be allowed in the churches solely for their educational and inspirational character. But the *Libri Carolini* seem doubtful about allowing religious imagery even that much value, as they remark that man's memory must be poor indeed if he needs pictures to remind him of God. The following selection from the *Libri Carolini* expresses both the tone of the Franks toward the Greeks and summarizes their position:

> We have nothing against images apart from adoration of them: indeed we permit images of the saints in churches. They are not there, however, for adoration but as memorials of deeds done by the saints or simply as decoration of the walls. The Greeks apparently put all their hope and faith in pictures. We, on the other hand, in accordance with the traditions of the ancient fathers, venerate saints in their bodies or rather in relics of their bodies, or even in their clothes.[35]

Charles called the Council of Frankfurt in 794. By summoning his own ecumenical council, Charles attempted to oppose the emperor on an equal footing. The two papal legates who had represented Hadrian in 787 were in attendance as were Frankish, German and Italian bishops as well as some British delegates. The council's main concern was the spread of Adoptionism in the Frankish kingdom. After reaching agreement on that question, the council turned to the image controversy. Adopting the tenets of the *Libri Carolini,* it denied that the Second Council of Nicaea was ecumenical and declared its pronouncements null and void.[36] Hadrian, who had refuted point by point the *Libri Carolini* in a letter to Charles, never challenged the verdict of the council. He could not afford to alienate Charles, who provided military protection against the Lombards and the Roman factions. In addition, the Frankish condemnation of Eastern policies only strengthened Hadrian's stand against the Emperor so long as the papal lands and patrimonies were withheld.

There was little discussion on the question of image worship following the conclusion of the council until 824. Charles, having been crowned Emperor in 800, adopted a more conciliatory policy with the East. The papacy did not alter its position. However, during the second iconoclastic period in the East, the question was reopened when Michael II requested that Louis the Pious return refugees fleeing the East. In conjunction with the pope, Louis called the Synod of Paris. It reaffirmed the decisions of the Council of Frankfurt: images were neither to be worshipped nor destroyed. Again, Gregory the Great was cited as the authoritative precedent.

However, two Frankish bishops departed from the theories of image worship advocated by the two councils. Claudius of Turin and Agobard of Lyons were both opposed to the use of religious imagery, but the arguments they cited in favor of their views were different from those of the Eastern iconoclasts. Rejecting christological arguments, Claudius and Agobard are best characterized by their radical Augustinianism.

Claudius, known mainly for his scriptural commentaries, was made bishop of Turin in 816.[37] Rumors soon began to circulate among the Frankish bishops that Claudius denied the legitimacy of images, the intercession of the saints, and the validity of pilgrimages to Rome. A council of bishops was called at the behest of Abbot Theodemir which Caludius refused to attend, terming it a council of asses. In the bitingly sarcastic *Apologeticum atque rescriptum adversus Theutmirum abbatem* in which he denied only that he was an heretical innovator, Claudius reveals a strong strain of Augustinianism. Rejecting the belief that merit or prayers to saints through the holy images can help a man attain heaven, Claudius stresses that it is only through man's direct relationship with God and through repentance that he can hope to be forgiven.[38] In his eyes, image worship was simply another form of idolatry in which the cult of pagan demons was exchanged for that of the saints. Claudius refused even veneration to the Cross on the grounds that this denied the reality of the Resurrection, a position that the Eastern iconoclasts had not gone so far as to adopt. Emphasizing the need for an individual genuine faith in God, Claudius wrote, "God commanded them to do one thing; they do otherwise. God commanded them to bear the cross, not to adore it; they wish to adore what they are spiritually or incorporeally unwilling to bear."[39]

The problem of veneration extended to images that Claudius faced was evidently quite real. Claudius removed "those sluttish abominations – images" from the churches in his diocese when he found people worshipping them. His parishioners must have protested strenuously, since Claudius claimed that his life was in danger. Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, also felt that the presence of images in the churches gave rise to superstition and idolatrous veneration.

Agobard shared many of the opinions of Claudius of Turin, but expressed them in a much calmer, more rational way. Agobard fought incessantly against the pagan superstitions that survived in the Frankish kingdom. Fearing as Claudius did that image worship could all too easily be equated with pagan idolatry,

Agobard opposed the use of religious imagery although he would allow the presence of a bare Cross. He admitted that the ancient churches had used images legitimately for narrative and inspirational purposes, but felt that the danger of idolatry overruled their use. As Claudius had done, Agobard rejected the thesis that prayers to the images of the saints had any power to move God. Only Christ is the true mediator. To approach God through a material medium was unthinkable and implied that the material was superior to the spiritual: "When faith is taken from the heart, then is all trust set on visible things."[40] Again, the Augustinian emphasis upon man's complete reliance on God is evident.

Both Agobard and Claudius were writing at the time of the Synod of Paris. Agobard was never officially censured for his views and Claudius remained in possession of his see until the time of his death. Nevertheless, the Irish monk Dungal and Jonas of Orleans defended religious imagery in treatises directed against Claudius. They upheld the decisions of the Council of Frankfurt and the Synod of Paris justifying the limited use of Christian iconography and denying Claudius' equation of images with idols. They agreed that worship was reserved to God, but held that prayers to saints were valid and therefore images, as memorials to their sanctity, were permissible. The official Carolingian position was to remain that of Gregory the Great.

Throughout the history of the West, then, there existed two strains of thought. Critics and advocates of religious imagery lived side by side. The West, however, never faced the question of image worship as did the East. The question simply never was seen as possessing the degree of theological complexity with all the subtle implications that it had in the East. Western Christianity still competed with pagan beliefs and practices. The West therefore remained more aware both of the dangers of idolatry inherent in religious imagery and of the instructional value of images as a missionary tool. Gregory the Great's simple, pragmatic concept of image worship remained the standard. Therefore, when the iconclastic controversy broke out in Constantinople, the West, having established its own doctrines, could neither appreciate nor sympathize with the iconoclasts and iconodules. Iconoclasm became for the West a political rather than a theological question for the most part. Many of the actions taken during this period were due to papal and Frankish ambitions rather than to purely religious conviction. When the West did produce two fervent iconoclasts in Claudius and Agobard, they emerged independently of Eastern iconoclasm. Their opinions were dictated by entirely Western circumstances and they relied upon Western authorities. The iconoclastic controversy points up the increasing political, cultural and theological estrangement of the Eastern and Western Churches. It was evident to both, using different arguments to produce different conclusions, that the universality of the Church had been lost. The iconoclastic controversy was a crucial factor in the papal decision to identify itself with the West, and provided an issue which the increasingly confident Europeans under Charles the Great used to assert their independence from, and equality with, the Byzantine Empire as well as their authority over the papacy.

Notes

1. For purposes of this paper, Byzantine Italy will be considered as part of the East.

2. The role of the icon is directly related to the Orthodox emphasis upon the triumph of Christ over death, which necessarily includes the triumph over sin. Simply put, Athanasius' formula is a clear statement of the Orthodox belief in *theosis,* or deification: "God became man so that man might become God." The icons, as representations of the God-Man or of the deified saints are mediators of grace, and thus fulfill a sacramental function, although not on the same scale as the Eucharist. The West had no such theology of the icon.

3. Paul J. Alexander, *The Patriarch Nicephorus of Constantinople* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1958), pp. 101-102.

4. Tertullian's essay *De idolatria* is a statement that art cannot be reconciled with Christian worship.

5. The following is from his *Octavius* written in the mid-third century:

> Do you suppose we conceal our object of worship because we have no shrines and altars? What image can I make of God when, rightly considered, man himself is an image of God? What temple can I build for him, when the whole universe, fashioned by His handiwork, cannot contain him? Shall I, a man, housed more spaciously, confine within a tiny shrine power and majesty so great? (*Oct.* 32. 1)

Translated by Gerald H. Rendall in *Tertullian: Apology de Spectaculis and Minucius Felix, LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 413.

6. Ernst Kitzinger, *The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West: Selected Studies,* ed. by W. Eugene Kleinbauer (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), pp. 86-89.

7. Such was Eusebius, who was widely read in the West. In his letter to Constantia, Eusebius rebukes her for desiring an image of Christ. He states that it is impossible to depict Christ properly even in his human nature:

> Who, then, would be able to represent by means of dead colors and inanimate delineations the glistening, flashing radiance of such dignity and glory, when even his superhuman disciples could not bear to uphold Him in this guise and fell on their faces, thus admitting that they could not withstand the sight? . . . How can one paint an image of so wondrous and unattainable a form – if the term "form" is at all applicable to the divine and spiritual essence – unless, like the unbelieving pagans, one is to represent things that bear no possible resemblance to anything? (*PG* 20, 1545ff).

Translation in : Cyril A. Mango, comp., *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453, Sources and Documents in the History of Art,* ed. by H. W. Janson (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), pp. 16-17.

8. *PL 61, 339.* The abbreviations used in this paper conform to the standards found in the *Enciclopedia Cattolica,* citta del Vaticino, 1949-1954.

9. Edward James Martin, *A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, nd), p. 226.

10. Bede, *A History of the English Church and People,* 1. 25.

11. *Placuit picturas in ecclesia esse non debere ne quod colitur et adoratur in parietibus depingatur.*

12. Leonide Ouspensky points out in *Theology of the Icon* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1978), pp. 44-45, that the canon only forbids church wall paintings and does not prohibit any other form of religious imagery. Therefore, he interprets the text as an attempt to protect church art from profanation by gentiles during the early fourth century pagan persecutions.

13. *PL* 77, 1027-1028 (Book 9, Ep. 105). Gregory also condoned the physical act of veneration before an image:

> But let thy Fraternity carefully admonish them that from the sight of the event portrayed they should catch the ardour of compunction, and bow themselves down in adoration of the One Almighty Holy Trinity (*PL* 77, 1128-1130 (Book 11, Ep. 13)).

Translated by James Barmby in *Selected Epistles of Gregory the Great*, Vol. 13 of *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, ed. by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1898), pp. 23, 54.

14. *PL* 77, 991 (Book 9, Ep. 52). Translated by William R. Jones in "Art and Christian Piety: Iconoclasm in Medieval Europe" in *The Image and the Word: Confrontations in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, ed. by Joseph Gutmann (Missoula, Montana: The Scholars Press, 1977), p. 79. Bede described the function of religious imagery in much the same way as did Gregory. Pictures were placed on the monastery walls:

> in order that all men which entered the church, even if they might not read, should either look (whatsoever way they turned) upon the gracious countenance of Christ and His saints, though it were but in a picture, or might call to mind a more lively sense of the blessing of the Lord's incarnation, or having, as it were before their eyes, the peril of the last judgement might remember more closely to examine themselves (*A History of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow*, c. 6).

Translated by J. E. King in *Baedae Opera Historica*, II, *LCL* (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1930), pp. 405, 407.

15. Gregory of Tours, *Liber in gloria martyrium*, c. 21 (*MGH, SRM*, vol. i, pt. 2, p. 51). Gregory here tells of the desecration of a portable icon (*iconia*). Although Gregory does not state where the miracle took place, it is conceivable that he is telling a Greek story and adopting its terminology. Nevertheless, the story remains important since Gregory, a Western writer, evidently accepted the miracle, as he assumed his Western audience would.

16. There were, of course, Eastern writers in every period who opposed the use of pictorial representations in the churches and the growing use of private portable icons. A letter from the Emperors Michael II and Theophilus to Louis the Pious, although written at a later date (824), detailed the abuses of overardent worshippers. Making some allowance for possible exaggeration, it is possible that such practices had their origin at an earlier date:

> They sang hymns to these images and worshipped them and asked help of them. Many people wrapped cloths round them . . . Certain priests and clerics scraped the paint of images and, mixing this with the eucharistic bread and wine, let the communicants partake of this oblation after the celebration of the mass. Others again placed the Body of the Lord in the hands of images and made the communicants receive it therefrom. Others yet, spurning the Church, used panel images in the place of altars, and this in ordinary houses, and over them they celebrated the holy ministry, and they did in the churches many other illicit things of this kind that were contrary to our faith and appeared to be altogether unseemly to men of learning and wisdom (*MGH, Leges*, Sect. III, vol. ii, part 2, 478f).

Translated in Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire*, pp. 157-158.

17. The canon states in part:

> In order therefore that "that which is perfect" may be delineated to the eyes of all, at least in coloured expression, we decree that the figure in human form of the Lamb who taketh away the sin of the world, Christ our God, be henceforth exhibited in images, instead of the ancient lamb, so that all may understand by means of it the depths of the

> humiliation of the Word of God, and that we may recall to our memory his conversation in the flesh, his passion and salutary death, and his redemption which was wrought for the whole world. (Mansi, 11, 977e-980b).

Translated by Henry R. Percival in *The Seven Ecumenical Councils,* Vol. 14 of *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* Second Series, ed. by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900), p. 401, using the Labbe and Cossart, *Concilia,* Tom. 6, 1135f text. The disciplinary decrees of the Quinisext Council were never accepted by Rome, although Hadrian I (772-795), in a letter, specifically accepted this canon (p. 357).

18. Since it was agreed by all that the divine nature (*ousia*) could not be depicted, the iconoclasts held that the artist either distinguished too sharply between the natures of Christ by painting only the human (Nestorianism) or he so confused the two natures that he fell into Monophysitism.

19. Adoptionism, the one christological heresy which truly threatened the West, became important only after the Seventh Ecumenical Council.

20. Mansi, 12, 959f. Translated by Edward Gibbon in *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* Vol. V, ed. by J. B. Bury (London: Methuen & Co., 1901), p. 259. The authenticity of this letter has been questioned. See Martin, *A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy,* pp. 37-38. for a summary of the arguments. George Ostrogorsky in *History of the Byzantine State,* trans. Joan Hussey (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1956), pp. 133-134 with n. 1, discusses the arguments and concludes that the letters are authentic.

21. Paul wrote in 764: "The Emperor is very angry and plotting against us, because we have in no way kept silence from admonishing him, in regard to sacred images and the keeping of the Faith, true and entire" (*MGH, Epp.* III, VIII *Codex Carolinus,* no. 36, p. 546). Translated by Eleanor Shipley Duckett, *Alcuin* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1965), p. 53.

22. Mansi, 12, 720. Translated by Martin, *A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy,* p. 82.

23. Stephen Gero, "The *Libri Carolini* and the Image Controversy," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review,* XVIII (Spring-Fall, 1973), p. 10.

24. *PL* 96, 1217 & 1218. The opposing translations are laid side by side in Percival, *The Seven Ecumenical Councils,* pp. 536-537. It is interesting to note that the iconodules in the East during the second period of iconoclasm supported Rome's primatial claims against the Eastern Church in an attempt to convince the Emperor that Rome, as the center of orthodoxy, should be allowed to resolve the controversy (See Martin, *A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy,* pp. 200-203). The iconodules, in all probability, were not willing to extend more than a primacy of honor to Rome. Rome's support was critical to them as it was widely held that Rome had never strayed from orthodoxy.

25. Alexander, *The Patriarch Nicephorus of Constantinople,* pp. 104-105.

26. Hadrian set forth his views on the council in a letter to Charles the Great concerning the *Libri Carolini:*

> We have made as yet no reply to the Emperors, fearing they may return to their error. We exhorted them long ago about the images and the dioceses of the archbishops which . . . we sought to restore to the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church, which they sequestered together with our patrimonies at the time they overthrew the holy images. To those exhortations they never replied. They have returned in one point from their errors, but in the other two they remain where they were . . . [We express] gratitude that the holy images are in their former state. But as to the dioceses of our holy Roman churches . . . and the patrimonies we warn the Emperor solemnly that if he does not

restore them to our Holy Roman Church, we shall decree him a heretic for persistence in this error (Mansi, 13, 808c).

Translated in Martin, *A History of the Iconclastic Controversy*, p. 250.

27. Carolingian conceptions of the role of imagery by this time lagged far behind the East. John of Damascus (?675-749) stated: "The saints in their life-time were filled with the Holy Spirit and, when they are no more, His grace abides with their spirits and with their bodies in their tombs and also with their likenesses and holy images, not by nature, but by grace and divine power." Translation in L. W. Barnard, *The Graeco-Roman and Oriental Background of the Iconoclastic Controversy* (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1974), p. 102.

28. Allen Cabaniss, *Charlemagne*, Vol. 15 of *Rulers and Statesmen of the World*, ed. by Hans L. Trefousse (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1972), pp. 57-59.

29. The following discussion is heavily dependent upon: Walter Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaissance and the Idea of Kingship* (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1969), pp. 135-146. Heinrich Fichtenau, *The Carolingian Empire*, trans. by Peter Munz, Vol. IX of *Studies in Medieval History*, ed. by Geoffrey Barraclough (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1957), p. 50.

30. The *Libri Carolini* speak of certain usages "allowed rather by the ambition of Rome than by any apostolical tradition" (*PL* 98, 1015). The Synod of Paris (825) faced the same problem and is therefore applicable here:

> We consider that the holders of the see of St. Peter should be treated with every respect. At the same time we know, some of us by what we have seen and others by report, of the superstitious regard that Popes pay to pictures. We desire to express ourselves against the destruction of pictures and so influence those of the other party to accept our guidance on their practice (*MGH, Leges*, Sect. III, Vol. ii, part 2, p. 484).

Translated by Martin, *A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy*, p. 254.

31. Whether or not the Franks knew the translation was bad and deliberately chose to misconstrue it is a debatable question. Stephen Gero, "The *Libri Carolini* and the Image Controversy," p. 10, presents a strong case for the view that it was not done deliberately.

32. The second canon of the Council of Frankfurt reads:

> The question was introduced of the recent synod of the Greeks on the worship of images held at Constantinople. There it was laid down that those who refuse to pay service and veneration to the images as to the divine Trinity should be judged anathema. Our most holy fathers, absolutely refusing that service, held them in contempt and unanimously condemned them. (Mansi, 13, 909d).

Translated by Martin, *A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy*, p. 251.

33. In the tradition of Augustine, the *Libri Carolini* stated that *imago* and *similitudo* are incorporeal. The *imago* consists of the intellect, will and memory. The *similitudo* compares with divine charity, justice and goodness. Gero, "The *Libri Carolini* and the Image Controversy," pp. 15-16.

34. The concluding chapter of the *Libri Carolini* states:

> May our apostolic lord and father of the Romans know that, in accordance with the letter of blessed Gregory to Serenus of Marseilles, we allow anyone who so wishes for the love of God and His saints to make images of the saints both inside and outside the churches. But we compel none to adore them who does not choose to do so. Nor do we permit anyone to break them or destroy them, though we may wish to do so. And in the foregoing communication we profess freely that the god-pleasing universal catholic church should follow the teachings of St. Gregory (*PL* 98, 1248).

Translated by Cabaniss, *Charlemagne,* p. 72.

35. *PL* 98, 1147. Translated by Cabaniss, *Charlemagne,* pp. 69-70.

36. There is some dispute on this matter. Percival, in *The Seven Ecumenical Councils,* pp. 583-586, and Cabaniss in *Charlemagne,* pp. 70-73, both hold that Frankfurt did not condemn Second Nicaea. They believe that the papal legates would have raised objections if the Frankish council had done more than condemn the Iconoclastic Council of 754. Cabaniss goes further, stating that Charlemagne, upon receipt of Hadrian's rebuttal of the *Libri Carolini,* decided not to press the issue and it was not until the Synod of Paris, which did condemn definitely the cult of images, that the royal annals were altered for the year 794 to read: "The synod which was summoned a few years ago in Constantinople under Irene and Constantine and called by them not only seventh, but also universal, although it was neither seventh nor universal, was repudiated as totally worthless" (*Ann. Ein.*, 794). I find it difficult to accept this thesis. The second canon of Frankfurt (note 32 above) speaks of condemnation. The papal legates did not necessarily possess any great authority at the council. For example, the Council of Frankfurt accepted the addition of the *filioque* into the creed, a move strongly resisted by the pope. This shows the extent of the differences between the pope and Charles, and the king's willingness to overlook papal protests. See also Martin, *A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy,* p. 251, and Alexander, *The Patriarch Nicephorus of Constantinople,* pp. 104-105.

37. Claudius came from Spain, center of the Adoptionist heresy. However, there is no connection between his Adoptionist tendencies and his iconoclastic views. Adoptionism is similar to Nestorianism, and the iconoclasts of the East regularly leveled this charge against the iconodules. Moreover, Agobard, who shares with Claudius iconoclastic opinions, wrote a treatise *Against the Teachings of Felix of Urgel,* the foremost adoptionist of the day.

38. From the *Apologeticum:* (*PL* 105, 459f):

> He therefore says these things that no one may rely on the merit or intercession of the saints, for one cannot be saved unless he possess the same faith, righteousness, and truth which they possessed and by which they were pleasing to God.

Translated by George E. McCracken in *Early Medieval Theology,* Vol. 9 of *The Library of Christian Classics,* ed. by John Baillie, John T. McNeill and Henry P. Van Dusen (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1957), p. 247. It is interesting to note that in this instance he does parallel the extreme views of Constantine V, who denied the intercession of the saints. The Eastern iconoclasts, however, refused to sanction his opinions. Alexander, *The Patriarch Nicephorus of Constantinople,* p. 49.

39. A further selection concerning the veneration of the Cross points up Claudius' sarcastic tone throughout:

> Against them we must reply that if they wish to adore all wood fashioned in the shape of a cross because Christ hung on a cross, then it is fitting for them to adore many other things which Christ did in the flesh . . . Let virgin girls therefore be adored, because a Virgin gave birth to Christ. Let mangers be adored, because as soon as he was born he was laid in a manger. Let old rags be adored, because immediately after he was born he was wrapped in old rags. Let boats be adored, because he often sailed in boats . . .

Translations in McCracken, *Early Medieval Theology,* pp. 244-245.

40. *De imaginibus, PL* 104, 199-228. In Reginald Lane Poole, *Illustrations of the History of Medieval Thought and Learning* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1932), p. 36.