

AMERICAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Charles Town, West Virginia

A Research Project Proposal

Submitted By

Carl C Jones

Student Number 5528783

HIST500 D001 Spring 2016

Submitted to the Department of History

July 31, 2016

I.

Tentative Title

The title of this research project that I am proposing is: “The Rise of the Western (Latin) Christian Church over the Eastern (Greek) Churches in the 5th and 6th Centuries: The Key Factor that Propelled it into Dominance.”

II.

Research Problem

As Rome declined and the Byzantine empire emerged under the rule of Constantine, Christianity was declared by him legal in his, now famous, Edict of Milan. There were five regional areas of the Christian Church that naturally emerged with the encouragement and oversight of Constantine in the early 4th century¹. Four of these church regions were located in the eastern realm of the Mediterranean Sea: Constantinople (Turkey), Jerusalem (Israel), Antioch (Syria), and Alexandria (Egypt). The fifth church region was located in Rome (Italy) in the western realm of the Mediterranean. Over the succeeding two centuries, the Church in Rome became the dominant force over all of Christianity, even though at one time under Constantine it was equal with the other four eastern churches. What clearly separated the four (Eastern) churches from the one (Western) church was not only locality but also language and culture (Greek vs. Latin).

The main question being asked in this research project proposal is: What caused early Christianity to move its seat of orientation from Greek (Eastern) to Latin (Western) locality, culture, and language? Additionally, what factors caused this to occur? Was there any single factor that was key in the emergence of the Western Church, causing it to so quickly dominate

those in the East? What makes these questions so interesting is not just the fact that there were four churches (as opposed to just one) in competition for power, but that a different language and culture (Latin) was able to usurp the established and more influential language and culture (Greek) of the native Christian Church. Were the influential factors just religious in nature, or were they also political, social, economic, or even some combination of all of these? It seems reasonable to expect that all of these factors were, at least to some degree, contributing causes in the Western Church's emergence to power. But is there one factor that was more key in bringing this about than all others?

Although it should go without saying that no single factor in history is ever the sole cause of anything because life is just too complex to allow this, it is however possible for one factor to be the *main* cause of an event or situation in history. Such a dominant factor need not be greater than all other factors combined, nor does it even need to be the most visible and obvious source of influence. Sometimes key factors are hidden and not obvious, yet can be when examined carefully the dominant and controlling force among all others. Such is the case in my hypothesis for why the Western Christian Church emerged over the Eastern Churches in power and influence. And this happened in spite of the fact that the Western Church did not possess the original language and culture of native Christianity which existed in the early church before Constantine's Edict of Milan. My hypothesis is that the most powerful weapon used by the Western (Latin) Church in Rome to emerge to supreme power over the Eastern churches (and over most of Christianity in the 1500 years followed), was the doctrine of eternal punishment that was adopted as an absolute and infallible creed of the Christian Church².

The amount of fear and control over ignorant saints that eternal punishment gave the Church (whether a true doctrine or not) cannot be overstated. Once this horrifying doctrine was

pronounced and believed by the masses, the ultimate weapon of tyranny was in place. Having and using such a powerful weapon on the minds and hearts of people made the emergence of the Western Christian Church over its Eastern counterparts is a foregone conclusion. The horrors that followed in the Christian Church as this teaching was applied through the rise of what many would call “the monstrous papacy”³ that propelled itself into absolute power in both spiritual and civil realms, are well chronicled in the history of the church in the Middle Ages. But the church as a whole for the first 500 years prior to the rise of the Western Church was not like this. It never concluded, not in any of the five great counsels or creeds, that God’s punishment of human beings would be eternal in duration⁴. Not until about the mid sixth century did this powerful doctrine emerge in the Western (Latin) Christian church and propel it into dominance and brutality for a millennium!

Though secular and religious (church) history is commonly held in distinction and separated categorically, such division is arbitrary and somewhat misleading. What happened in the religious realm had direct effect on the secular world, and vice versa. This became especially true in the Middle Ages, after the Western Church had risen to power and completely mingled spiritual and civil authority. And it was this, along with other such bluing of power, that inspired the Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment, and American Revolution! So, although it is, practically speaking, legitimate to distinguish between secular and religious history, in reality they are intermingled to the point that trying to only look at one and ignore the other will not produce an accurate view of the past. Therefore, in this project I will include both, each as is needed, intermingled in an attempt to not only support my hypothesis but to discover the truth of why the Western Christian Church became the dominant seat of power within Christianity.

The evidence supporting my hypothesis will exist in the following general areas. First, in

the contrast between the beliefs, policies, and mind-set of the Western vs. Eastern Churches. The Western Church emerged in, and out of, Rome. All of the beliefs, politics, and ways of thinking of Rome emerged with it. It is nearly impossible for individuals or whole societies to progress without being influenced by its established core values. And Rome, of all places, had values, mind-sets, and ways of thinking that were entrenched by a great and long-lasting empire. The Eastern churches inherited their posture and thinking from the Greek culture of greatness that preceded that of Rome under Alexander the Great. Alexander had, single handedly, conquered the civilized world of that day (to the point that he wept when there were no more frontiers to conquer), and established Greek language and culture as the norm prior to the rise of Rome, Jesus, his Apostles, and the Christian Church. It is out of this Greek background that all of the early Christian churches emerged and found their mind-set, world-view, and perspective. They were kinder, gentler, humbler, more fair minded and less power hungry than the church of the West that emerged in dominance from it. It was the Western Church that broke away from the native influence of Greek culture and language as it found its new identity in the ideas of Rome. The contrast is actually quite striking and can easily be seen as one of many reasons why the Western Church rose to power by abandoning the traditional, softer tone of the Eastern churches. Not only did the Eastern churches not hold eternal punishment to be an infallible truth (and proved this by never mentioning it in any of its counsels or creeds), they also viewed ecclesiastical power as something to be equally distributed across the many church regions rather than allowing it to be centralized in one location as did the Western Church.

My second supporting evidence is in the isolation of the Western Church from Eastern, in location, language, and culture. Third, in the singularity of WC compared to plurality of eastern. Forth, in the influence of Constantine and his Edict of Milan. Fifth, in the history and origin of

the idea of eternal punishment. Sixth, in the disposition of the early Greek church toward the idea of eternal punishment. And, seventh, in the inherent sense of the power and mindset of “Rome” in the culture and setting of the Western Church.

¹ Geanakoplos, Deno John. *Constantinople and the West: Essays on the Late Byzantine (Palaeologan) and Italian Renaissances and the Byzantine and Roman Churches*. University of Wisconsin Press, 1989.

² Schaff, Philip. *History of the Christian Church*. 8 vols. Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2006. Vol. 3: *Nicene and Post-Nicene Christianity: AD 311-590*.

³ Bainton, Roland. *Christendom: A Short History of Christianity and its Impact on Western Civilization*. New York: Harper and Row, 1964.

⁴ Schaff, Philip. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Second Series, 14 vols. Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2012. Vol. 14: *The Seven Ecumenical Councils*.

III.

Definition of Terms

Aion. This is the Greek word for “age”. In Homer, for example, it typically referred to life or lifespan. It is where we get our English word aeon (eon) -- duration of time. Aionios is the Greek adjective rendering of Aion. Both are used in early Christian Church writings, in the New Testament books and in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers. This word is sometimes used with the words “punishment” and “fire”. Modern translations render these usages as “eternal punishment” and “eternal fire” in support of the long-standing theological positions in the Western Christian Church that emerged in the 6th century. But prior to that time, early Christian writers (those of Eastern orientation) understood these terms to mean punishment and fire in the age to come, without any reference to time duration⁵. This is a very important factor in the research project, because it is key in proving the hypothesis that the Western Church rose to power and dominance on the wings of the ideas of eternal (never-ending) punishment and fire.

Apostolic Fathers. This is the common name for the group of early Christian leaders that lived and taught in the succeeding generations after the days of Jesus and his Apostles (sent-out ones). This covers about a 200-year period from AD 100 to 325. This group is unique because they learned directly from the Apostles, or others who recently did so. Beliefs and stories were passed down to these from their parents and grandparents who were eye witnesses of what is now just written history for us. Their understanding of teachings and events are reasonably credible due to their close time proximity to the events of the beginnings of Christianity, and due to their shared language and culture (Greek) with that time period. Later Christians did not have these advantages since they were more distant in all of these areas.

Apokatastasis. This is the Greek word for “restoration”. It was used only once in the

writings now considered the “New Testament”, by a physician named Luke in his chronicles of his travels with Paul of Tarsus on his missionary journeys. But it was used even more by the succeeding generations of Greek Church Fathers to express their belief that God would someday restore all people, wicked and righteous, in the eternal state.

Byzantine Empire. This is the empire that was the continuation of the Roman Empire. It is also known as the “Eastern Roman Empire”. Its capital city was Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul). It survived the fragmentation and fall of the great and long-lasting Roman Empire and continued to exist for an additional thousand years until conquered by the Ottoman Turks in the 15th century⁶.

Councils. These are official gatherings of the prominent Christian church leaders to determine which teaching in the church are legitimate and which are heresy. There were five great councils in the period of time examined by this research project between AD 300 and 600. The first of these great councils was called by Constantine for the purpose of bringing unity to the Christian emerging into freedom from persecution. It is interesting that the early Christian Church was greatly unified *because* of its persecution. When a group of people are persecuted there is very little to fight over. But once that persecution is lifted (as it was under the emperor Constantine) unity becomes much harder to maintain because there is plenty of time and freedom to fight each other. This was the case in the emerging Christian Church under Constantine’s rule. This “freedom to fight” became a major factor in how the Western Church (church in Rome) rose to dominance over Eastern churches. Until this time there was no opportunity.

Creeds. This is an official statement of beliefs. Creeds usually resulted from the findings of a Council. The Creeds (as well as the Councils) were identified by the city in which they were held (i.e. Nicaea, Chalcedon, Ephesus, etc.). It is interesting to note, and something very key to

the hypothesis of this project, that none of the counsels or creeds during the first 500 years of the church (including the very early, pre-counsel, Apostle's Creed) ever held eternal punishment as an official teaching of the church. It was not until the Western Church in Rome began to emerge that eternal punishment became an official teaching. And, it was a teaching that was very powerful over the masses of Christianity; one that propelled the church of Rome into dominance over the meeker and milder (and perhaps more reasonable) churches of the East.

Eastern Church. This is the Christian churches located in the eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea. In later periods it became a single entity and rival force in opposition to the Western Church within Christianity. It initially included churches in the Greece peninsula, modern day Turkey, Syria, Israel, and Northern Africa. It was Greek in both its language and culture -- both of which are at the heart of the first century writings by the followers of Jesus, commonly known as the "New Testament". (See also "Western Church").

Edict of Milan. When Constantine came to power as emperor, he was also soon after converted to Christianity. Favoring Christianity and believing that its spread would benefit society as a whole, he pronounced an edict that would make Christianity no longer illegal, putting an end to its persecution. This one act by the emperor in secular authority changed the direction of the Christian Church⁷.

Eternal Punishment. A teaching that goes back as far as Egyptian paganism, and was prominent in many pagan religions⁸. However, it was never taught or presented in the Jewish religion prior to BC 400 (when the sacred writings of the Jews ceased production). In other words, eternal punishment is never found, in any clear detail, in what is now known as the "Old Testament" Jewish writings. This is important in this research project because the way in which this dreadful and fearful teaching came about as a force of power in the Western Church (and not

in the East) is key in understanding how the Western Church came into spiritual and political dominance in such a short period of time.

Roman Catholic Church. This is the official institutionalized Christian Church that emerged in the 4th, 5th, and 6th centuries out of the proud mindset of Rome, and out of the Latin language and culture. This church stands in stark contrast to the multiple churches of the East that eventually emerged into the Eastern Orthodox Church as the single rival of the Roman Catholic Church.

Western Church. This was the Christian Church located in Rome. It was physically separated from the Eastern churches in the Mediterranean region. Unlike the Eastern churches, it was Latin in both language and culture. This set it apart and separated it from the East. (See also “Eastern Church”).

⁵ Ramelli, Ilaria. *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis: A Critical Assessment from the New Testament to Erigena*. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

⁶ Anastos, Milton V. *Aspects of the Mind of Byzantium (Political Theory, Theology, and Ecclesiastical Relations with the See of Rome)*. Ashgate Publications, 2001.

⁷ Schaff, Philip. *History of the Christian Church*. 8 vols. Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2006. Vol. 3: *Nicene and Post-Nicene Christianity: AD 311-590*.

⁸ Thayer, Thomas. *Origin and History of the Doctrine of Endless Punishment*. Boston: Universalist Publishing House, 1881.

IV.

Background

Many people, including many Christians, do not realize that Christianity started out as a sect of the Jewish religion. Jesus was a Jewish Carpenter from an obscure (at that time) town of Nazareth, raised in and taught the Jewish faith as a child, attended Jewish Synagogues with his parents and continued doing so until his early death⁹. He observed the law of Moses (though not the additions made to it by Jewish religious leaders), taught and read from sacred scrolls in assemblies, and always appealed to the accepted Jewish “Scriptures” of that day. His carefully chosen twelve Apostles (“sent-out ones”) were also all Jewish, and the majority of his initial followers – even after his death – were Jewish. It was not until the grand missionary journeys by Paul of Tarsus (known by fellow Christians as “The Apostle Paul”), whereby he traveled all across the civilized world of that day throughout the Mediterranean region, that Christianity spread to Gentile (non-Jewish) people.

And so Christianity grew very rapidly in the first Centuries (2nd and 3rd) after the time of Jesus, in spite of extreme brutal persecution and death wherever it was found. But such persecution seemed to actually fuel the spread of this new religion (along with the great moral contrast between it and the many pagan cultures that pervaded almost every society of that day). People who converted to Christianity knew they were literally putting their lives on the line and that there was a fair chance that they would not live into old age. They were, as a group, a committed driving force that the threat of life, limb, or torture could not squelch. This was not always true in the history of the world. Prior to the time of Christ, people believed that this life as all there was and buckled in submission under any threat of torture or death. But not Christians. Whether they were correct in their faith or deceived, they believed that there was more to “life”

than just this life. They believed this, based on the multitude of eye-witness reports of Jesus raising bodily from the dead (often by their parent and grandparents of those early generations), and that they too would be raised from the dead and experience life eternal as a result of their faith in Jesus as the “promised Messiah of Israel” and the “Son of God”¹⁰. As a result, (again, whether justified or not) they were fearless in their faith and considered martyrdom to be a great honor. How could Rome, the most brutal of all world dominating forces, who cruelly hung criminals and rebels on crosses for days until they died a slow agonizing death – how could they control and be victorious over people who do not fear persecution? The bottom line is that Rome could not! And over time, Christianity out-last-ed and out-endured the greatest, and longest lasting, political power in the history of the world simply by exercising faith and being willing to give up all in honor of it.

But after about three centuries of brutal persecution, after the death and reported resurrection of Jesus, Christianity (and therefore Christians) found relief in the emperor Constantine. In AD 317, through his now famous “Edict of Milan”, Constantine declared Christianity to be a legal system of belief. Today in America, we find this to be strange with our long-coming “freedom of religion” in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. But in the history of the world it has not always been like this. Most governments and societies maintained a required religious adherence. It ranged from pagan gods, to gods of Greek mythology, and even included worship of the supreme leader (i.e. a “Caesar”, which means lord) of the land or kingdom. But Constantine’s edict put an end to this requirement and allowed alternative religions like Christianity to be legal.

But Constantine went even further. He endorsed, encouraged, and stacked the deck to help Christianity flourish. He even robbed pagan religions (in the name of the crown) and lavished

the Christian churches with the spoils¹¹. The result is that Christianity become status-quo in Greek society under Constantine. He did this because he, himself, was converted to Christianity through a supposed event whereby he saw a vision of a great cross and God was telling him to be a follower of this faith. So, Christian churches flourished, unfettered by the kind of persecution that had now ceased. This resulted in five regional areas of church jurisdiction, set up by and supported by Constantine himself. These were: Constantinople (Turkey), Jerusalem (Israel), Antioch (Syria), and Alexandria (Egypt). The fifth regional area was located in Rome (Italy). The first four of these were located in what is now considered the Eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea. The other, Rome, was located further west in Italy and stood alone in not only location but language (Latin) and culture. All of this set up the situation between East and West that lent itself to the rise of the Western (Latin) Christian Church which eventually dominated in power and influence over the other four Eastern Christian Church entities.

Rome as the once great power house of dominance over the civilized world had fallen, and to some degree was defeated from within by the relentless pursuit of a growing number of unarmed, fairly ignorant Christians who were fully committed to the Jesus they believed in, without retreat, in the midst of brutal persecution. But the spirit and pride of "Rome" still existed in the hearts and minds of its now neutralized citizens, And that pride and mindset was centered in the city of Rome itself. As one writer put it, "Rome was more than just a great nation, it was a set of ideas!". And this spirit of "Rome", though lying in the ruins of defeat and downfall, also laid waiting for a new and different means to raise its ugly and brutal head. And it did so, in the Christian Church that resided in Rome! Within two centuries after Constantine, the church of Rome (that was at one time just one of five), equal in power and local authority, rose to a place of prominence over the other four eastern churches. And why? Well, there are, of course, many

factors. There always are in history. History is complex because people are complex and history really just records the actions of complex people as they exercise their will in competition with each other. But of all the many factors: social, political, economic, religious, and even personal ego-catering, there is one that, perhaps, trumps them all. It is the power of enlisting the idea of eternal punishment as a weapon over the hearts and minds of ignorant and fearful people. Once this weapon is in place, the sky is the limit for rule and all barriers of reason, decency and conscience go out the window as power-hungry egos seek satisfaction that can never be met.

⁹ Edersheim, Alfred, Thomas. *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. McLean, VA: McDonald Publishing Co, 1886.

¹⁰ Gospel of Mark, Chapter 1, Verse 1.

¹¹ Schaff, Philip. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Second Series, 14 vols. Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2012. Vol. 14: *The Seven Ecumenical Councils*.

V.

Research Methods

The methods I will use in my research are as follows. First, I want to read as many relevant documents in the time period of AD 100 to AD 600 as possible. This is of course an impossible task, but by selecting broadly and carefully, I believe I can come up with enough reliable information to make a reasonable case for my hypothesis. I want to look at both religious and secular sources (even though this distinction is somewhat arbitrary, artificial, and often a matter of opinion. The secular and religious worlds were very much intertwined in ancient times, so any attempt to isolate either so-called kinds of writings would be a great mistake. Relevant documents are just that... relevant, and it matters not what category they seem to fall into.

Another method I hope to use in something I learned about only recently – GIS mapping. Since I want to look into possible explanations outside of my proposed hypothesis, I want to include political, social, economic, military, and religious data as well. Analyzing such data in relation to locality can be very powerful, and placing it into the GIS database for analysis will be worth trying. One interesting “layer” to consider as mapping information using GIS is the locations of churches established by Paul of Tarsus during his missionary journeys throughout the Eastern and Western regions of the Mediterranean. The seven churches listed in John’s (now famous), “Revelation of Jesus” would be another layer of location data. Trade routes, major metropolitan cities of that day, political seats of power, and many other factors are all possibilities.

VI.

Research Limitations

There are many research limitations that became obvious as I began my research. First, when studying ancient history of any kind there is an obvious language barrier (if the language of the documents studied is unknown to the researcher). This means that translations must be used. But translators always have some bias, especially when it comes to political and religious matters and events. But also, even the very best translation can lose some accuracy due to cultural and nuance subtleties. One way to compensate for this is to read multiple translations of documents (when available). Another way is to read broadly among the so-called experts (some are and some are not, and this is yet another limitation!) and get a consensus of the meaning of a foreign-languaged text.

In the case of this research project, most of the ancient documents (primary and even some secondary documents) are written in Greek and Latin. I am fortunate that I have had two years of study in Koine Greek, the common language during the beginning and early Christian periods. But my personal limitation in this is that I am not even close to being a Greek scholar. However, I do know the language well enough to read the ancient Greek texts, understand them grammatically with reasonable accuracy, and be able to read what scholars say about them. Unfortunately, I have not studied Latin so I am totally dependent of translations and experts.

Another research limitation I discovered is that in some of the historical periods I am examining, especially in those early years of Christianity as it was growing in number and influence, there are a limited number of documents. Often, documents referred to by primary sources are nonexistent. This can be very frustrating because there is no way to test the accuracy of these writers who quote them. Additionally, there is no way to go look up a referenced

document and gain full context of what has been claimed.

Yet another limitation is bias and agenda inherent in sources. This is especially true of political and religious documents. Often there is such a strong agenda attached to the motives of those who write, that information must only be accepted with great care. However, this is not always the case. Some ancient writers are very honest and desire to present the “truth” as carefully as possible. Many who are “religious believe that they have an obligation under God to be honest and accurate. If a writer has provided much material, it is not all that difficult to check his work out through other sources and gain a sense of how accurate he or she really is. This just takes more time, effort, patience and discipline in gathering historical information.

Finally, one other limitation is that there is so much information out there, and so little time to read (or skim) through it. But this is better problem than too little information (as is the case in earlier time periods of the research project timeline). The main solution to this problem is to read and skim with great skill. This is learned over time. I am pretty good at it after thirty years or reading historical documents and other writings, but there is always room for improvement. As part of this learned skill I am able to quickly find what is relevant in documents. This saves a lot of time over reading everything carefully.

VII.

Working Bibliography

Works Cited:

Anastos, Milton V. *Aspects of the Mind of Byzantium (Political Theory, Theology, and Ecclesiastical Relations with the See of Rome)*. Ashgate Publications, 2001.

Athanasius. *On The Incarnation*. San Bernadino: Fig Books, 2014.

This important work by Athanasius was not included in the above collection by Schaff. But the clarity of the universal position Athanasius takes in this brief presentation on the significance of the incarnation of Jesus in all matters of Christian faith, is foundational in my research of primary sources of people who shaped Christianity in those early years and contributed to the direction it would take in the form of the Roman Catholic Church.

Edersheim, Alfred, Thomas. *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. McLean, VA: McDonald Publishing Co, 1886.

This old mammoth classical work from the late nineteenth century is one of the great definitive works on the life of Jesus and the times in which he lived. The author claims "seven years of continual and earnest labor" (in his preface) to produce his work. He lists over 500 authors consulted, and has an estimated 1500 footnotes in his 800 page monster. He presents the life of Jesus chronologically, with constant references to the times in which Jesus lived (in both a Jewish and Roman world). To some degree his work is a commentary on the new Testament Gospel writings. So some of his work expresses his opinions and speculations. But he seems to do a good job of staying reasonably objective and demonstrates a high regard for the value historical fidelity for his audience. I was particularly interested in his appendix titled "On Eternal Punishment, According to the Rabbis and the New Testament". Though brief, it is an interesting summary of why the Jews of that day believed in eternal punishment.

Geanakoplos, Deno John. *Constantinople and the West: Essays on the Late Byzantine (Palaeologan) and Italian Renaissances and the Byzantine and Roman Churches*. University of Wisconsin Press, 1989.

Schaff, Philip. *History of the Christian Church*. 8 vols. Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2006. Vol. 3: *Nicene and Post-Nicene Christianity: AD 311-590*.

Where Will Durant has a more secular perspective of Christian Church history, Schaff is more religious -- himself being a believer. The contrast and balance between the two is a helpful safeguard in preserving objectivity. Schaff, like Durant, deals with Constantine and Augustine early on in his work. But he also deals with the alliance of the church and state that came about in the time period. This is also very key to my research project theme of causality of the

emergence of the Western Church as the dominant force in Christianity. Schaff also chronicles, very thoroughly, the great ecumenical councils. What was concluded (and not concluded) at these councils over several hundred years (particularly the first five) is yet another key to my project thesis.

Schaff, Philip. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. First Series, 14 vols. Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2012. Vol. 2: *Augustine: City of God, Christian*.

Schaff's *History of the Christian Church* (referenced above) is a secondary source. It is his presentation and interpretation of Church History. This set of *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* is a primary source of writings, and is Schaff's effort to collect all essential early Christian Church Writings. There is also a "Second Series" of 14 volumes bearing the same title. Additionally, he has also produced a 10 volume set of writes by the Apostolic Fathers from the pre-Nicene period. Together, these three set, 38 volumes total, are perhaps the best collection of primary sources of early Christian Church in existence. I am very happy I discovered these and expect them to be of great help. The only down side is that it is an intimidating amount of material to even browse through. I am looking for someone who has done an index to this massive collection. Though many volumes in this set will be helpful, the second volume, *Augustine: City of God* is of great interest to me for my research project. The writings and life of Augustine will, I believe, be key as evidence supporting my hypothesis. *City of God*, above all the writings of Augustine, will be the most relevant for my research because of its great influence on the Western Christian Church as it emerged as the dominant force in the battle between the East and West wings of Christianity.

Schaff, Philip. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Second Series, 14 vols. Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2012. Vol. 14: *The Seven Ecumenical Councils*.

Five of the first seven great councils of the Christian Church are very important in my research of the cause of the Western Church to emerge as the dominant force in Christianity. These councils were convened usually by political rulers (such as Constantine) to bring conclusion and unity in the Christian church when faced with deviant teachings. What was concluded (usually expressed in an official church creed) is an important aspect of how direction in the Christian church was chosen. And, what was *not* concluded also sheds light on causes sought in my research project. Schaff provides all related documents of that time period. In his words, as part of his subtitle of this volume, he says, "Canons and dogmatic decrees, together with the canons of all the local synods which have received ecumenical acceptance."

Works Consulted:

Brown, Harold. *Heresies*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1984.

Mr. Brown's history of heresies in the Christian Church covers the period of time from before the New Testament through Schleiermacher, Kierkegaard, and Bultmann of the modern

era. It is a very thorough secondary source, weighing in at close to 500 pages. Mr Brown seems to be quite objective and clearly bridle his personal bias that inevitably comes with being an Evangelical Seminary professor. Eight chapters in his book cover the period of time of most interest to me in my research project (about AD 300 to 600). Though it is somewhat subjective what constitutes "heresy", Mr Brown has tried to identify what the Christian Church, as a whole, and as it progressed, to be heresy. This will be a helpful resource in identifying what was considered heresy, by whom, and what was done in response to it. Some of these decisions had much to do with the rise of the Western Christian Church.

Durant, Will. *The Story of Civilization*. 10 Vols. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950. Vol 4: *The Age of Faith: AD 325-1300*.

In chapter 3, *The Progress of Christianity*, Mr. Durant lays out the origin of the Christian Church, and then presents the differences between West and East wings of the church after the Edict of Milan in 313 under the emperor Constantine. In these sections he presents the major players in each wing, but then spends considerable time on Augustine as the foundational figure in the Western Church, who the Eastern Church "never really took to". Augustine, and his relationship to the Eastern Church (or lack of it) is one of many key elements in my research project concerning the cause of the shift from East to West in the Christian Church between the period of AD 300 to 600.

Ramelli, Ilaria. *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis: A Critical Assessment from the New Testament to Erigena*. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

Ms. Ramelli has spent over a decade researching the topic of Apokatastasis ("restoration" in Greek) in the early Christian Church. She covers the period of time from AD 100 (the Apostolic Fathers) until about AD 800 when the Neoplatonist philosopher Erigena lived and wrote. However, the bulk of her work is during the third century focusing on Clement of Alexandria and Origen, and also in the later years through the first five Councils into the 6th century. Professor of Roman Near Eastern History at Catholic University, Ramelli has compiled an impressive 890 pages with nearly 2000 footnotes. It appears to be a top-notch scholarly work. The reason I found this reference to be applicable to my research project is that one of my hypotheses is that at least part of the reason for the shift from the Eastern to the Western Christian Church, as the seat of influence and power, was rooted in church doctrine. As the view of full eternal reconciliation between God and humanity (Apokatastasis), held predominately in the Eastern Church, became replaced by the view of eternal damnation by many Latin church Fathers (primarily Augustine), it armed the Western Church with psychological ammunition to dominate control Christians, and therefore, the future of Christianity. I expect her research to be very helpful in proving my thesis historically.

Thayer, Thomas. *Origin and History of the Doctrine of Endless Punishment*. Boston: Universalist Publishing House, 1881.

This old classical work from the nineteenth century is somewhat unique among theology books. Though it presents a theological perspective (universalism), its content is mostly historical analysis. It is a rather good secondary source that led me to many primary sources. As part of my evidence for my research project, the original history of eternal punishment lays some of the ground work for how the Western Christian Church came to embrace this view, which in my hypothesis, is one of the major factors in the change in the Christian church from Eastern to Western thinking. Thayer looks into the origins in Judaism during the Maccabean period as well as heathen origins of the belief in eternal punishment. Later in his work he presents how the Roman Catholic church used this teaching as its basis for cruel abuses of its enemies and heretics, in stark contrast to what was believed and practiced in the earlier Eastern Christian Church and in the New Testament times of Jesus and his apostles.

The Apocalypse of Ezra. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1917.

This is a primary source translation from the Syriac text of *The Apocalypse of Ezra*, considered one of the apocryphal books of the Roman Catholic Church. Also known as "2 Esdras", it was included in some Protestant bibles like the original King James version of 1611 -- but probably as a "non-inspired" reference document. This ancient book, along with the Book of Enoch, contain clear and vivid teaching of eternal punishment. Since eternal punishment is not found as a teaching in the canonized 66 books of the Jewish Old Testament, it seems likely that these inter-testamental period books are the source of first century Jewish teachings on eternal punishment. This is very relevant background information for my research project thesis.

The Book of Enoch. (unknown): Winter Publication, 2005.

This is another primary source translation of an inter-testamental period book. This book, however, was quoted by Jude, one of the apostles of Jesus, in his letter to Christian believers. This book was well accepted by many early church Fathers in the 2nd and 3rd centuries. Like *The Apocalypse of Ezra*, the Book of Enoch contains clear and vivid teaching of eternal punishment and was probably a source of first century Jewish teachings on this subject. As with *The Apocalypse of Ezra*, this book is very relevant background information for my research project thesis of finding the causes of the rise in the Western Christian Church, from its Eastern roots.

Works to be Consulted:

Bainton, Roland. *Christendom: A Short History of Christianity and its Impact on Western Civilization*. New York: Harper and Row, 1964.

The title tells it all about this book. It is indeed short (for the amount of ground it covers) and it deals specifically with the Western Christian Church's impact on the Western world that resulted from it. To some degree, it is a "Readers Digest" version of Will Durant's massive work cited above. Of the eight chapters and 250 pages, I found two chapters of greatest interest to me

for my research. In these he deals with the period starting with Constantine up through the establishment of the Papacy as a state. Though not a lot of detail, I expect this book to give me some good and balanced overview.

Hill, Jonathan. *Handbook to the History of Christianity*. Oxford: Lion Publishing, 2006.

Published in the U.S. under Zondervan, this is a good, solid, modern, thorough, and reasonably fair-minded presentation of Christianity from the background of the Roman Empire before the time of Jesus all the way through Christianity in modern America. Out of 600 pages, the first 150 pages are of importance to me. The chief editor, Mr. Hill, has degrees in philosophy and theology from Oxford. So, although it is published through an Evangelical publisher (Zondervan), it is probably safe to say that the volume is reasonably objective, though clearly Protestant and not Catholic in its approach and conclusions. The combination of being Protestant, modern, and not too Evangelical makes it a good resource for my research project.

Schaff, Philip. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Second Series, 14 vols. Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2012. Vol. 4: *Athanasius: Selected Works and Letters*.

In this collection of primary sources, I expect to find a great deal of help in supporting the hypothesis in my research project. Athanasius was a Greek (as opposed to Latin) Church Father, and was, without a doubt, the most instrumental person in defending the Trinitarian view of God, currently held by the Western Christian Church today. This collection of writings by Athanasius contains not only his major doctrinal works but many letters written during his struggle to defend his view of God, mostly to individuals.

Schaff, Philip. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Second Series, 14 vols. Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2012. Vol. 6: *Jerome: Letters and Selected Works*.

Jerome, along with Ambrose and Augustine, are perhaps the three most influential Latin Fathers in the rise of the Western Church. Jerome was the one who translated the Bible (written mostly in Hebrew and Greek) into Latin. This was a big step in launching the Western (Latin) wing of the Christian Church into dominance. It also moved the western Church away from the Greek language and, therefore, culture. This collection has 150 letters (on 300 of the 500 total pages), a handful of Treatises (9 total on 180 pages), and about 100 short Prefaces on just 20 pages. So the collection is rich in variety and number of items.

Schaff, Philip. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Second Series, 14 vols. Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2012. Vol. 10: *Ambrose: Selected Works and Letters*.

Ambrose is the third of the (perhaps) three most influential Latin Fathers in the rise of the Western Church. He followed (theologically) Origen and Didymus in his universalist tendencies. He was highly influential of Augustine who in the beginning was more universalistic in his theology, but later became an ardent defender of eternal punishment. Augustine's transition in

this area of theology, and anyone who influenced him (i.e. Ambrose) is significant in my research of the causes of the emergence of the Western Christian Church. In this collection are 400 pages of dogmatic treatises and only about 50 pages of letters. Quite a different mix of primary sources compared to those of Jerome.

New Catholic Encyclopedia. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967.

This is a new edition of the classic *Catholic Encyclopedia* of 1914. A second edition, was published in 2002 and was listed as one of the Library Journal's "Best Reference Sources" for 2003. This has been a standard reference work for students, teachers, librarians, journalists, and general readers interested in the history, doctrine, practices, and people of the Catholic faith. I have chosen this as a resource to get the most authoritative perspective on Christian Church history from the Roman Catholic (Western) point of view. This encyclopedia, fortunately, is available on line by the Catholic Church.