



The Eastern Churches and the Papacy (Studies on the Papacy)

S. Herbert Scott, Mysterium Books

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"A detailed and critical survey of a complex subject....A bold thesis." -- *The Spectator*

One often hears that, in Christian antiquity the Pope came to prominence in the West as a unifying force, but that he was in the East honored only as "first among equals," without being accorded any sort of primacy of authority. S. Herbert Scott argues that the history is not nearly so clean as that. In this book, he probes the historical record, sifting the controversies of antiquity--on penance and the date of Easter, on the Incarnation, on communion and excommunication--to characterize in each historical instance the role that was expected of, claimed and exercised by, and accepted of the Bishop of Rome. In the final analysis, he states: "[T]he evidence of the second and first centuries, such as it is, will be found identical in character—Rome will be seen claiming authority, and expecting or demanding obedience—and for the same reasons: that the bishop is the successor of St. Peter, the chief of the apostles, the leader appointed by Christ."

Scott's book originated not as a rhetorically-driven apologetic but as a doctoral thesis at the University of Oxford. All the more so, then, are its strong conclusions useful to those interested in the question of papal authority in the patristic era and to those who follow today the ongoing dialogue between the Catholic Church and Eastern Orthodoxy.

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