

Anastasius Bibliothecarius  
(815-878)

PREFACE TO VII GENERAL SYNOD  
(TO POPE HADRIAN II)  
(PL 129: 17-18)  
[9<sup>th</sup> Century]

Following the directions of the Popes, especially your predecessor and yourself, I have published practically everything which relates to this present business, and which has come out in Latin from the Apostolic See either in this account of the council in question or in other volumes. And afterwards, when I went to Constantinople for this purpose, I gave a fair amount of help on these matters to your agents, as they themselves will also tell you. And bearing in mind what turns human affairs can take, I decided to take a copy of the minutes of the Council, which your agents had copied out to carry back with them, and bring it back to Rome myself. But your agents were set upon by robbers and they lost their copy along with the rest of their goods, and I received due recognition for bringing back the minutes in the volume I carried with me. Your Holiness received it gladly and ordered me to translate it into Latin. I pointed out that I was not fully competent to perform this task, while admitting that I am at present attempting to translate certain documents from the Roman archives into Latin. I do acknowledge that some of my drafts have been published for the instruction of many and at your predecessor's bidding. But an order from such a Pontiff overcomes all scruples, as long as obedience is a grace to a dutiful servant.

Therefore in my translation of this holy synod, insofar as Latin idiom will allow, I have rendered word for word. And, in keeping the sense, I have sometimes had to change Greek constructions to their Latin equivalents. A few passages I have left to be unravelled by a more able translator. [...] These I annotated in the margin, or even, as the need dictated, gave a full explanation of them. It is also worth noting that I found certain relevant documents, which had been sent to Constantinople, were not translated accurately into Greek as there is a dearth of translators in Constantinople. Some of these documents, as time permitted, I corrected myself; others remain uncorrected as I found them.

One last point: readers must be warned, and to avoid future error it must be clearly

borne in mind in case underhand additions or alterations by Constantinople are found in the Greek manuscripts, that there are no more nor no less matters defined than are recorded in the Greek minutes of this same Council archived at Rome, and are translated into Latin satisfactorily and archived in the same Church, attested to by the signatures of all the administrators of Patriarchal Sees, of the Emperors, and of the Bishops, and officially sealed.

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