

Hieromonk Enoch: Tampering with the AD 589 Acts of Toledo and the Filioque: A Centuries Old Slander



St. Leander, Archbishop of Seville, c. AD 534-600

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by

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The standard historical model we are presented with on the origin of the Filioque clause (or “et Filio” depending upon the version) into the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Symbol is that it was first inserted into the Symbol of Faith at the [589 Synod of Toledo](#), in Spain. However, there

are reasons to believe that this was not the case; that, instead, there was actually a bit of tampering going on with the Acts of the Council by unknown persons a hundred or more years later. I will attempt to present some of this possible evidence and outline its implications. First, let us examine the background that was present in Spain and the wider Western world before the council.

Visigothic Spain, Germanic Tribes, and Orthodox Roman Civilization

The Roman province of Hispania (the modern day Iberian Peninsula of Spain and Portugal) was invaded by various Germanic tribes in the 5th century. Lacking resources, the imperial government in Rome enlisted the aid of the Visigoths to fight the other Germanic tribes. With the Western Empire collapsing the Visigoths came to dominate the province, forming the independent Visigothic Kingdom (eventually, during the time of King Euric in the late 5th century, the powerless emperor in Rome had no choice but to recognize their independence).

The Visigoths were mainly Arians (and therefore, did not accept Orthodoxy, the official religion of the Western Empire). However, the majority of the Iberian population was still Hispano-Roman (i.e., the Romanized population of Iberians, Lusitanians, Carthignians, and Celts, some of which, like the Iberians, had been culturally influenced both by the Semitic Phoenicians and Greek civilization); that is, they were culturally, linguistically, and religiously different (they were Mediterranean-Greco-Roman in their culture, they spoke Latin, Greek and their native tongues, and they had long since accepted, for the most part, the Orthodox Faith [hidden Priscillianists and others excepted]).

This, of course, created a division between the rulers and the ruled. In fact, the Visigothic nobility, for the most part, with their Arian church, were a separate and exogenous entity, grafted onto the native Orthodox population. Needless to say, this caused serious problems, especially at Visigothic attempts to forcibly convert the Orthodox to Arianism. Long after the existential defeat of Arianism as a major threat in the East, the West was heavily plagued by persecution from Arian forces (the Visigoths in Spain, the Lombards in Italy, and the Vandals in North Africa). With the collapse of the Western Empire as a stabilizing force, and the attendant power vacuum, numerous barbarian tribes filled the void. Of course, not everything with said tribes was bad; they did accept a great deal of Romanization, and in many cases were able to fuse the best parts of their cultures with the best part of the classical culture. King Euric had Leo, the Roman lawyer, draw up the [Codex Euricianus](#) in the 5th century. The Lombards in Northern Italy, despite being heretics, did adapt the wider Christian civilizational influences (for example, the famous ‘Arian Baptistry’ in Ravenna).

However, as long as the ruling class was religiously different, and was consistently attempting to forcibly convert and martyr the native Orthodox populations, there would be no long term peace (thus, we see the distinctions contained in the Codex Euricianus, which were only to be altered and replaced with the [Lex Visigothrum](#) in the 7th century; thus, a standardization of one law for all classes,) Other tribes, such as the Franks under Clovis, adopted Orthodoxy over against Arianism and Paganism; the results were a combination of Roman and Germanic attributes; an attempt at a fusion.

Despite hostilities with Constantinople, and the success of a incursionary force of the Imperial Army under Emperor St. Justinian, the Visigothic

Arians were forced to accept a form of suzerainty, if in name only, from the Eastern Roman Empire. King Liuvigild, despite his wars with Constantinople, did seek to accept the mantle of Roman civilization (as did many of the Germanic tribes); for example, the Visigoths continuously issued coinage along the imperial models (although with varying degrees of quality) . Despite his heresies, Liuvigild, did make some improvements in the conditions of his Hispanic possessions; he repealed, for example, the old Breviarium law passed under Imperial Roman rule. These prohibited ethnic intermarriage between Visigoths and Ibero-Romans. And, except for the end of his rule, there was mostly peace. There was some modification of the previous legal code on other fronts, and production of another legal code (all of which were heavily influenced by Theodosian decrees as much as Germanic principles). Indeed, St. John of Biclaro, the famous Spanish bishop and confessor for Orthodoxy in the 6th century, does observe that King Liuvigild was mostly at peace with his own subjects, that is, of course, until St.Hermenegild the Martyr.

St. Hermenegild the Martyr

In the late 6th century, near the end of Liuvigild reign, St. Hermenegild, son of King Liuvigild (the other son being Reccared, the future King) was made co-ruler with his father, and thus, a major aspect of Visigothic society, instability, was staved off for the foreseeable future. Essentially, Visigoths did not have a firm concept of hereditary monarchy. One of the perennial problems of the Visigothic Kingdom was that it was essentially a diffused aristocratic (or oligarchic) government with the King being merely the head of the military nobles. The King did not have absolute power; Germanic kingship, in fact, was simply a development of the old chieftain system. Thus, laws the king wished to pass needed to be ratified by the nobles; they could even be legally

challenged by others in the aristocracy. Absolute monarchy (despite many benefits) is something that more belongs to the 17th century with Louis XIV's statement "L'état, c'est moi" (yet, even in these cases, there was a clearly defined understanding of what political power was; and it was more restricting in what it sought to influence than modern democratic governments). The only monarch who was absolute in a modern sense was the Emperor in Constantinople, yet, even the Emperor knew better than to go against the whole of the Senate, aristocracy, beauracracy, Church Hierarchy, and peasantry.

Because of the lack of a firm way of choosing a new King, there was constant threat of civil war and factionalization among the aristocracy.

Thus, St. Hermenegild's installation as co-ruler, provided a seemingly smooth transition when his father died. However, problems began almost immediately; around 579 St. Hermengild alienated his father by converting from Arianism to the Orthodox Faith. St. Hermenegild's wife, Ingunthis, along with St. Leander, had convinced the youth to accept the True Faith. However, this was an unpopular move in a country ruled by an Arian elite who had been known to persecute the Orthodox. The Arian King and family immediately demanded St. Hermenegild's apostasy and reversion to Arianism. As St. Gregory Dialogus, a contemporary of these events relates in his "Dialogues":

Not long since, as I have learned of many which came from Spain, king Hermigildus, son of Leuigildus, king of the Visigoths, was from Arian heresy lately converted to the Catholic faith by the most reverent man Leander, Bishop of Seville, with whom I was not long since familiarly acquainted; which young Prince, upon his conversion, his father, being an Arian, laboured both by large promises and terrible threats to draw again to his former error: but when most constantly his son answered, that he would never forsake the true faith which he had once embraced,

his father in great anger took away his kingdom, and beside deprived him of all wealth and riches; and perceiving that, with all this, his mind was nothing moved, he committed him to straight prison, laying irons both upon his neck and hands. Upon this, the young king Hermigildus began now to contemn his earthly kingdom, and to seek with great desire after the kingdom of heaven: and lying in prison fast bound, he prayed to almighty God in hair-cloth to send him heavenly comfort: and so much the more did he despise the glory of this transitory world, by how much he knew himself in that case that he had now nothing that could be taken from him.

When the solemn feast of Easter was come, his wicked father sent unto him in the dead of the night an Arian Bishop, to give him the communion of a sacrilegious consecration, that he might thereby again recover his father's grace and favour: but the man of God, as he ought, sharply reprehended that Arian Bishop which came unto him, and giving him such entertainment as his deserts required, utterly rejected him; for albeit outwardly he lay there in bands, yet inwardly to himself he stood secure in the height of his own soul. The father, at the return of the Arian prelate, understanding these news, fell into such a rage that forthwith he sent his officers of execution to put to death that most constant confessor, in the very prison where he lay: which unnatural and bloody commandment was performed accordingly: for so soon as they came into the prison, they clave his brains with an hatchet, and so bereaved him of mortal life, having only power to take that from him which the holy martyr made small account of. Afterward, for the publishing of his true glory to the world, there wanted not miracles from heaven: for in the night time singing was heard at his body: some also report that, in the night, burning lamps were seen in that place: by reason whereof his body, as of him that was a martyr, was worthily worshipped of all Christian people. But the wicked father and murderer of his own son, albeit he was sorry that he had put him to death, yet was not his grief of

that quality that it brought him to the state of salvation. For although he knew very well that the Catholic faith was the truth, yet, for fear of his people, he never deserved to be a professor thereof.

At length, falling sick, a little before his death, he commended his son Recharedus, who was to succeed him in the kingdom, and was yet an heretic, unto Bishop Leander, whom before he had greatly persecuted: that by his counsel and exhortation, he might likewise make him a member of the Catholic Church, as he had before made his brother Hermigildus; and when he had thus done, he departed this life. After whose death, Recharedus the king, not following the steps of his wicked father, but his brother the martyr, utterly renounced Arianism: and laboured so earnestly for the restoring of religion, that he brought the whole nation of the Visigoths to the true faith of Christ, and would not suffer any that was an heretic in his country to bear arms and serve in the wars. And it is not to be admired that he became thus to be a preacher of the true faith, seeing he was the brother of a martyr, whose merits did help him to bring so many into the lap of God's Church: wherein we have to consider that he could never have effected all this, if king Hermigildus had not died for the testimony of true religion; for, as it is written: Unless the grain of wheat falling into the earth doth die, itself remaineth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit. This we see to prove true in the members, which before was verified in the head: for one died amongst the Visigoths that many might live, and of one grain that was sown for the faith, a great crop of faithful people sprung up. ([Book III, ch. 31](#))

Although St. Hermenegild requested help from the Roman forces, not much help was coming. The Romans were busy fighting the Persian Empire during the [nearly 20 year long Caucasus War](#) that wasn't to end until years after St. Hermenegild's martyrdom. Although initially

welcomed by the Imperial commander of Roman forces at Cordoba, this was not long lasting. The Roman government soon concluded another treaty with King Liuvigild, and Cordoba was transferred to their Visigothic Arian ally, to the detriment of the Orthodox contender for the throne (upon whom the hopes of relief for the vast majority of the Ibero-Roman population depended). St. Hermenegild's wife and son left with the imperial forces. St. Hermenegild chose to stay and face his father. He took refuge for himself in a church to pray. King Liuvigild agreed not to put his son to death if the son renounced claim to the throne and accept exile and imprisonment in Valencia. This occurred. But, as St. Gregory notes, St. Hermenegild continued to refuse communion with the Arian church, for which he was martyred. Refusing to accept the false communion from the hands of an Arian bishop, on the Feast of Pascha, 586, the wicked Arian King Liuvigild ordered his own son to be beheaded. Not long after, King Liuvigild died; apparently in peace. However, St. Hermenegild went not down to the depths of Hades, though having suffered a horrendous death in prison; his soul joined the martyric hosts with the Light Unapproachable.

The Aftermath of St. Hermenegild's Martyrdom and the Defeat of Arianism

With the death of King Liuvigild, and Hispania firmly in the hands of the the Visigothic Arian forces after their victory, backed up by a completely distinct Arian ecclesial body (with its own bishops, clergy, monks, liturgy, and teachers), perched and feeding off the Orthodox Ibero-Roman population, it seemed as if there was no hope for Orthodoxy's triumph, even temporarily. King Liuvigild, in revenge for his son's actions, persecuted the Orthodox, and imprisoned bishops and martyred saints. St. Leander, the Orthodox Archbishop of Seville, was exiled in Constantinople. St. [John of Biclaro](#), one of the most highly educated

men in the Kingdom (having spent perhaps as many as 17 years in Constantinople, devoted to study of Greek and Latin, and learning from the sources), upon his return to his native Kingdom was imprisoned in Barcelona for his refusal to accept Arianism (it was also suspected by the Visigothic King that St. John was a spy for the Imperial Government in Constantinople). It seemed pretty hopeless. But, there was a light to shine forth.

The brother of the martyred prince St. Hermenegild, Reccared, took his father's throne upon Liuvigild's death. King Reccared was immediately accepted by the Visigothic Arian nobility and proclaimed King. Under the influence of the now returned St. Leander, and undoubtedly moved beyond words by the heroic martyrdom of his saintly brother, in 587, King Reccared renounced Arianism and accepted the Orthodox Faith.

Figure: Official Public Confession of Orthodoxy of King Reccared at the 589 Third Council of Toledo . Notice the tremendous influence that 'Byzantine' Roman culture had upon even the Visigoths in their royal dress, architecture, and designs. 'Byzantine' architecture and church design was to dominate Western Europe far into the Middle Ages; only being overthrown with the Renaissance, Reformation and Counter-Reformation / Baroque movements

For the next two years, King Reccared would face constant plots, rebellions, wars, and intrigues by Arian forces against his conversion. Though the immediate effect on the Visigothic nobility and clergy in Toledo was the acceptance of Orthodoxy, this was not the same elsewhere. Arian bishops were the main antagonists. Even the Queen Dowager with Arian ecclesiastical support was plotting. However, after two years of wars and plots, Arianism was militarily defeated. The Visigoths, who had increasingly accepted Romanization, were now to make this official in a Council at Toledo. King Reccared had converted to Orthodoxy two years previous; but, there was to be another public confession, along with the Visigothic nation as a whole. Thus, a Church Synod was to symbolize the triumph of the Orthodox Faith in a nation through its leaders. In the coming decades the Visigoths increasingly combined their society with the Eastern Roman, and a successful fusion was begun.

Here, I believe, despite the objections on many fronts to Fr. John Romanides' theories, I believe his theories of a Roman civilization do provide a possible framework. The Frankish rulers and ecclesiastics, were, for the next few hundred years to constantly attack the Spanish Church and accuse it of every heresy under the sun, including Neo-Nestorian Adoptionism; despite the Spanish Church's repeated condemnation of Felix and Elipandus for Crypto-Nestorianism and the

defense of Orthodoxy raised by St. Beatus of Liebana, the Frankish clergy were to continually attack, libel, and slander the Spanish Church into the 9th, 10th and 11th century. They even became the proverbial busy body tattlers when, in the 10th century, a Frankish delegation convinced the Orthodox Roman Pope John X to send the legate Zaragoza, to Spain, in order to investigate the “charges” against the Spanish (erroneously called “Mozarabic”) rite. The Frankish representatives said it was tainted with “Adoptionism” (which in the Medieval mind did not mean Classical Paul of Samosata teachings, but, merely a form of Nestorianism). The Spanish Church was cleared of all charges and a rebuff was thus given to certain Frankish clerics for meddling in things that were not their business. However, during the time of the post-schism Pope Gregory VII (the Germanic Abbot Hildebrand), in 1085, the Frankish meddlers finally got their way: by means of force and intrigue (not to mention burning of books and undue persecution by royal power) they were finally able to suppress the native Spanish rite and begin the gradual process of total Papal domination and incorporation of Ultramontane thought.

Yet, despite what the future would hold, such devastation was nearly 500 years away. The Third Council of Toledo was held in 589 with St. Leander, the triumphant Orthodox Archbishop of Seville and friend of St. Gregory Dialogus, presiding, along with St. John of Biclaro, bishop of Girona (both saints having spent years living in Constantinople, learning the Greek language and influenced by liturgical customs there, which would show in the rite of the Orthodox Romans of Spain). At the Council several Canons were passed and anathemas issued. Nothing really out of the ordinary, EXCEPT FOR ONE THING!

The Filioque Not Found in Authentic Acts of Third Toledo; Filioque

as Used Later Misapplied by Papism

In the Acts of the Council we find many interesting things. One of the most important liturgical changes introduced into the rite of the Spanish Church was the singing of the Symbol of Faith. Before this, the Creed was not sung during the Liturgy (or was not required to be, at any rate). To us, this seems strange, but, we must remember that the Symbol of Faith only found a permanent place of recitation at the Liturgy in Constantinople only about 70 years before Toledo (during the time of the Monophysite intruder, Patriarch Timonthy, although the Orthodox were more than happy to retain this custom). In fact, the form of the Creed introduced into the Liturgy in Spain was in the first person plural of “We believe”, and thus similar to the original Greek constructions given at Nicea I and Constantinople I. This was undoubtedly due to the influence of the two prominent hierarchs at Toledo, St. Leander of Seville and St. John of Biclario, who, as mentioned before, had spent several years in the Greek speaking capital of the Eastern Roman Empire.

Now, we have been told for centuries that the 589 Synod of Toledo introduced the infamous addition. In particular, it was not ‘Filioque’ but ‘Et Filio’ that was said to have been added to the section about the Holy Ghost. Yet, in this author’s research, I have found that, apparently, many recent scholars have challenged this assumption. In the rather interesting book by A. Edward Siecienski, “The Filioque: History of a Doctrinal Controversy“, on pg. 68, we find the following:

“For centuries the Council of Toledo has been used to date the first use of the filioque in the Western version of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. It was at Toledo, under the Presidency of Archbishop [St.] Leander (the older brother of [St.] Isidore of Seville), that King Recarrd and the Visigoths accepted the Catholic [i.e., Orthodox] faith and

renounced Arianism and Priscilianism, pledging their acceptance of the ancient councils of Nicea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon. Since the acts of these councils were read out, those assembled at Toledo were very much aware of the prohibition of Ephesus regarding “producing, editing, or composing another faith other than that set out by the Holy Fathers gathered at Nicea with the Holy Spirit.” In order to maintain continuity with the faith of these councils, King Reccard mandated that the symbol of faith of the Council of Constantinople (i.e., “of the 150 bishops”) should be recited at the celebration of every Eucharist in all the churches of Spain and Gallacia “according to the form of the Eastern Church.” It is thus clear that the Council of Toledo had no intention of adding anything to the creed, or no-consciousness that they were introducing something new.

“Yet in his opening speech at the council, King Reccard professed his belief that “in equal degree must the Holy Spirit be confessed by us and we must preach that he proceeds from the Father and the Son” (a Patre et a Filio procedere). In its third anathema, the council condemned “whoever does not believe in the Holy Spirit, or does not believe that he proceeds from the Father and the Son (a Patre et Filio procedere), and denies that he is coeternal and coequal with the Father and the Son.” Even the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, as it was allegedly recited at Toledo, taught that the “Holy Spirit, Lord and Giver of Life, Proceeds from the Father and the Son [ex Patre et Filio Procedentem].” In the mind of Reccard and those assembled at Toledo, this was the Creed “in its Eastern form,” demonstrating against a lack of awareness that any alteration or addition was being made in the faith of the Universal Church.

“Here we must assume that either the council was using an already interpolated creed, one that “had made its way from Church to Church...and established so firm a footing that no suspicion of its

genuineness was entertained,” or that the acts of the council themselves been altered and the et Filio added by the hand of a later editor. This later (and more probable) theory was first advanced in 1908 by A.E. Burn, who pointed out that in many early copies of the councils acts the phrase was either missing or obviously in another hand. However, regardless of its exact origin, it is clear that within a few short years of the council the interpolated creed was firmly established in both the liturgy and theology of the Spanish Church.”

Now, this is rather interesting. If true (which Siecienski says is probable), we have a case of one of the greatest misapprehensions of fact in history. In fact, St. Leander has even been attacked by some who have accused him of heresy and removed him from the Calendar, particularly over this (though, these are relatively recent attempts in the past 30 years). However, perhaps the claim will be made that, even if the phrase wasn't used, in the minds of those found at the Council, heretical Filioquism was implicitly believed. Now, while admitting the Filioque (i.e. that the Holy Ghost derives His Hypostatic Origin from the Son along with the Father) is condemned by the Church, there is still a question about what exactly ALL these Western writers, centuries before the Schism, meant by this term. Indeed, this author, is again, more than pleased to agree with Fr. John Romanides, when he asserts, based on the well-known Letter to Marinus, by St. Maximus, that the Orthodox Romans (of which St. Leander and St. John were typifications, having drunk the depths of theology at Constantinople and been purified through ascetic struggle and violent persecution) meant something different in their personal writings than what later heretical thinkers would proclaim. So, even if, as I believe and will continue to show, the phrase “Et Filio” was not inserted at Third Toledo into the Creed, what did some of these Fathers mean by using the similar phrases in their other writings? Well, in [Part 3 of his “Franks, Romans and Feudalism”](#), Fr. Romanides say the following:

“This is nowhere so evident as in the Latin handling of Maximos the Confessor’s description, composed in 650, of the West Roman Orthodox Filioque at the Council of Florence (1438-42). The East Romans hesitated to present Maximos’ letter to Marinos about this West Roman Orthodox Filioque because the letter did not survive in its complete form. They were pleasantly surprised, however, when Andrew, the Latin bishop of Rhodes, quoted the letter in Greek in order to prove that in the time of Maximos there was no objection to the Filioque being in the Creed. Of course, the Filioque was not yet in the Creed. Then Andrew proceeded to translate Maximos into Latin for the benefit of the pope. However, the official translator intervened and challenged the rendition. Once the correct translation was established, the Franks then questioned the authenticity of the text. They assumed that their own Filioque was the only one in the West, and so they rejected on this ground Maximos’ text as a basis of union. When Maximos spoke about the Orthodox Filioque, as supported with passages from Roman Fathers, he did not mean those who came to be known as Latin Fathers, and so included among them Saint Cyril of Alexandria.”

This is, of course, a totally different understanding than what we find codified by the Post-Schism Church in Anselm, or the [Council of Bari in 1098](#). St. Maximus, who, during the Monothelite heresy, had to defend the Orthodox West Romans (yes, a more than acceptable term) against the heresy of the Eastern Romans, had to deal with many criticisms. Perhaps the greatest was the accusation by the Eastern Roman Monothelites that the teachers of Old Rome had no room to speak because some were using Filioque type phraseology, and were therefore unsound in their Trinitarian theology. This was a serious accusation, and if true, it would seriously undercut St. Maximus. The issue was first broached when one of the Orthodox Popes, in a protest to the

Monothelitism of Constantinople, used the unguarded phrase in a profession of Faith. This, of course, prompted balks from the Monothelites at Constantinople. However, whatever later Carolingian, and particularly Scholastic, teachers will make of this, it is clear that St. Maximus understood it in a way that was Orthodox; and so did these Westerners he collaborated with (it still being absent from the Creed; despite attempts by later writers to interpolate the “phrase”; [see the case of the addition by a foreign hand of “Filioque” into the Irish Stowe Missal sometime in the 10/11th century](#)) In his letter to Marinus (for which we have no reason to doubt its [authenticity](#)), St. Maximus writes:

“Those of the Queen of cities have attacked the synodal letter of the present very holy Pope (Martin I), not in the case of all the chapters that he has written in it, but only in the case of two of them. One relates to theology, because it says he says that ‘the Holy Spirit proceeds (ἐκπορεύεσθαι) also from the Son.’

“The other has to do with the divine incarnation, because he has written, ‘The Lord, as man, is without original sin.’

“With regard to the first matter, they (the Romans) have produced the unanimous documentary evidence of the Latin fathers, and also of Cyril of Alexandria, from the sacred commentary he composed on the gospel of St. John. On the basis of these texts, they have shown that they have not made the Son the cause of the Spirit — they know in fact that the Father is the only cause of the Son and the Spirit, the one by begetting and the other by procession; but [they use this expression] in order to manifest the Spirit’s coming-forth (προϊέναι) through him and, in this way, to make clear the unity and identity of the essence....

“The Romans have therefore been accused of things of which it is wrong to accuse them, whereas of the things of which the Byzantines have quite

rightly been accused (viz., Monothelism), they have, to date, made no self-defense, because neither have they gotten rid of the things introduced by them.

“But, in accordance with your request, I have asked the Romans to translate what is peculiar to them in such a way that any obscurities that may result from it will be avoided. But since the practice of writing and sending (the synodal letters) has been observed, I wonder whether they will possibly agree to doing this. One should also keep in mind that they cannot express their meaning in a language and idiom that are foreign to them as precisely as they can in their own mother-tongue, any more than we can do.”

(St. Maximus the Confessor, Ad Domnum Marinum Cypri presbyterum (Letter to the priest Marinus of Cyprus), PG 91, 134D-136C.)

Thus, a perfectly Orthodox interpretation is capable, but one which completely excludes the Papist heresy (indeed, as Professor Ostrumoff observes, the Latin party at Florence quickly were embarrassed when the Orthodox said if the Latins would accept the “Filioque” in St. Maximus’ sense, and remove it from the Creed, then Union would be accomplished immediately, seeing that Orthodoxy was triumphant; the Latins quickly withdrew the letter and repudiated Andrew of Rhodes’ use of it).

However, about 34 years prior to Toledo (which did not insert the term), Pope St. Pelagius I in his Epistle [“**Humani generis**”](#), [written to King Childebert I](#) of Gaul, states the following as regards the Holy Ghost:

“*Spiritum quoque Sanctum, omnipotentem, utriusque, Patri scilicet ac Filio, aequalem, consemperiternum atque consubstantialem; qui ex Patre intemporaliter procedens, Patris est Filique Spiritus.*”

Pope St. Pelagius I was the Orthodox Pope of Rome from 556-561. The translation of the above is as follows:

“Also the Holy Ghost, the Almighty with both the Father and the Son equal, coeternal, and consubstantial; Who, Proceeding Eternally from the Father, the Spirit of the Father and the Son.”

St. Pelagius has to explicitly use the term ‘intemporaliter’; which means, ‘eternal’ or ‘un-time’. Similarly, when speaking of the Father, he uses the term ‘ingenitum’, meaning ‘Unbegotten’. Thus, because Latin uses the word ‘procedere’ (and it’s various forms, such as the participle form above ‘procedens’) to convey the Greek terms used for both the Eternal Procession of the Holy Ghost, and the mere temporal sending in time, it is necessary to add clarifying words, i.e., the adverb ‘intemporaliter’. Because of this vague word of translation, it became necessary, in many instances, to clarify what type of Procession was spoken of. Sadly, this ambiguity in the Latin tongue, would later be taken advantage of for the real and dangerous and heretical Filioquism to be promoted; eventually being able to gain enough foot ground to tear the Western portion of the Orthodox Church away during the Great Schism.

Furthermore, the later Carolingian and Roman Catholic attempts to paint St. Gregory Dialogus, the Great, as teaching heretical Filioquism fail for a number of reasons. St. Gregory in the Latin edition of the “Dialogues”, translated into English, says:

” And therefore our Saviour himself, to increase the faith of his disciples, said: If I do not depart, the Comforter will not come unto you: for, seeing certain it is that the comforting Spirit doth always proceed from the Father and the Son, why doth the Son say that he will depart that the Comforter may come, who never is absent from the

Son?” ([Book III, Ch. 38](#))

In the Greek edition prepared by Pope St. Zacharias (commemorated March 15), it says in the one section:

“for, seeing certain it is that the comforting Spirit doth originate [proceed] from the Father and abideth in the Son”.

Now, it would seem, the critic would say that supposedly Pope St. Zachary, who knew Latin and Greek (being indeed from a Greek speaking family in Calabria, and whose father, Polychronios, was a Deacon in the Church at Rome), and was the Orthodox Pope of Rome, celebrating all the services from Mass to Baptism to the Hours, Ordinations, etc, in Latin, while also knowing Greek as a Greek, responsible for defending Orthodoxy against Iconoclasm, and gave the Church in the Greek-speaking East the Dialogues, didn't know his own native languages, and theology enough, to render an accurate translation!. That's kind of ridiculous! Instead of the author suggesting some ambiguity because of the Latin, why not the reverse? Indeed, the Septuagint is so valuable not just as the Scripture of the Church, but, because it can also be useful in translation. For example, suppose there is a dispute about what the Hebrew word in Isaiah 7:14, *almah*, means. Some says, 'virgin', and others say 'young woman, maiden'. Well, the 70 Translators certainly were familiar with Greek. Therefore, they could have used a different word than they did, but, they chose a word in Greek that explicitly implied 'virgin' (*parthenos*). Therefore, it is the 'translation' which is contained in a comprehensive language which can define terms and ambiguities in one less so.

Therefore, words like ‘procedite’, ‘procedere’, etc, which have an ambiguous meaning in older theological Latin, often have to be clarified. Thus, Pope Pelagius uses the word ‘intemporaliter’ (eternally) to clarify the exact nature of the Holy Ghost’s Procession in his Epistle to King Childerbert in the 500s. However, Pope St. Zachary chose to render the ambiguous Latin word, which could be subject to the same meaning as Procession in relation between the Father and the Holy Ghost, or procession in some other meaning such as sending in time, etc, by the translation he used. However, as time continued, the ambiguous phrase took on an horrible life of its own. The term was wrongly put into the Creed, and the heresy became more and more powerful.

We remember, even at the Council of Florence, when St. Mark of Ephesus put forward the Letter of St. Maximus to Marinus, as a basis for understanding the true doctrine, the Latins, who had been so quick to bring this letter up because of St. Maximus’ words, quickly renounced the letter. Why? Because St. Maximus explains what the Romans of that time meant by the phrase, which was diametrically opposed to what the Papists meant by it back then and today. Therefore, there is no reason to suppose that St. Gregory the Great taught that the Holy Ghost Eternally Proceeds from the Father and the Son, or the Double-Procession Heresy. Instead, using an awkward language, he was trying to express the view that, as St. Zacharias translates, that the Holy Ghost Originates Eternally from the Father, and Abides in the Son. Because of the heretical use of these terms, it is impossible to use them as they were originally meant. Indeed. St. Gregory II of Cyprus at the Council of Blachernae states:

“And they either infer a double or a single procession of origin, and join the Son to the Father according to this explanation of “cause,” both of which are beyond all blasphemy. For there is no other hypostasis in the Trinity except the Father’s, from which the existence and essence of the consubstantial [Son and Holy Spirit] is derived. According to the

common mind of the Church and the aforementioned saints, the Father is the foundation and the source of the Son and the Spirit, the only source of divinity, and the only cause. If, in fact, it is also said by some of the saints that the Spirit proceeds “through the Son,” what is meant here is the eternal manifestation of the Spirit by the Son, not the purely [personal] emanation into being of the Spirit, which has its existence from the Father. Otherwise, this would deprive the Father from being the only cause and the only source of divinity, and would expose the theologian [Gregory of Nazianzus] who says “everything the Father is said to possess, the Son, likewise, possesses except causality” as a dishonest theologian. To these who speak thus, we pronounce the above-recorded resolution and judgment, we cut them off from the membership of the Orthodox, and we banish them from the flock of the Church of God.”

Therefore, St. Gregory did not teach the heresy of filioquist double-processionism. The term in the original Latin can be interpreted more fully by the Greek of St. Zacharias to mean that Procession in Latin, being originally a broad term, encompassed many meanings. The Holy Ghost Proceeds from the Father as the Eternal Arche, and the only sense He can be said to ‘proceed’ from the Son is in the sense of either an Eternal Manifestation, or temporal sending (in which case, ‘proceed’ is misused). However, the Papists took this ambiguous phraseology and built an heresy out of it.

More so, turning to A.E. Burn’s book “The Nicene Creed”, , we find more information. Burn seems to have been the last serious scholar who was interested in this question from a manuscript perspective. His ability to look at many of the early manuscripts of the Council proved invaluable. We have the following concerning the 589 Toledan Synod,

on [pg. 40](#):

“One of the leading theologians at the Council, John of Biclaro, Bishop of Gerona, had recently returned from Constantinople, where he had resided for some years. It was no doubt due to his influence that the liturgical use of the Creed was introduced, according to the custom at Constantinople. Moreover the text of the Creed itself in the Acts of the Council follows closely the form quoted at the second Session of the Council of Chalcedon, which we found reason to regard as the form currently used in the Church of Constantinople.

“These considerations render it in the highest degree improbable that the Council could have accepted the interpolation of the words ‘And the Son’ in Art. 9 without protest from a prelate who was qualified to speak with authority on the text used by the Eastern Church, the example of which they all evidently wished to copy.

“In my Introduction to the Creeds I quoted the fact that two early editions of the Council—Cologn (1530) and Paris (1535)—omit the words in the text of the Creed as quoted at Toledo. Indeed Cardinal a’Aguirre admits that some MSS. do not contain them. I am now able to produce evidence, from some of the most important MSS. of the Spanish Councils at the Escorial and at Madrid, which confirms my conviction that the Council never added the words at all. Some MSS. omit them altogether, an omission which would not be made intentionally after controversy had arisen with the Eastern Church in the ninth century. Some MSS. put them into the margin or between the lines. When the Creed occurs twice, first under the heading of Constantinople, and then under the heading of Toledo, it is always under the heading Toledo that the words creep in, before they are added in the other text-form. The reason is not far to seek. The copyist has read in one of the anathemas of this Council of Toledo: ‘Whoever does not believe or has not believed

that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, and has not said that He is coeternal and coessential with the Father and the Son, let him be anathema.’ With that fate hanging over his head what was a poor copyist to do? Without larger knowledge he could not imagine that the Creed had not contained the words ‘and the Son’ from the beginning. We cannot blame him. When the words once crept into the Toledan text it was natural that they should spread into the form quoted as from the Council of Constantinople. The Creed thus interpolated spread.”

Of course, even assuming the other references to “Filioque” or “Et Filio” in the Acts are even genuine (and it seems perhaps we can cast doubt on that), their interpretation can be understood in the same sense as St. Gregory Dialogus, as opposed to that of, say, Anselm or Aquinas. Furthermore, Burn then alludes to an early Toledan Synod (the First) as approving the addition of the “And the Son”, but, this is not so. In the editions contained on the site run by the [Papists themselves](#) we find in brackets, or in parentheses, the filioque is only contained. Not in the original text. Am I mistaken? Was Neale, who is quoted at the source on this, merely quoting an interpolated text himself? Clearly, we have an example of a foreign hand, centuries later, perhaps during the 9th or 10th centuries, adding to the text even in the First Toledan Synod. That is, unless one also assumes that all those brackets with the actual chapters and verses were in the 5th century version! In fact, the First Synod of Toledo, which is variously placed at anywhere between 400 AD to 447 AD, did not use the Filioque. The editions that have been used to say it did are based upon the well-known late 9th century work known as the [Collectio Hispana Gallica Augustodunensis](#) (Vat. lat. 1341). The *Collectio* contains insertions and several forged capitularies, along with genuine texts, compiled by an author known only as “[Benedict Levita](#)” (i.e., Benedict the Deacon). Indeed, this author and others first noticed many of these ‘additions’ in brackets in their old copies of the

19th century “Enchiridion Symbolorum”.

Burn wrote a short entry about the MSS. of the Creed of the early Spanish Church. It can be found in the 1908 Journal of Theological Studies, beginning on pg. 301. It is a very short entry, but, it confirms what he has stated above. (Burn touches briefly on the subject here as well in another Journal issue.)

Therefore, there has been a good deal of tampering with things by Western writers, tampering even with Acts of Councils which are no longer acknowledged to have originally contained the horrid filioque. Indeed, when one considers the fact that the Oath against the Heretic Honorius, contained in the Liber Diurnus Romanorum Pontificum (but which ‘mysteriously’ disappeared after the Great Schism), remained hidden for nearly 600 years, and was then, after discovery (in the 1600s), only allowed to be published 100 years later, this gives one pause for thought! It is hard to change wholesale liturgical and patristic texts, but, it is far easier, centuries later, to insert a word here or there! However, can we once and for all clear this 589 Synod of the centuries old slander of altering the Symbol of Faith? What happened was the conversion of the Visigothic nation to Orthodoxy and its uniting with the Ibero-Roman population in faith, and culture. The Devil, on the other hand, has done all he could to slander St. Leander and others. Perhaps after centuries, the Spanish and their descendants can be availed of the intercessions of St. Hermenegild (as well as the later Cordoba Martyrs under the Muslims in the 9th century) for their re-conversion to Orthodoxy. After centuries of libel perhaps this deprivation of the Devil can be put to rest.

St. Hermenegild, intercede to God for us!

Source: <http://nftu.net/tampering-583-acts-toledo-filioque/>