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**Separatio vel reconciliatio: The diversity of Christian rituals of  
excommunication and penance in tenth and eleventh centuries**

MA Thesis in Comparative History, with a specialization  
in Late Antique, Medieval, and Renaissance Studies.

Central European University Private University

Vienna

May 2022

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(Slovakia)

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Chair, Examination Committee

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Thesis Supervisor

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## Author's declaration

I, the undersigned, **Katarina Balcirakova** candidate for the MA degree in Comparative History, with a specialization in Late Antique, Medieval, and Renaissance Studies, with a specialization in Interdisciplinary Medieval Studies declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

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## Abstract

This thesis reexamines the excommunication rites found in tenth and eleventh-century liturgical manuscripts to show them to be far more diverse than has been recognized in scholarship to date. It takes as its starting point a detailed analysis of four eleventh-century German pontificals, a part of the *Pontificale Romano-germanique*, which have been generally neglected by modern scholars. By demonstrating the active interest scribes devoted to compiling and adjusting the influential excommunication formulas of Regino of Prüm, the thesis shows that the period of tenth and eleventh centuries was critical for the ritual of excommunication. This argument proceeds in three stages. The first addresses the overlooked excommunication formulas in the German pontificals. By analyzing the variety of structure, vocabulary, rubrication, and positioning of these rites within each manuscript, I demonstrate that characterization of the PRG excommunication rites as static is simply untenable. The second places the locally confined case studies into their wider context of both liturgical sources and political developments. I link the proliferation of excommunication formulas to the disintegration of the Frankish Empire. The final chapter offers an analysis of real-world cases of punitive rites being performed, examining both penance and excommunication. The underlying argument throughout the whole thesis is that the subject of excommunication should be viewed in unison with penance, due to their intertwined relationship in the eyes of the contemporaries. Ultimately this thesis proves that excommunication rites were far more dynamic and varied than most scholars believe, and that this is reflected in both text and action.

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# 1 Introduction

The present thesis researches two medieval rites that were the means of punishing and reforming medieval Christians, namely excommunication and penance. The primary aim of the first part of the study is to demonstrate the existing, albeit often overlooked, variety of excommunication rites recorded in German liturgical manuscripts of tenth and eleventh centuries. I link this, together with the significant increase in numbers of liturgical manuscripts, to the growing political instability characteristic of the period. The normative literature for the proper performance of these rituals is inevitably reflected in contemporary practice recorded in narrative sources which constitutes the secondary focus of the research of this thesis. The underlying rationale behind studying concrete liturgical texts that had relatively locally confined influence and the narrative evidence that covers wider geographical scope is to provide a comprehensive picture of these two rites in the period of tenth and eleventh centuries.

The origins of the excommunication ritual can be traced to the Scripture - Christ's words established both the ideal procedure of communal discipline and sanction for its transgression - social exclusion.<sup>1</sup> This ostracism was supposed to be remedial since the exclusion was not permanent and the relationship between the included and excluded members was not portrayed as antagonistic. Only sinners who turned against Christ completely were shunned - with an emphasis on the sinner's choice to raise this barrier and distance himself from the community, as opposed to the Church's punishment.<sup>2</sup> The form of the ritual was therefore established in the formative years of Christianity, similarly to other communal rites such as baptism - a rite to mark one's entrance into the society. However, while the form of baptismal ritual was recorded

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<sup>1</sup> The procedure followed like this: a person must admonish the sinning individual first privately, then, if nothing changed, in front of two or three witnesses, and finally, before the whole Christian community.

<sup>2</sup> Some authors distinguish between the temporary exclusion and the absolute expulsion by using the names excommunication for the former case and anathema for the latter. The two terms will be used interchangeably in this thesis. See Lester K. Little, *Benedictine Maledictions. Liturgical Cursing in Romanesque France* (Ithaca and London, 1993) 30–44.

as a part of the oldest liturgical books to survive, that of excommunication only appeared at the beginning of the tenth century. Nevertheless, the existence and performance of this rite throughout the Middle Ages can be attested from a variety of other sources, such as the letters of the ninth-century Frankish archbishop Hincmar of Rheims.<sup>3</sup>

The rite of penance represented the less severe end of the stick used by the clergy to keep their flock to follow the Christian way of life. The process through which a person sought to atone for his sins involved confession, penitential acts to prove his repentance and good deeds. The ritual underwent a lot of change both in terms of form and the genre of the liturgical book it was recorded in. In the Late Antique period, we have records of the ritual of public penance which, despite the outdated opinions within academia of its opposite, continued to be exercised throughout the Middle Ages. Another form of penance, called private, tariff or non-solemn by different authors, was brought onto the continent by Celtic monks in the sixth century. In the subsequent centuries it gained popularity and at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 it was decreed that every Christian was supposed to undergo confession at least once per year.

Unlike excommunication, the rites for public penance were part of the earliest liturgical collections that can be traced as far as to the seventh century.<sup>4</sup> This chronological discrepancy between the two rites will form the basis around which the proposed thesis will revolve.

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<sup>3</sup> In the letters he instructed his parish clergy to read out the excommunication sentences before reading out the Gospel to make sure that the malefactors who tended to leave the mass immediately after the Gospel would not avoid hearing the sentences. Thus, the archbishop's suggestion on improving the accustomed practice illuminates the contemporary practices. Hincmar of Rheims, *Hincmari rhemensis archiepiscopi Opera omnia: juxta editionem sirmondianam ad prelum revocata : varia accessere monumenta quæ suppeditarunt Surii, Pertzii, etc., collectiones memoratissimæ. Patrologiæ cursus completus, series latīna* 125-126, ed. by Jacques-Paul, Migne (Paris: Garnier, 1844-64), 101-104.

<sup>4</sup> The earliest surviving sacramentaries date to the eighth century but historians trace their direct forerunners to the seventh century. See eds. Leo Cunibert Mohlberg, Leo Eizenhöfer, and Peter Siffrin, *Liber sacramentorum Romanæ Ecclesiæ ordinis anni circuli (Cod. Vat. Reg. Lat. 316 / Paris Bibl. Nat. 7193, 41/56) (Sacramentarium Gelasianum)*, *Rerum ecclesiasticarum documenta, Series major, Fontes* 4 (Rome: Herder, 1960), 17–18, 56–58.

Unlike excommunication, the rites for public penance were part of the earliest liturgical collections that can be traced as far as to the seventh century. This chronological discrepancy between the two rites will form the basis around which the proposed thesis will revolve.

In the first chapter of the present study, I argue against the established scholarly view of the excommunication liturgy as static. I do so by analyzing the excommunication rites in four eleventh-century German pontificals. First, by demonstrating that the authors consciously played around and interacted with the model formulas established by the Lotharingian abbot Regino of Prüm I prove that there existed a liturgical diversity as well as contemporary interest in the proper performance of the rite. Secondly, I argue that some of the ambiguous aspects of this seemingly separate rite of excommunications can be answered by looking at the wider context of punitive rites, hence the inclusion of an analysis of penitential ordines in certain manuscripts. The conclusions of the first part of the thesis, which may be viewed as a study of a locally confined written tradition, will then be situated into the wider context of liturgical sources of the Carolingian empire and post-Carolingian territories. Here I explain how the sudden proliferation of these texts fit into the wider political developments and the societal transformation that entailed. In the third and final part of the thesis I will shift my attention to sources of diverse genres, although the primary focus will be on narrative sources that describe concrete forms of the performance of these two rites in their historical context. This is in order to demonstrate the variety of real-life practice that is inevitably tied to the ongoing interest in the excommunication rites in the written liturgical tradition.

What directly follows is an outline of the history of the two rites before the period under study in this thesis combined with the scholarly approach to their studying. The discussion on the nature of the liturgical sources and the prejudices connected to them together with an

introduction into the historical context following it are used to set the scene for the subsequent analysis in the main chapters.

## 1.1 Historiography

Despite the fact that the primary focus of this thesis lies with the period of tenth and eleventh centuries, some background on the development of the rites in the late antique and early medieval period is in order. For the purpose of being concise, I decided to merge the introduction to the history of these rites with an overview of their previous scholarship.

### Penance

The traditional chronology of the history of penance is usually divided into three periods: first, the late antique period that only knew severe public rituals for atoning for one's sins, second, the early middle ages when the monks coming from the Celtic regions brought the practice of private penance together with their penitential handbooks on the continent,<sup>5</sup> and thirdly the scholastic period which saw the development and emphasis on the inner world of the penitent and his genuine contrition.<sup>6</sup> This simplistic periodization managed to persevere due to the fact that for many years the history of this rite belonged solely to the purview of church history.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The penitentials came into being in the regions of Ireland, Wales, and Cornwall in the monastic environment. Monasticism played a vital and influential role in the local Churches, and it was in this environment that monks first confessed their secrets to a senior in order to get advice on how to improve and achieve religious perfection. On the historiography from the point of view of *libri poenitentiales* see Rob Meens, "The Historiography of Early Medieval Penance", in *A New History of Penance*, ed. by Abigail Firey (Leiden: Brill, 2008), pp. 73-96; John McNeill and Helena M. T. Garmer. *Medieval handbooks of penance: a translation of the principal "libri poenitentiales" and selections from related documents*. (Columbia University Press, 1990)

<sup>6</sup> These historians include for example Bernhard Poschmann, *Penance and the anointing of the sick*, trans. F. Courtney (London, 1964), pp. 131-138, 149-164. Or Cyrille Vogel, *Le pécheur et la pénitence au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1969), pp. 27-36. For a brief outline of the critics of the "birth of modern individualism" in the twelfth century see Mary C. Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners: Public Penance in Thirteenth-Century France*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 3-4

<sup>7</sup> Historiography of penance dates all the way back to the 17th century but due to the extent of this thesis I limited myself to the authors more pertinent to the motivations behind the present research. For a more comprehensive historiography across centuries see Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners*, 5-10.

Having emerged as the result of the post-Reformation climate, scholars on the Catholic side of the confessional dispute aimed to justify their current form of the penitential practice while the protestant side strove to invalidate it.<sup>8</sup> As a result, the evidence was approached with a specific agenda in mind which influenced the later generations of scholars as well and created the clear-cut, three-step evolutionary view on the history of penance.

As scholars of recent decades have demonstrated, it would be wrong to assume that the public ritual of penance - which the generations of scholars put to such a privileged position - was the only way to achieve remission of sins in the late antique period. The moment one stops looking for precedents for later practice, a variety of means of receiving absolution people had at their disposal becomes apparent.<sup>9</sup> Influential authors such as Origen and John Cassian emphasized baptism, giving of alms, martyrdom or saintly intercession as some of the other means of achieving the same result.<sup>10</sup> While we do possess texts that witness the process of the public ritual of penance, these by no means attest to a universal practice across early Christendom.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Catholic historians such as the influential Bernhard Poschmann, concentrated on the continuities in practice and concepts of penance in order to defend the present-day Catholic form of auricular confession against the Protestant attacks Bernard Poschmann, *Die abendländische Kirchenbuße im Ausgang des christlichen Altertums* (Munich 1928) and Bernard Poschmann, *Die abendländische Kirchenbusse im frühen Mittelalter*, Breslauer Studien zur historischen Theologie 16 (Breslau 1930). Cyrille, Vogel documented the process of a decline of public penance from the Gaulish sources: idem, *La discipline pénitentielle en Gaule des origines à la fin du VIIe siècle*, (Paris, 1952)

<sup>9</sup> Richard Price, 'Informal penance in early medieval Christendom', in ed. Kate, Cooper and Jeremy, Gregory, *Retribution, Repentance and Reconciliation*, Studies in Church History 40 (Woodbridge, 2004), 29-38.

<sup>10</sup> John Cassian, *Collationes XX*, 8, ed. Michael Petschenig, *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 13 (Vienna 2004), 561-4; Origen, *Homélies sur le Lévitique II*, 4, ed. Marcel Borret, *Sources Chrétiennes* 286-7 (Paris 1981) 108-10. It is worth pointing out that there were also groups like the Montanists that rejected the concept of remission of sins through penance altogether. This effectively underlines the rather disparate nature of the early Church - diversity, rather than unity, was the norm in this period and it should come as no surprise that this applied to doing penance as well. Andrew Louth, 'Unity and diversity in the Church of the fourth century', in ed. Robert Swanson, (ed.) *Unity and diversity in the Church*, Studies in Church History 32 (Oxford, 1995) 1-17.

<sup>11</sup> Probably the earliest description of the penitential process was written by the third century African Church Father Tertullian. Tertullian, *De paenitentia* Bk IX, ed. Charles Munier, *Tertullien, La Pénitence, Introduction, texte critique, traduction et commentaire*, Sources Chrétiennes 316 (Paris 1984), 154, 174 and 180. Disciplinary measures for sinning Christians were established in Nicaea in 325 that relied on a three-stage process before they are readmitted into their community. This system seems to have worked in Anatolia while in the West there is no evidence to support their existence. Basil's four-stage process, on the other hand, may have been established in the Greek world based on Basil's influence.

Moreover, it is worth pointing out that the matters of penitence did not concern individuals only. It was generally believed that the Almighty may punish whole communities for their sins in the form of plague, famine or other natural catastrophes. Therefore, for instance, Rogation ceremonies were also used for the purpose of restoring the proper relationship of the Gaulish Christian communities with their God.<sup>12</sup> The very term “public penance” is not to be found in contemporary sources but was rather devised by later scholars to distinguish this late antique ritual from the ritual of private penance that developed later.<sup>13</sup>

The gravity of the public ritual of penance itself but also the severity of the rules that guided one’s life after completing the ritual were probably the main causes that deterred the sinful Christians from performing it - after the sinner’s reconciliation with the church, activities like military duty, games, commerce, feasts and so forth were officially proscribed.<sup>14</sup> The sermons of the sixth-century Gallic author, Caesarius of Arles inform us that many postponed their penance to the end of their life as a solution to this problem which led the previous generation of authors to conclude that the deathbed penance completely took over from the public penance and became the only available remedy.<sup>15</sup> In the past decades, scholars began to dispute these

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<sup>12</sup> A fifth-century letter of Sidonius Apollinaris illuminates that he introduced the ceremony in his community after having heard from the bishop of Vienne that a series of unfortunate events such as earthquakes and an attack of wild animals came to a halt after the community had performed the Rogation ceremony. Geoffrey Nathan, “Rogation ceremonies in Late Antique Gaul”, *Classica et Mediaevalia* 21 (1998), 276–303.

<sup>13</sup> Although sometimes authors do use the word “public” in connection to these rituals, it is only to stress their public nature. See for instance Ambrose commenting on Theodosius’ penance. The Roman Emperor had to perform penance for committing massacre among the people of Thessalonica in 390. See ed. John H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose of Milan: Political Letters and Speeches*, Texts for Historians 43 (Liverpool 2005), 262–9.

<sup>14</sup> There have been parallels drawn between the rules for penitents and those in “mourning” under the synagogue ban, Elisabeth Vodola, *Excommunication in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1986) 9. The earliest extant papal decretal of Siricius writing to the bishop of Tarragona in fourth century prohibited the post-penitents from military service, games, marriage and sex and Leo I then extended the ban to commerce and litigation, although he allowed sex for the ones who struggled with continence.

<sup>15</sup> Vogel, *La discipline pénitentielle en Gaule*, 118–21.

conclusions, however, as there is no direct evidence to support this.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, in the seventh century Anglo-Saxon and Irish missionaries brought into continental Europe the so-called private penance. Unlike its graver forerunner, *poenitentia privata* was more flexible - it could be repeated as often as necessary, and it required only a mere priest to administer it. This type of penance came to acquire attribute tariff due to the *libri poenitentiales* which aided the priests in assigning the appropriate punishment for any given sin. The ninth-century bishops criticized the use of these unauthorized and often contradictory texts and tried to renew the practice of canonical public penance.<sup>17</sup> Despite their efforts, the penitentiaries as well as the mode of penance they represented, remained widely popular.

One of the greatest adversaries of the traditional view of the disappearance of public penance is Mayke de Jong. She reiterated the co-existence of several less formal ways of gaining absolution with private penance, traced the origins paradigm of ancient public penance in the ninth century Francia and challenged the dichotomy of public and private penance in the first place.<sup>18</sup> Similar attitude was adopted by Sarah Hamilton and Mary Mansfield, both of whom argued that public penance existed in later centuries: Hamilton writing about the tenth and eleventh and Mansfield about the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The move away from the

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<sup>16</sup> Uhalde, for instance, argued that apart from the discussion on the validity of the deathbed penance there is no indication that it actually disappeared. Kevin Uhalde, *Expectations of Justice in the Age of Augustine* (Philadelphia 2007)

<sup>17</sup> The council of Paris (829) instructed the bishops to burn the penitentials. Similarly, the Council of Chalon-sur-Saone (813) described the books “quos penitenciales vocant, quorum sunt certi errores, incerti auctores”. For Council of Paris (829) see ed. Albert Werminghoff, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Concilia*, 2 (Hanover 1908), 605-80; For the Council of Chalon (813) see ed. Charles De Clercq, “Concilia Galliae A.511-A.695, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 148A (Turnhout 1963), 302-10.

<sup>18</sup> In Mayke De Jong, “What was ‘Public’ about Public Penance?” pp. 863–904 she explained that during the 9th century councils Frankish bishops aimed to promote the revival of public penance according to the canons. The Frankish public penance differed from the ancient canonical one in that it was not performed only once per lifetime and did not entail the same severe repercussions.; idem, “Pollution, Penance and Sanctity: Ekkehard’s Life of Iso of St. Gall,” in *The Community, the Family, and the Saint: Patterns of Power in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. J. Hill and M. Swan (Turnhout, 1998), pp. 145–158; M. de Jong, “Transformations of Penance,” in *Rituals of Power: From Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Frans Theuvs and Janet L. Nelson, The Transformation of the Roman World, 8 (Leiden, 2000), pp. 185–224

“public versus private” dichotomy and recognition of the other, less formal ways of doing penance therefore set the tone for the latest scholarly debates.<sup>19</sup> While the so-called Carolingian dichotomy - secret penance for secret sins, public penance for public sins - may not be universally applicable throughout history, evidence found in the works of Regino of Prüm and Burchard of Worms suggests that it was understood by them this way.<sup>20</sup> In this thesis, I will therefore use the terms public and private penance despite the fact that they both involve their specific connotations and may not have always been performed or understood that way by contemporaries.

## Excommunication

The history of excommunication was not subjected to the same contest between confessions because of the indisputable biblical origins of this rite. The most important scriptural reference are the words attributed to Christ himself in the Gospel of Matthew 18:15-17 that set down the procedural basis for the centuries to come.<sup>21</sup> The most prominent interpretations of biblical passages on excommunication as well as its subsequent development in the late antique period can be found in the seminal works of Daskal and Hein.<sup>22</sup> The early periods saw stern laws ruling the excommunication. For instance, the pseudo-Augustinian sermon taught that a due

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<sup>19</sup> Meens, “Historiography”, p. 90. But also Rob Meens, “The Frequency and Nature of Early Medieval Penance,” in *Handling Sin. Confession in the Middle Ages*, ed. Peter Biller and Alastair J. Minnis, York Studies in Medieval Theology 2 (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 35–61; Nathan, ‘Rogation ceremonies in Late Antique Gaul’, 276–303.

<sup>20</sup> They both cited the canons of the Council of Mainz (847) and later authors of note differentiated between the two types of punishment as well. Shiner, John. “Burchard of Worms's Corrector and Doctor (c. 1008-12)” In. *Medieval Popular Religion, 1000-1500: A reader*. 2. ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 2009. pp. 459–470

<sup>21</sup> The influences on the cultures that contributed to biblical sources are various: the most basic one was the curse that existed in all the cultures that consisted of social exclusion or even death, then there was also the pagan ritual of *devotio*, other Greek and Roman curses, the Jewish contemporary practices etc. For a summary of these see Vodola, *Excommunication in the Middle Ages*, 3-4

<sup>22</sup> With a concise summary in Vodola, *Excommunication in the Middle Ages*, 7; Walter Daskal, *Der Bann in der Urkirche, eine rechtsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Munich, 1958); Kenneth Hein, *Eucharist and excommunication. A Study in Early Christian Doctrine and Discipline* (Frankfurt am Main, 1973)

judicial procedure must be followed in order to excommunicate someone, and conciliar canons emphasized the accused's rights of appeal.<sup>23</sup>

As one moves on to the period of early Middle Ages, it becomes more difficult to speak of excommunication without bringing in penance. This is partially due to the scarce amount of evidence for both of them respectively. It is no coincidence then, that the historians who greatly influenced the historiography of penance turned either subsequently or simultaneously to its affiliated punitive rite.<sup>24</sup> Based on his study of early medieval conciliar canons, Cyrille Vogel concluded that in the early Middle Ages, in order to gain reconciliation, one had to seek reparation for his crime rather than perform penance.<sup>25</sup> For this period, it is most suitable to imagine various kinds of excommunications as Vogel pointed out: exclusion from the Eucharist only, exclusion from communal worship as such, or exclusion from the community altogether.<sup>26,27</sup> From the late seventh century onwards, one can detect growing proximity between lay and ecclesiastical authorities when the excommunication fell more and more into the purview of ecclesiastical courts.<sup>28</sup> This presented a problem especially in the context of the breakdown of Carolingian rule - the church turned to the imperial contenders and later on to

<sup>23</sup> Pseudo-Augustine, Sermon 351 S 10. And for the synods see c. 11 of the council of Sardica of 343 (Turner, *Monumenta I* 480-82 = Gratian C.11 q.3 c.4, cited in X 5.39.40)

<sup>24</sup> Reynolds and Russo notably looked at these rites in unison. Roger E. Reynolds, "Rites of separation and reconciliation in the early Middle Ages", in *Segni e Riti nella Chiesa altomedievale occidentale, Spoleto 11-17 aprile 1985*, (Settimane de studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo 33, Spoleto, 1987) 405-33; François, Russo. "Pénitence et excommunication. Étude historique sur les rapports entre la théologie et le droit canon dans le domaine pénitentiel du IXe au XIIIe siècle", In *Recherches de science religieuse* (1946) pp. 256-279. On the other hand, authors such as Little examined excommunication as part of a system of medieval maledictions. Little, *Benedictine Maledictions*, 30-44.

<sup>25</sup> Cyrille Vogel, "Les sanctions infligées aux laïcs et aux clercs par les conciles gallo-romains et mérovingiens", *RDC* 2 (1952), p. 5-29, 171-94, 317-327

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. p. 313-316.

<sup>27</sup> Little, for example, differentiated between using the term excommunication for exclusion from the sacraments and the term anathema for the first-class excommunication of the old standards. See Little, *Benedictine Maledictions*, 30-35. Other scholars like Reynolds viewed excommunication more like a spectrum. Reynolds, "Rites of separation and reconciliation in the early Middle Ages", p. 405-410.

<sup>28</sup> Henry C. Lea, "Excommunication" *Studies in church history* (Philadelphia, 1869), 313-42, Thomas P. Oakley, "The cooperation of medieval penance and secular law", *Speculum* 7 (1932) 515-24

local feudal dynasts in search for protection and secular reinforcement. Elizabeth Vodola, for instance, viewed the contemporary, albeit overall unsuccessful, attempts to make anathema a more severe penalty as a response to the same need.<sup>29</sup> The distinction between excommunication and anathema occurred infrequently in earlier periods as well which suggests that the differentiation had been rather haphazard and not universally accepted.<sup>30</sup>

Given the grave nature of excommunication, it was supposed to be delivered during the celebration of the mass right after the reading of the Gospel.<sup>31</sup> There were naturally exceptions to this, such as when archbishop Hincmar of Reims advised his clergy to go against the standard practice and read out the excommunication as soon as the reading of the Epistles was finished. This was due to the fact that the malefactors rushed out of the Church immediately after the reading of the Gospel to avoid public shaming.

All of the evidence mentioned above - conciliar canons, sermons, letters - demonstrate that the ritual of excommunication was performed from the formative period of Christianity throughout the Middle Ages. In the ninth century, we can detect a growing number of sources providing information about these practices in the western Church. However, the earliest extant liturgical sources to record excommunication formula date to the beginning of the tenth century only. This was a significant aspect picked up by Hamilton in her work "Interpreting diversity:

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<sup>29</sup> Vodola, *Excommunication in the Middle Ages*, 14-16

<sup>30</sup> In the Scriptures, the word ἀνάθεμα is used on several occasions and refers to damned and rejected persons or things, more importantly, it is used as a curse or punishment against those who contradict the accepted teaching. Deuteronomy 7:26 Neither shalt thou bring any thing of the idol into thy house, lest thou become an anathema, like it. 1 Corinthians 16:22 If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be under a curse. For the evolution of the ritual in the formative years of the ritual see Hein, *Eucharist and excommunication. A study in early Christian doctrine and discipline*. From the fourth century onwards, it was used at councils to condemn heretics that did not abide by the defined orthodoxy. According to Little, as the severity of the punishment of excommunication decreased over time and became repeatable, the anathema, formerly reserved primarily for heretics, picked up the slack and became the "first-class" excommunication that upheld the old standards. Both Little and Vodola pointed out, there was no sound theological grounding for such a distinction between the two concepts. Little, *Benedictine Maledictions*, 30-35; Vodola, *Excommunication in the Middle Ages*,

<sup>31</sup> This was presumably the conclusion of the part of the mass with the greatest attendance since it concluded the Mass of the Catechumens. Little, *Benedictine Maledictions*, p. 34.

Excommunication rites in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries”. The author strove to shed more light on this peculiarity by analyzing the newly emerging liturgical genre of pontificals and the role of the excommunication rites in them. In my research, given the erratic survival of the liturgical sources from the early medieval period, I do not place as much significance to this first recording as Hamilton does. What is important, however, is that the period under consideration here, 10th and 11th centuries, witnessed a proliferation of these texts which is a point around which the present thesis revolves.

Moreover, the primary goal of Hamilton’s chapter was to dismantle the established scholarly view on the static nature of the excommunication rites within the liturgical evidence. This is directed mainly against Roger Reynolds and Genevieve Steele Edwards, scholars who have looked at the excommunication liturgy most recently and who “both concluded that the formal liturgy set out by Regino underwent relatively little change between the tenth and fifteenth centuries”.<sup>32</sup> While Reynolds did not explicitly come to such a conclusion in his study, his way of treating the Romano-Germanic pontificals as a unified tradition that took over Regino’s formulas only in a slightly modified form does betray the wider scholarly neglect that the PRG manuscripts faced so far.<sup>33</sup>

Thus, similarly to Hamilton, I take this scholarly disregard for the variety present in the actual manuscripts as the starting point which I aim to tackle in the present study.

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<sup>32</sup> Sarah Hamilton, “Interpreting Diversity: Excommunication Rites in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries”, in *Understanding Medieval Liturgy: Essays in Interpretation*, ed. by Sarah Hamilton, Helen Gittos. (Aldershot: Ashgate/Taylor & Francis, 2016) 133.

<sup>33</sup> As for Steele Edwards, her conclusions are a part of an unpublished PhD dissertation thus it was not available to me for consultation. Genevieve Steele Edwards, “Ritual excommunication in Medieval France and England, 900-1200”. PhD thesis (Stanford University 1997). Little also emphasized the liturgical variety and mutual borrowing among the scribes. Little, *Benedictine Maledictions*. 39-40

What follows now is a brief introduction into the field of liturgical studies as a whole with a subsequent definition and history of the genre of pontificals that present the core of the first part of this thesis.

## 1.2 Sources

### Liturgical sources

Missals, antiphonaries, lectionaries, sacramentaries, benedictionales - the list of medieval books involved in the daily mass goes on without end. Collectively, these writings are known as liturgical sources. Originally, the word liturgy (λειτουργία) denoted any kind of public service. It was only later, in accordance with the translation of Septuagint, that liturgy gained its contemporary meaning denoting worship in the temple. The term did not appear in the Latin Vulgate and in the *Patrologia Latina* it occurs only in connection to exotic rites. Thus, as Carol Symes aptly summarized, it is an anachronistic term used to cover a wide spectrum of worshipful activities, having emerged only in the 16th century climate of confessional controversies.<sup>34</sup>

Historical study of medieval liturgical documents had been made difficult by a variety of misconceptions. One of the most important of these, and of particular interest for this thesis, was the notion that liturgy was conservative - resistant to change - and thus presented an unattractive field of study.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, those changes that did occur within a given manuscript

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<sup>34</sup> Carol Symes, "Liturgical texts and performance practices" in *Understanding Medieval Liturgy: Essays in Interpretation*, ed. by Sarah Hamilton, Helen Gittos. (Aldershot: Ashgate/Taylor & Francis, 2016) 133.

<sup>35</sup> Encouraged by the materials that they study, liturgists tend to lay great stress on uniformity. From a liturgist's perspective this paper is rather iconoclastic, proposing as it does a high degree of diversity and informality in English local practice during the ninth to eleventh centuries.' in Helena, Gittos. "Understanding Medieval Liturgy", in *Understanding Medieval Liturgy: Essays in Interpretation*, ed. by Sarah Hamilton, Helen Gittos. (Aldershot: Ashgate/Taylor & Francis, 2016) 13.

were dismissed with the flawed explanation that the changed version of the prayer or ritual had appeared already elsewhere. This is made evident by the focus of earlier scholarship on genealogies of manuscripts rather than their historical context - context that may have influenced the new liturgy.<sup>36</sup>

The belief in the rigidity of liturgy is not unfounded. Certain rites, such as the canon of the holy mass that was of central importance and was performed most often, remained relatively stable throughout the centuries. That said, there are many others that defy this old prejudice. Susan Keefe's study on Carolingian baptism rites and Sarah Hamilton's work on the excommunication and reconciliation rites both demonstrated that liturgy, in fact, varied and was often revised.<sup>37</sup> Some scholars connect this tolerance for alteration to the infrequently performed rites that lacked a clear explicit form in early authoritative texts and were practiced too little for the clergy to remember them by heart.<sup>38</sup> This holds only to a certain degree; the various baptismal rites discussed in Keefe's work could hardly be considered occasional. Nevertheless, diverse readings existed - a fact of which even contemporaries were sometimes aware. For instance, Walahfrid Strabo, a ninth-century German abbot, discussed in detail the plethora of liturgy he himself witnessed.<sup>39</sup> Any thorough scholarship is only possible by characterizing individual rites and avoiding generalizations. For some rituals, such as the northern French type of solemn penance, there were as many versions of the rite as there were

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<sup>36</sup> "In fact, it is very difficult and very unsafe to attempt strict historical deductions from liturgical formulae, new or old" in Edmund Bishop, *Liturgica historica: Papers On The Liturgy And Religious Life Of The Western Church* (Kessinger Publishing, 1918), 298. Another great example of this is Michel Andrieu who dedicated his life-work to the search of the Mainz archetypal pontifical - see below.

<sup>37</sup> Susan A. Keefe, *Water and the Word: Baptism and the Education of the Clergy in the Carolingian Empire*, 2 vols. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002) and Sarah

<sup>38</sup> For example, Mary C. Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners*, 160. Although there are some exceptions to this rule - some rites such as royal coronation petrified due to their disuse.

<sup>39</sup> Alice L. Harting-Correa, *Walahfrid Strabo's libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiasticis rerum: A Translation and Liturgical Commentary*, *Mittelaltersche Studien und Texte* 19 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996) in Gittos, "Understanding Medieval Liturgy", 73.

pontificals.<sup>40</sup> It would be easy, then, to simply dismiss the field as too varied to allow any comprehensive study. However, as Christine Mohrmann pointed out, “Christian liturgical compositions are mosaics of stock stylistic formulas inherited from the past” and thus the wide range of specific rites in the medieval liturgical sources should not put one off from studying them either.<sup>41</sup> The task is then to uncover the precise historical contexts in which these developments took place and, at times, to look for chronological progress.<sup>42</sup>

Previous generations of scholars were often deterred by the complexity of liturgical sources and the ambiguous relationship between them and actual practice.<sup>43</sup> While the sources may appear impenetrable at first glance, just as studying any other written document, one has to first understand the rules of the genre. As for the loose connection with practice, historians have started to recognize that liturgies tend to be “prescriptive” rather than “descriptive”, and as such, it is risky to assume that what was written down was precisely put into practice. However, the same reservations may be applied to texts such as chronicles describing performance of an act performed by a real, historical person - authors of both genres have a specific agenda guiding their writing. Further, the physical characteristics of some of these manuscripts further highlight the fact that these works were not created with the primary purpose of being used when performing the actual liturgy.<sup>44</sup> Scholars are divided on this matter. While many argued that these works were fashioned to control and regulate various practices, especially to curtail

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<sup>40</sup> Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners*, 161. But as the author concluded, no other pontifical rite shows this kind of variety.

<sup>41</sup> Christine, Mohrmann. “Liturgical Latin: its origins and character. (London, 1959) p. 24. Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners*, 161. Some scholars suggested that liturgies only became more stable in the 1560s under Pope Pius V. See Natalia Nowakowska, “From Strassburg to Trent: Bishops, Printing and Liturgical Reform in the Fifteenth Century”, *Past and Present* 213 (2011): 3-39

<sup>42</sup> Although some scholars warn against the tricky assumption that all liturgy develops through an evolutionary process. Symes, “Liturgical texts and performance practices”

<sup>43</sup> Gittos, “Understanding Medieval Liturgy”, 14.

<sup>44</sup> Parkes. ‘Questioning the Authority of Vogel and Elze’s Pontificale Romano-Germanique’, 98-99

improvisation, others contend that the literature was inspirational rather than normative.<sup>45</sup> It would be equally wrong to assume that these texts were completely detached from practice, which is one of the many reasons that liturgical sources are worth studying.

## The pontificals generally and the PRG specifically

The early modern term “pontifical” is used to refer to a book designed specifically to contain rites that can be performed exclusively by bishops.<sup>46</sup> The origins of this genre can be traced back to the ninth century but it developed fully over the course of the tenth century.<sup>47</sup> To call this a cohesive genre is an oversimplification. What constituted its contents varied to a great extent and thus the impetus behind the creation of these newly-emerged collections continues to be widely discussed.<sup>48</sup> The pontificals generally included administration of penance, clerical ordinations, the consecration and reconciliation of churches, holding synods, episcopal benedictions for significant feast days, and blessings of ecclesiastical accessories such as chrism.<sup>49</sup> Alongside these rites we often find not only other liturgical texts but also liturgical exegesis, commentaries, legal and historical writings.<sup>50</sup> The wide variety of content is reflected

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<sup>45</sup> Symes, “Liturgical texts and performance practices”, 247-249.

<sup>46</sup> There was a variety of names used for these books in the medieval period, perhaps connected to the heterogeneity of the genre. A study of medieval Latin terminology is amiss so far but for an overview see Sarah Hamilton, “Interpreting Diversity” n.7, p. 126

<sup>47</sup> Cyrille, Vogel. *Medieval Liturgy: The introduction to the sources*. Transl. by William George Storey, Niels Krogh Rasmussen, (John Brooks-Leonard, Pastoral Press 1986) 226-30.

<sup>48</sup> One side argues for pragmatic reasons that led to the emergence of this new genre: Niels K. Rasmussen, *Les Pontificaux du haut moyen âge: genèse du livre liturgique de l'évêque*, (Louvain 1998), 479-83. The other side views them as didactic products that arose in the wake of the episcopal authority in west Francia in the ninth century. Eric Palazzo, “La liturgie de l'Occident médiéval autour de l'an mil: Etat de la question”, *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 43 (2000): 371-94, Cyrille Vogel, ‘Le pontifical romano-germanique du Xe siècle: nature, date et importance du document’, *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 6, (1963): 27-48. For a discussion on the topic see Hamilton, *Interpreting diversity*, p. 127

<sup>49</sup> Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners*, 165. Hamilton, “Interpreting diversity”, 126. Parkes, “Questioning the Authority”, 82-83.

<sup>50</sup> Christopher A. Jones, “The Book of the Liturgy in Anglo-Saxon England”, *Speculum* 73 (1998): 659-702

by the internal order of these collections - authors play around with organization, offering no universal structure.

Like most of the other liturgical books, pontificals were almost always compiled anonymously. Often, the person in charge of the compilation of a pontifical would have been the cantor or dean of the cathedral, with the author being simply a cleric or monk of above average education.<sup>51</sup> In cases when the commissioner of a given work is known it is uncertain to what extent they were involved with the process of production.

Alongside the question of authorship goes the issue of audience. While the precise meaning of each word would have been grasped by the Latin speaking clergy, the extent of lay comprehension posits a more difficult problem. Presumably, the lay audience would be able to recognize at least a benediction or absolution. In certain rituals, like excommunication, the texts indicate that the bishop did explain the matter to the laity in the vernacular. Nonverbal cues were important for lay comprehension. The gestures that accompanied the bishop's "Venite, venite" to the penitents and signaled them to enter the church or the dramatic stomping of the twelve candles by the priests as a person was being excommunicated undoubtedly helped to convey the message quite clearly. Hand in hand with gestures like these went the general body language invoking humility that would be universally understood in this period, especially in rituals like excommunication and penance.<sup>52</sup>

Pontificals, just like canon law collections, belong to a normative group of sources. They cannot be taken purely at a face value as representing actual ritual practice; yet it would be

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<sup>51</sup>There are exceptions to this such as the intellectual Peter Cantor. Also, at times the name of the author of a given work is named, however, usually too little is known about him. Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners*, 163.

<sup>52</sup>Gerd, Althoff. *Rules and Rituals in Medieval Power Games*, (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2019) 99-125, Geoffrey, Koziol, *Begging Pardon and Favor: Ritual and Political Order in Early Medieval France*, (Cornell university Press 1992) 59-76

wrong to believe they were fully detached from real-life practice. The reality of the situation lies somewhere between these two extremes. Richard Pfaff astutely observed that the lack of a table of content together with the general diversity of content and order, would make individual manuscripts difficult to navigate.<sup>53</sup> The author himself partially explains this by pointing out that many bishops must have owned these books personally thus becoming closely familiar with them.<sup>54</sup> Moreover, the manuscripts of the eleventh and twelfth centuries were larger and much more “encyclopedic” and thus possibly intended to serve as authoritative texts from which the *libelli* used for real life practice would be copied.<sup>55</sup>

The liturgical sources are by no means the only ambiguous group of sources in this thesis. The sources describing real-world action cannot be taken at a face value either. Some scholars like Philippe Buc criticized the use of the concept of ritual in the first place. Among other things, the ritual is “dangerous” because it can be subverted in interpretation. The only evidence describing medieval ritual, that modern scholars have at their disposal, cannot be relied on as always descriptively accurate given that it also is an authorial construct written to persuade.<sup>56</sup> Buc’s criticism has been met with backlash from other academics.<sup>57</sup> His at times controversial proposal reminded modern scholars not to blindly rely on the established categories of previous generations, a pattern the present thesis builds upon. For the purpose of this study, it is worth

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<sup>53</sup> Richard Pfaff, “The Anglo-Saxon bishop and his book”, in *Bulletin of the John Rylands University library of Manchester* 81 (1999): 30-24, esp. 7-12. Pfaff also recognized that they were the most likely part of the manuscript to get destroyed or detached as, if they existed, they would be included at the beginning of the codex. In the case of a few pontificals in England there is indication as to contents.

<sup>54</sup> The other two points were that these personal books may have traveled with the bishop to his new diocese following his translation and the fact that there is an indication that individual religious houses possessed these books for themselves. Pfaff, “The Anglo-Saxon bishop and his book”, p. 5

<sup>55</sup> Rasmussen, *Les Pontificaux du haut moyen âge*, 479-83; Niels K. Rasmussen, “Unité et diversité des pontificaux latins au VIIe, IX et X siècles”, in *Liturgie de l'église universelle: conférences Saint-Serge XXIIe semaine d'études liturgiques, Paris, 30 juin-3 juillet 1975* (Bibliotheca 'Ephemerides Liturgicae' subsidia vii, 1976) 404-7.

<sup>56</sup> Philippe, Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2001)

<sup>57</sup> Janet L. Nelson, *Speculum* 78, (2003): 847–51.; Geoffrey Koziol, “Review article: The dangers of polemic: Is ritual still an interesting topic of historical study?”, *Early Medieval Europe*, 11 (2002), 367-88.

pointing out that the texts recording what we identify as medieval rituals were always written by authors with specific agendas, agendas which dictate the form in which they were written.<sup>58</sup> Bearing these reservations in mind, pontificals prove to be particularly useful as they were often commissioned for particular individuals, and they come with easily traceable provenance. One of the most important group of sources dealt with in this thesis is the *Pontifical Romano-Germanique* (PRG). The title, coined by Michel Andrieu in 1924, was meant to refer to a combination of Frankish ritual texts, Carolingian liturgical exposition and commentary, and *Ordines Romani* all united in a bishop's liturgical book.<sup>59</sup> Due to his sudden death in 1956, Andrieu was unable to finish his seminal work on what he had perceived as a clearly defined tradition of manuscripts deriving from a single text probably from a monastery of St Alban's in Mainz after the year 950. His hypothesis was that this *Urtext* was heavily propagated by the archbishop of Mainz and as a result enjoyed a period of popularity and wide dissemination, culminating in the papacy's adoption of it.<sup>60</sup> His project of editing and categorizing the constituent texts was bequeathed to Cyrille Vogel and Reinhard Elze. They did not venture to reconstruct Andrieu's hypothetical Mainz archetype but merely edited texts from the PRG manuscript tradition in a three-volume edition published between 1963 and 1972.<sup>61</sup> On the one hand, this was a reasonable decision since it is doubtful that only one such original text existed.

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<sup>58</sup> Buc skillfully demonstrated this point using the example of Liudprand of Cremona. The chronicler intentionally juxtaposed the bad Lombard rituals against the good rituals of the Saxon dynasty on the basis of the opposite political dispensations. Buc, *Dangers of rituals*, pp. 15-50

<sup>59</sup> Michel, Andrieu., *Immixtio et consecratio. La consécration par contact dans les documents liturgiques du moyen âge*, (Paris, Picard 1942)

<sup>60</sup> It was brought over to Rome by Otto I (936-68). ed. Michel Andrieu, *Ordines Romani du haut moyen âge*, (Louvain 1931-61)

<sup>61</sup> Cyrille, Vogel. *Le Pontifical romano-germanique du dixième siècle: 1 : Le texte : (NN. I - XCVIII)*. Rist. anast.. Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1966. But also, as Henry Parkes pointed out, by structuring the edited text principally on the basis of the earliest texts of the identified number, they did attempt to recover the most original version of the PRG, even if not the one that Andrieu had proposed. Henry, Parkes. 'Questioning the Authority of Vogel and Elze's Pontificale Romano-Germanique' in Gittos and Hamilton (eds.), *Understanding Medieval Liturgy*, 83. Vogel himself admitted to this: "surtout en raison de leur proximité avec l'archétype". Vogel. *Le Pontifical romano-germanique du dixième siècle*, p. 118.

On the other, by combining texts from nine manuscripts they created something that never technically existed.

Today, only thirty-nine manuscripts from Germany, France, Italy and England survive and they are divided into four main recensions.<sup>62</sup> Due to this wide geographical dissemination of manuscripts the original editors of the pontificals argued that it constituted an influential tradition that influenced liturgy all over Europe. Recently, Henry Parkes demonstrated that the significance of PRG was overstated and the considerable impact of the pontificals was limited to the dioceses of Mainz and Salzburg.<sup>63</sup> According to his opinion, this was partially due to Vogel's and Elze's respect for Andrieu's hypotheses that allowed for his unproven theories to be slowly accepted as fact through their reverent repetition.<sup>64</sup>

Overall, sixteen manuscripts can be securely dated to the eleventh century and as many as thirteen of these come from the dioceses of Mainz and Salzburg, which subsequently also presents the area of interest in this part of the thesis. Unfortunately, not all of these include the *ordines* of excommunication and penance, which is why I will be working primarily with four pontificals, two from Salzburg and two from Mainz. Chronologically they cover the whole century, are all available online for the convenience of the reader and provide a solid basis for a detailed analysis on a small scale.

Moreover, the underlying rationale behind an analysis of a specific rite within the PRG tradition is to bring one closer to the real version of the rites as they are recorded in the manuscripts as opposed to the reconstructive version that may be found in the PRG edition. It is exactly these

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<sup>62</sup> For a recent overview of the textual tradition see Sarah Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance 900-1050*, (Boydell & Brewer Ltd. 2011) 211-223.

<sup>63</sup> Parkes, "Questioning the Authority", 75–101.

<sup>64</sup> Parkes, "Questioning the authority", 79.

artificially unified versions that had contributed to overlooking the diversity of, for instance, excommunication rites.

### 1.3. Methodology

This research conforms to the current stand on the study of liturgical evidence in that each text should be considered as valid in itself and not merely as a lesser version of an unknown *Urtext*. Since this shift in the field occurred, some scholars have taken it a step further by demonstrating that even minor textual variations may be used to illuminate the ways in which rites were understood and used.<sup>65</sup> Thus an underlying rationale behind this research is that the changes authors introduced correspond to their personal perceptions of how the rite should be recorded and practiced. This is why each of the pontificals will be first introduced in its historical context together with its basic codicological and paleographical information.

I will then examine the extent to which the excommunication formulas either follow or traverse the rites set out by Regino of Prüm. Two aspects will be taken into consideration: firstly, the variations to the actual formula and structure of the rites, and secondly, the authorial choice as to which rites to include. This second aspect is my unique contribution to the field as the decision to include one rite over another is just as important as changes introduced to the texts themselves - and it has not been stressed and discussed sufficiently by previous scholars.

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<sup>65</sup> Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners*, 189-247. Hamilton, “Interpreting Diversity”. Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance 900-1050*.

## 2 Normative sources

The natural starting point for the present research is the very first extant collection of church law to include a manual on how to impose and lift the sentence of excommunication: the *Libri duo de synodalibus causis et disciplinis ecclesiasticis*. Compiled between 906 and 913 by Regino of Prüm, a Lotharingian abbot, it was written for the archbishops of Trier and Mainz. This canon law collection was meant to aid the bishops in their visitations during which the assessment of both the laity and clergy was conducted. The formulas as well as a general order of the excommunication rites that Regino wrote down proved very popular and were employed to varying extent by Regino's successors in the same genre, such as Burchard of Worms, Ivo of Chartres and Gratian.<sup>66</sup> The number of rites included in the abbot's collection is six in total: five different version of excommunicatory formula, in most of the cases accompanied with scene-setting allocution, and one ordo for the act of reconciliation.<sup>67</sup>

Until recently, scholarly consensus was that following the introduction of Regino's model for the excommunication rite, the liturgy underwent little change between the tenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>68</sup> However, as Sarah Hamilton convincingly demonstrated by using four pontificals from the period of eleventh and twelfth centuries, excommunication rites were, in fact, characterized by a great degree of variety.<sup>69</sup> In this chapter, I aim to build on top of Hamilton's

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<sup>66</sup> I specifically used "wrote down" because Regino was probably simply recording the established practice rather than prescribing a novel way. This becomes apparent when the text is compared to the formula used to excommunicate the murderers of archbishop Fulk in July 900 CE in the province of Rheims. Hincmar of Rheims also provides an account to the accepted procedure when he instructed his clergy to, contrary to the current practice, read out the names of the offenders before Gospel to prevent them from avoiding the shaming. Hincmar of Rheims, *Hincmari rhemensis archiepiscopi Opera omnia*, in PL 126, Ep. XVII. For scholars who suggested that Regino may have invented the formulas see Hartmut Hoffman and Rudolf Pokorny, *Das Dekret des Bischofs Burchards von Worms*. (Munich, 1991) 218-9. Evidence that both precedes and follows that of Regino will be elaborated on in the second part of the thesis.

<sup>67</sup> Regino of Prüm, *Libri duo synodalibus causis et disciplinis ecclesiasticis*, ed. H. Wasserschleben, *Regionis libri duo de synodalibus causis et disciplinis ecclesiasticis* (Leipzig 1840). For the summarized excommunication rites in Regino's *Libri duo* see the Appendix A. The only rite whose structure will be discussed is the Leonine formula as it was not included in the Lotharingian collection.

<sup>68</sup> Reynolds, "Rites of separation and reconciliation"

<sup>69</sup> Hamilton, "Interpreting Diversity" 128-156.

work by presenting more evidence to support this argument. What follows is an analysis of four pontificals from the eleventh century, all coming from the Mainz or Salzburg family of the PRG.<sup>70</sup> The four exemplars were selected for containing rites of both excommunication and penance as well as for the different combination of their inclusion. This is an important aspect that differentiates this study from that of Hamilton; I opted to include manuscripts that do not necessarily contain both the excommunicatory imposition and absolution but rather those that include at least one rite connected to excommunication, whether that be an imposition or absolution. The same applies to penance. The manuscripts are listed according to their age and the order of the rites discussed is based on the order of their appearance within specific work. This chapter has a dual focus. First, it aims to examine the historical, codicological and paleographical information of each manuscript and provides the context necessary to understand each. Second, by analyzing the various combinations of the inclusion of specific ordines as well as their form I aim to demonstrate that these rites were by no means as static as they had been previously described. In cases where it is relevant, I will employ a comparison or contextualization of the excommunication rites with those of solemn penance within individual manuscripts. This is due to the fact that these two rites are closely connected - they represent two ends of one spectrum and as such enough attention should be paid to their relationship.

Before I embark on my own analysis of the rites, however, I will summarize Hamilton's conclusions as well as briefly introduce the manuscripts she worked with as they complement my own results.

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<sup>70</sup> Here I follow Sarah Hamilton's most recent classification of the extant RGP manuscripts. See Table 2 in "Existing manuscripts of the Romano-German pontifical" in Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance 900-1050*, 220-223.

## 2.1 Setting the scene

In her chapter, Hamilton analyzed four eleventh century pontificals from Germany<sup>71</sup>:

- The Bamberg Pontifical: Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Lit.53
- The Freising Pontifical: Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 21587
- The Cambrai Pontifical: Cologne, Diözesan-und-Dombibliothek, Cod. 141
- The Metz Pontifical: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Latin 13313

Based on this sample, she demonstrated several significant patterns. The excommunication rites in the Bamberg and Metz pontificals consist merely of the texts the bishop requires for conducting this rite without more detailed instructions as to how to do so. Coincidentally, the rites in these two pontificals were not originally planned as part of the manuscripts, and they were added in the later stages of production. This stands in direct contrast to the Freising and Cambrai pontificals that include closer information on how the rites should be administered in the form of a rubric and intended the excommunication rites as part of the manuscript from the very beginning.

Now I turn to a different set of manuscripts that will ultimately build on Hamilton's conclusion of a lively and ongoing interest in the practice of excommunication. In order to provide a more comprehensive picture of the eleventh century liturgy of excommunication I will not limit myself only to the evidence that supports this proposed diversity, but I also aim to consider manuscripts that are characterized by lesser departure from the earlier models.

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<sup>71</sup> It is of note that only two of these belong to the PRG tradition: the Bamberg and Cambrai pontificals.

## 2.2 Manuscript analysis

### Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Lit. 59 (c.1039-46)<sup>72</sup>

This codex was written in the first half of the eleventh century in an anonymous atelier supplying several manuscripts for an unidentified Benedictine monastery belonging to the diocese of Verden, province of Mainz.<sup>73</sup> Altogether five scribes worked on completing the manuscript, but majority of the work was written by scribe (A) - roughly 165 out of 166 folios. A second scribe, hand (B), contributed in the second half of the eleventh century with a fragment of the evangelist and three hands (C), (D), and (E) of the twelfth century made further additions.<sup>74</sup>

All the excommunication formulas were written in the first stage of the manuscript production by scribe A. Overall, this stage included writing down about 45 entries. The first seven folios cover the ordo of penance the usual way, the following ten folios deal with the chrism, and the next section of about thirty-eight folios covers the promotion of cleric followed by rites concerning the monastic affairs. About twenty folios follow, dedicated to kings and emperors, forty-five folios discussing the physical aspects of the church, and eight folios describe the excommunication rites. These include the letter of Pope Leo, the longest ordo of “how the bishop ought to excommunicate” and *brevior excommunicatio*. The manuscript concludes with several benedictions. Given the pervasive thematic arrangement of the work it is apparent that

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<sup>72</sup> The usage of the title “king” suggests that the manuscript was written before Henri III's imperial coronation that took place on 25th of December 1046. This has been, however, disputed by scholars because the illumination may have been added to the manuscript in the final stages of its compiling process. The manuscript is available online on the Bamberg library website: [http://digital.bib-bvb.de/view/bvb\\_mets/viewer.0.6.5.jsp?folder\\_id=0&dvs=1638007449144~704&pid=4550450&locale=en&usePid1=true&usePid2=true](http://digital.bib-bvb.de/view/bvb_mets/viewer.0.6.5.jsp?folder_id=0&dvs=1638007449144~704&pid=4550450&locale=en&usePid1=true&usePid2=true)

<sup>73</sup> For a brief description of contents see Andrieu, *Les ordines romani du haut moyen âge*, 79-84.

<sup>74</sup> Hartmut Hoffmann, *Bamberg Handschriften des 10. und des 11. Jahrhunderts*, (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1995), 146f., Abb. 198, 199

it was well-planned and thus the fact that the excommunication rites are listed in the final pages of the pontifical is directly related to their respective importance in the eyes of the compiler.

The first excommunicatory formula of the manuscript is titled the Letter of Pope Leo and it is the only one not taken over from Regino of Prüm, although it is fairly similar in its structure. It is a liturgical formula that is disguised in the form of a letter from pope Leo and consists of these parts:

- Pope Leo greets the people.<sup>75</sup>
- He identifies the offenders by name and the nature of their offense, namely violating the possessions of the servants of Saint Peter. He continues to excommunicate and curse them, invoking the usual authorities.<sup>76</sup>
- A series of ruthless curses affecting both this and the afterlife of the excommunicant are proclaimed against the offender.<sup>77</sup>
- The sender reminds of the fact that should the excommunicants repent, all the curses would be lifted.<sup>78</sup>
- Conclusion consists again of a formula that compares the extinguishing of the light to the sinner's soul being extinguished in hell.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> *'Leo episcopus servus servorum Dei, dilectissimis fratribus et filiis archiepiscopis atque suffraganeis eorum, abbatibus et monachorum congregationibus in Francia commanentibus, salutem perpetuam.'*

<sup>76</sup> *'Indicatum est nobis, filii karissimi, quod in vestris regionibus malignorum hominum perversitas creverit, ita ut res vestras in suos pravos usus redigere cupiant, id est N.'*

<sup>77</sup> *'Fiant filii eorum orphani et uxores eorum viduae. Nutantes transferantur filii eorum et mendicent, eiciantur de habitationibus suis, scrutetur fenerator omnem substantiam eorum et diripiant alieni labores eorum.'*

<sup>78</sup> *'Si autem ad penitentiam et emendationem venerint, et secundum modum culpae fructus dignos penitentiae fecerint, omnia mala ista avertat Deus ab illis, et nos parati sumus ad recipiendum et orandum pro illis.'*

<sup>79</sup> *'Si autem ad emendationem noluerint venire, perpetuo anathemate feriantur ita: Ecclesiam Dei non intrent, pacem cum christianis non habeant nec ullam participationem faciant; corpus et sanguinem domini non in die mortis percipiant, sed, eterne oblivioni traditi, tanquam pulvis ante faciem venti fiant et cum diabolo et angelis*

The Leonine formula is distinct from all the other rites because of its harsh language which is legitimized by the author's alleged papal authority. It was probably first introduced for the Abbey of St Martin in Trier in the first half of the tenth century and survives not only in pontificals from the eleventh and twelfth centuries but also in early modern copies of tenth-century monastic charters.<sup>80</sup> It can be found in five out of the sixteen eleventh century PRG manuscripts with the pontifical Bamberg Ms. Lit. 53 marking the oldest extant manuscript to contain this formula. Interestingly, the formula was not incorporated into any of the infamous canon law collections - while it was probably introduced too late for Regino to include it, it was not copied either by Burchard of Worms or Ivo of Chartres.

While the text of the main body of the Leonine formula is fairly routine, its title reads *Incipit decretum sancti Leonis Pape: de excommunicandis invasoribus rerum ecclesiasticarum*. This novel title provides more information on the specific nature of the anticipated sinner which one would normally find out only later in the text. Most of the other pontificals under study here simply use the title *Excommunicatio Leonis Papae* or *Decretum Leonis Papae*.

This change in the rubric comes only second in importance, however, to the adjustments the author made to what Regino of Prüm viewed as two separate, albeit similar, rites: *Excommunicatio brevis* and *Item Alia Terriblior excommunicatio*. The author combined these two rites and created a hybrid which he titled *Brevior excommunicatio*.

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*eius perpetuis ignibus tradantur et, sicut lucerna ista exstinguetur, sic extinguantur animae eorum in fetore inferni.'*

<sup>80</sup> Jean Chelini, "Alcuin, Charlemagne et Saint-Martin de Tours", in *Revue d'histoire de l'Église de France* Année (1961), 19-50.

Table 1.1

<i>Excommunicatio brevis</i>	<i>Item alia terriblior excommunicatio</i>	<i>Brevior excommunicatio</i>
<p><u>Canonica instituta et sanctorum patrum exempla sequentes, ecclesiarum Dei violatore, ill., auctoritate Dei et iudicio sancti spiritus a gremio sanctae matris Ecclesiae et consortio totius Christianitatis eliminamus, quosque resipiscant, et Ecclesiae Dei</u> satisfaciant.</p>	<p><u>Canonica instituta et sanctorum patrum exempla sequentes, aecclesiarum Dei violatores</u> videlicet raptores, <b>depraedatores</b> aut <b>homicidas</b> illos in nomine patris et filii et virtute spiritus sancti, nec non auctoritate episcopis per Petrum principem apostolorum divinitus collata, a sanctae matris Ecclesiae gremio segregamus ac perpetuae maledictionis anathemate condemnamus. Sintque maledicti</p> <p>....</p> <p>Et sicut hae lucernae de manibus nostris proiectae hodie extinguuntur, sic eorum lucerna in aeternum extinguatur, nisi forte resipuerint et <b>aecclesiae Dei, quam leserunt, per amendmentem et condignam penitentiam satisfecerint.</b></p>	<p><u>Canonica instituta et sanctorum patrum exempla sequentes, aecclesiarum Dei violatores</u> videlicet raptores <b>depraedatores homicidas</b> N <u>auctoritate Dei et iudicio sancti spiritus a gremio sanctae matris Ecclesiae et consortio totius Christianitatis eliminamus,</u> quosque resipiscant <b>et Ecclesiae Dei</b> quam <b>leserunt, per emendationem et condignam penitentiam satisfecerint.</b></p>

Key: Underline represents text found in the Excommunication brevis, **bold** represents text found in Excommunicatio terriblior, and a combination refers to the text found in both formulas.

By creating this new combined *ordo* the author ultimately unified the focus of the excommunication formula on church violators and serious criminals only, much like he did with the novel title of the Leonine excommunication. This shows that the author interacted with the text by consciously editing it. These two adjustments the author made while writing down the excommunication rites point to the fact that considerable attention has been paid during their compilation process.

Despite the fact that all three excommunicatory *ordines* allow for the penitent sinner to rejoin the church the reconciliation *ordo* is conspicuously missing here. Out of the eight PRG pontificals that include at least one excommunication *ordo*, this is the only one where the rite for imposition of the sentence is not followed by its lifting. I suggest that the need for absolving sinners may have been satisfied by the inclusion of the penitential reconciliation ritual that I turn to now.

Of all the manuscripts under consideration here, Bamberg Ms. Lit. 59 is singular in various aspects when it comes to the penitential rites. First of all, it is the only work to have only one of the rites inserted plus the fact that that rite is the reconciliation makes it even more thought-provoking. Additionally, it marks the reversed version of the “regular” reconciliation of the penitents. In contrast to typical orders of this rite, here the sinners are first physically led into the church, then presented to the bishop, and only afterwards do they rejoin the local community transcendently. This specific kind of reconciliation was first identified by Jungmann in other PRG manuscripts, which he dubbed the “north-central family”.<sup>81</sup> It is thanks to Sarah Hamilton that we can link this specific manuscript to this tradition.<sup>82</sup> Mansfield saw the north-central family as an evolved eleventh-century combination of older and local

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<sup>81</sup> Josef A. Jungmann, *Die Lateinischen Bussriten in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, (Innsbruck, Rauch 1932), 98-100

<sup>82</sup> Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance 900-1050*, 150

traditions with that of the PRG. However, Hamilton demonstrated that the recently identified, earlier examples of this tradition trace their origins to the tenth century. By comparing the PRG and north-central tradition she proved that the latter is dependent to a certain extent either on the former, or on their common source. Either way, this manuscript provides a relatively distinct point of view on the variety of liturgical sources in this geographical area.

## Vendôme, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms. 14 (c. first half of the 11th century)<sup>83</sup>

The manuscript originally consisted of nineteen quaternions of which one, number XVI, is missing. The work has only 144 folios - all written in an eleventh-century hand. Its historical context is more obscure. We know that it was either copied from a Salzburg model or intended for a Church within the Salzburg diocese. We find several German saints in the litany on folio twenty-five.

For the purposes of this study, it is noteworthy that this pontifical includes the complete set of the excommunication ordines - all six taken over from Regino as well as the Leonine formula. The thorough inclusion may come as a surprise given that the manuscript is the shortest out of the four. The rites were recorded as a set - all in one place - and are located in the middle of the manuscript, running from folio 58v until 63r. They are preceded by an *ordo* on the structure of the provincial council and succeeded by a longer section on the order of offices to be said throughout the liturgical year. It is clear that they are a planned element of the codex and were not added as an afterthought.

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<sup>83</sup> Vendôme, Bibliothèques de la Communauté du Pays de Vendôme (Bibliothèque du Parc Ronsard), Ms. 14 Pontificale Salisburgense (Lorsch (?), 2. Drittel 11. Jh.) ([bibliotheca-laureshamensis-digital.de](http://bibliotheca-laureshamensis-digital.de))

The encyclopedic intention is detectable also in the structure and formulation of the rites themselves. Excepting minimal deviations, the text follows Regino's model almost perfectly, including the titles as well as order. The only deviation from his design lies in the scribe's transition from the *Excommunicatio brevis* to the *Leonine formula*. As we have encountered before, the last sentence of the short rite ends, according to Regino, with "*auctoritate Dei et iudicio sancti spiritus a gremio sanctae matris Ecclesiae et consortio totius Christianitatis eliminamus, quosque resipiscant, et Ecclesiae Dei satisfaciant*". The main text in the column stops at *resipiscant* and proceeds continuously with the first words of the next ordo - "*Leo episcopus fratres...*". The missing four words are added in smaller letters to ensure the ordo is complete and are the only, albeit small, indication that another ordo begins.

Despite the fact that the excommunication rites of this manuscript follow Regino's example almost perfectly, they nevertheless shed some light upon the issue at hand. In terms of the general mise-en-page and rubrication, the rites follow the general pattern of the manuscript, in that pages are organized into two orderly columns with the important parts of the text being highlighted by red color. Unlike in the other codices, the author did not rubricate only the titles but also whole passages:

- Instruction on when during the mass the bishop ought to perform the rite
- What people ought to respond following the excommunication, the twelve priests throwing down the candles, the priest explaining the situation to the laity in vernacular, providing examples of the forbidden activities with the excommunicant, the informing of the other priests in the diocese as well as the bishops of the province
- The entire procedure for the lifting of an excommunication without the psalms and prayers

When one looks at the highlighted parts only, a pattern becomes discernible. It would have been feasible for the bishop to perform the rite simply by using these sections of the text since their primary focus is on the steps necessary for the effective performance of the rite.

Taken together with the arrangement of the folios - the nicely separated maledictions, psalms and prayer texts that do not run into each other -<sup>84</sup> the specific rubrication of the text the author created offers an easy manual for bishops to navigate.

### Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Lit. 54 (after 1067)<sup>85</sup>

The final pontifical from the Bamberg library was either compiled in 1067 or based on a copy from that year. This is explicitly stated in folio 151 where 1067 is designated as the current year. It was written in Hildesheim and is made up of 155 folios in total. The majority of the codex was written by an eleventh-century hand (A). Hand (B) added passages from the Old and New testaments on folio 154 and a repetition of five verses was included as a sort of addendum on folio 78 by a possibly twelfth-century hand (C).<sup>86</sup> Spanning from folio 64r to 67r, the excommunication rites were written by the main scribe of the codex. They are placed between the *ordines* for consecration of a queen and a consecration of a cemetery.

Out of the three rites included in this codex, only the *Decretum Leonis Papae* formula follows its typical form of title. The rite that Regino named excommunication of the unfaithful (*infideles*) was given the name *Ordo excommunicationis qualiter unusquisque incorrigibilis anathematizari debeat*, opting for the designation uncorrectable or incurable. The switch from

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<sup>84</sup> The exception being, of course, the untitled Leonine formula.

<sup>85</sup> [Pontifikale. Benediktionale - ... \(bib-bvb.de\)](http://bib-bvb.de)

<sup>86</sup> Hoffmann, *Bamberg Handschriften*, 146.

*infideles* to *incorrigibilis* is not unheard of in this context - the Freising pontifical analyzed by Hamilton contains it as well. Working from a similar title found in the Freising canon law collection *Collectio duodecim partium* she concluded that the change in terminology was based on local tradition.<sup>87</sup> Unlike the Freising pontifical, the Hildesheim one follows the text of the excommunicatory formula set out by Regino as well as the Leonine formula without any major modifications.<sup>88</sup> The reconciliation of an excommunicant is a different matter. Titled *Satisfactio et emendatio et reconciliatio anathematizati*, it incorporated mainly the parts concerned with the necessary steps of the procedure: the initial willingness of the excommunicant to perform penance, the meeting the bishop who excommunicated him, the twelve priests surrounding him, the interrogation of the penitent's humility and the physical as well as metaphorical leading of the penitent back into the church. The instructions that the bishop ought to inform other priests outside of his diocese of the development as well as the warning that nobody should infringe on another bishop's jurisdiction are skipped here and the author returns to them only after the seven penitential psalms, versicles and prayer texts. The procedural parts in both the imposition and absolution rites are again highlighted in red color. Comparatively less space is devoted to the psalms and versicles, which are marked off from the continuously running text by two parallel columns.

All of the above-mentioned points lead us to the fact that the author interacted with the text. He adjusted the structure so that the events taking place during the actual ceremony in front of the audience were grouped together and the follow up procedure that befalls the bishop alone is postponed to the end. The combination of the highlighted part as well as the mise-en-page of the psalms and versicles create a manual for the bishop that is easy to consult.

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<sup>87</sup> Hamilton, "Interpreting Diversity", 141

<sup>88</sup> Minor modifications include changing "Sancti Petri" for "Martini"

The changes the author introduced in the Hildesheim pontifical make even more sense when put into context with the rites of solemn penance in the same codex for in the reconciliation rite of penitents performed on Maundy Thursday the scribe also opted for several modifications. The editors of the PRG concluded that majority of the manuscripts contain this structure of the penitential reconciliation:

- First comes the “*absolutio pluralis*” text - a blessing spoken over prostrating penitents
- “*Absolution singularis*” with an alternative text follow

This has led to an assumption that the two prayers represent alternatives to be chosen from in the case of either multiple or single penitent. The Bamberg Ms. Lit. 54 codex conforms to the modern edition of PRG in that it includes “*absolutio pluralis*” prayer but changed the title of the following prayer into “*absolutio paenitentis*”. Moreover, a third prayer that does not occur in the PRG edition, titled “*absolutio generalis*”, is included. Unlike any of the other prayers it was written in first person plural indicative and not the subjunctive or optative.<sup>89</sup> Two more alternative prayers follow - in the PRG edition they belong to the “*absolutio singularis*” but here they are not rubricated, simply following the continuous text. Hamilton pointed out that the Hildesheim pontifical may shed more light on the proper understanding of the logic behind the reconciliation rite. Rather than two alternative prayers based on the number of penitents, she suggested the rite was viewed as a progressive sequence - moving from blessing of all the penitents, through a single penitent, and finally to all those who are present.<sup>90</sup> In both cases,

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<sup>89</sup> Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance 900-1050*, 121

<sup>90</sup> Ibid. 121

the author played around with the structure of the ordo in order to create a more straightforward and logical ritual.

## Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Lat. 1231 (c. 1069-89)<sup>91</sup>

This manuscript consists of 268 folios and was written by several hands, all of which come from the second half of the eleventh century.<sup>92</sup> It was produced for the city of Regensburg. The litanies in folio 35 include invocation of several Bavarian saints, the first of which is Saint Emmeram, an important patron of the city's monastery. Moreover, a full-page miniature in folio 1 contains a depiction of a bishop Otto, who has been identified as Otto de Riedenburg, bishop of Regensburg from 1060 to 1089.

Out of the array of excommunicatory formulas available, the author of the Paris, Ms. Lat. 1231 manuscript, like that of Bamberg Ms. Lit. 53, included only the Leonine formula.<sup>93</sup> While the ritual for the imposition of excommunication follows the standard phrasing and structure seen in other manuscripts, the same cannot be said about the rite for lifting of the sentence. Here is an outline of the folios on which we can read these rites in the manuscript:

Ff. 110v - 112v *Excommunicatio Leonis Papae*

Ff. 112v - 114r *Absolutio Excommunicatorum*

Ff. 258r - 259r (*Q*)ualiter Episcopus reconciliet vel recipiat excommunicatum

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<sup>91</sup> The manuscript is available here [Ordines romani ad usum ecclesiae Ratisponensis. | Gallica \(bnf.fr\)](#).

<sup>92</sup> Andrieu, *Les ordines romani du haut moyen âge*, 256-265

<sup>93</sup> Hamilton concluded that Bamberg 53 is the only manuscript to contain the Leonine formula as the only excommunicatory formula. She may have discarded the Paris 1321 MS due to the fact that it also includes the *Vocationes for the incorrigible* that also poses as a papal letter, this time of pope Adrian.

The first section occupies a central position within the comprehensive pontifical and is between the rites for absolution of penitents at the deathbed and a mass focused on the confession of a priest and blessings of iron and water for ordeals. From its central position within the manuscript as well as the thematic arrangement it is obvious that it was a planned part of the pontifical from the beginning.

In this instance, the Leonine formula does not contain any extra information to instruct the bishop in greater detail on how to perform this rite. Apart from certain minor differences, it follows the form of the rite as it is recorded in the other pontificals, with no attempt by the author to intervene in the formulation of this apparent papal decretal. The same cannot be said about the lifting of the excommunication that directly follows it. Rubricated simply as *'Absolutio excommunicatorum'* it includes neither the introductory part of Regino in which he instructed the bishop to check the sinner's contrition nor the concluding part where the laity is informed of the lifting of the excommunicatory sentence. Just as one encounters in the manuscript Bamberg Ms. Lit. 53, the first section consists of the bishop reciting psalms 37, 50, incomplete 53 and 102, *Pater Noster*, ten versicles and responses and it is concluded with psalm 123. The second part consists of prayer text, however, in this case we only have three of them. Multiple texts attributed to the PRG tradition also contain a prayer text intended for the absolution of multiple penitents and text concluding the rite with blessings, holy water and incense. Instead of including a separate text for the absolution of several penitents right in this section, the scribe made provision for the bishop to correctly address multiple sinners as well by writing down a plural reading above the line. Unlike the Bamberg Ms. Lit. 53, the compiler did not seem to be satisfied with this shortened version of absolution of excommunicants and in the concluding pages of the manuscript another hand practically made up for what was lost in the first absolution.

The rite titled '*Qualiter episcopus reconciliet vel recipiat excommunicatorum*' is found between the '*Vocations for the incorrigible*' and the exposition of the faith of Saint Athanasius. It starts with the scene-setting introduction focused on the procedure preceding the act of excommunication itself, followed by an '*Absolutio excommunicatorum*' albeit in a shortened version - only accompanied with the psalm 37. Then follow three prayers, two of which were omitted in the earlier rite, with one being specifically titled '*Oratio pluribus*'. Interestingly, after this the scribe began with the next prayer. This may have been caused by the fact that the scribe realized that the prayer was already listed in its full version earlier in the manuscript. Instead, we find a marginal text that reads "*Requ(ire) super(ius) in rec(onc)iliatione.*" The rite is concluded with the recitation of benedictions as well as the sprinkling of the water and incense.

When one looks at these two seemingly separate reconciliation rites in greater detail, their intertwined nature becomes apparent. There exist several possibilities as to what caused their structure and formulation. The scribe may have intentionally separated the absolution into two parts, creating two distinct ordines, the first of which was intended for a single excommunicant whereas the latter was formulated for the cases of multiple excommunicants. Based on the few provisions for the plural forms the author made to the first absolution ordo, however, it may have been used for both purposes. The other possibility is that the scribe was copying the first absolution ordo down from an earlier model that only included the much-reduced version, as in manuscript Bamberg Ms. Lit. 53. In that case, the subsequent addition of the missing parts of the ordo into the other section of the manuscript points to a strong interest on the side of the author to include the full, proper version. This concern for the encyclopedic scope of the pontifical conforms to the comprehensive nature as well as the size of the pontifical and

suggests that rites were recorded by someone whose aim was to promote effective delivery of the rite.

## 2.3 Conclusions

So far, scholars have identified sixteen eleventh century PRG pontificals that originated in Germany. Three of these were damaged over the years: one consists of fragments only,<sup>94</sup> one was badly damaged in the Cotton fire,<sup>95</sup> and the third one is marked with many lacunae.<sup>96</sup> Out of the remaining thirteen, eight manuscripts in total contain at least one rite connected to excommunication. The research presented in this chapter is by no means all-inclusive. Rather, I opted to concentrate on the four manuscripts that were not analyzed in this context so far and thus I attempted at providing a more complete picture of the specific diversity of the excommunication rites characteristic of the eleventh century. It is clear that authors did consciously play around with formulas and at times composed them anew as opposed to merely copying them from earlier models. This directly contradicts earlier scholarship on the subject. This becomes apparent especially in the case of Bamberg Ms. Lit. 59, where the author took two existing models from Regino's collection and created a new *Brevior excommunicatio*. It is important to point out that this is exactly the sort of innovation that characterizes excommunication rites in the eleventh century liturgical evidence: the authors were dismantling and re-composing the order of the *ordines* as opposed to introducing completely novel formulas. This is supported by the disassembling of the reconciliation rite in the Paris, Ms. Lat. 1231 manuscript and completely changing its order in the Bamberg Ms. Lit. 54 manuscript. Other means of introducing small changes included variations to the titles or stripping the text

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<sup>94</sup> Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14690

<sup>95</sup> London, BL, MS Cotton Vitellius E. xii, fos 116-60

<sup>96</sup> Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Lit. 50

of what the author presumably viewed as supplementary parts. Even in texts like the Vendôme 14 manuscript, where the author did not intervene in the model from which it was copied, by highlighting the sections pertaining to the consecutive steps of the rite he created an easy-to-consult, step-by-step manual. Despite the specific nature of innovation, the scribes applied in the case of excommunication rites, the evidence presented in this chapter by no means supports the formerly accepted view of the excommunication liturgy as static and not evolving.

As for the proposed dichotomy between the codices where the excommunication rites were a planned element in terms of content and the corresponding high amount of detail, the evidence is less clearcut. The Vendôme 14, Bamberg Ms. Lit. 54, and partially also Paris Ms. Lat. 1231 manuscripts analyzed here incorporated the excommunication rites as planned elements with central place within the codices. The second reconciliation rite in the Paris pontifical as well as all of the excommunication rites in the Bamberg Ms. Lit. 59 can be found in the final folios of the manuscripts but nevertheless written in the hand of their main scribe respectively. The only book that could directly support Hamilton's conclusion on the low amount of detail as to the procedure associated specifically with the Leonine formula is the Paris Ms. Lat. 1231 manuscript because it does not include any of the formulas set out by Regino. Here, unlike in the case of the Bamberg Ms. Lit. 53 pontifical she analyzed, the formula is in the very center of the codex. Therefore, in light of the evidence considered in this chapter, her dichotomy does not hold.

On the other hand, the premeditated place of excommunication rites within the four manuscripts discussed here poses as an excellent opportunity to consider their position within the pontificals as a genre. In all of the cases the placement of the rites does not appear random, rather the opposite. The author of Bamberg Ms. Lit. 59 placed it behind the *ordo* for reconciliation of violated churches most likely because, as we have seen above, the sentence

of excommunication was closely connected to criminals attacking church property. In the Vendôme 14 manuscript it follows the instructions on provincial synod perhaps due to the far-reaching implications following the rite as well as its severity. In the case of Bamberg Ms. Lit. 54 the association is slightly less clear. It could be argued that it starts a new thematic section after the rites connected to the royal family. It is followed by the ordo for consecration of a cemetery, a more important connection, as the most severe consequences excommunication had on its recipient were connected to proper Christian death and burial.<sup>97</sup> And finally, in the case of the Paris Ms. Lat. 1231 manuscript the first section on excommunication and absolution is between the absolution of penitents and a blessing of iron and water for the use in ordeals whereas the second reconciliation is a part of a wider section on invoking unrepentant sinners to contrition, with the reconciliation being its climax. Each author associated excommunication with a different set of ordines. This is an interesting, albeit expected, aspect of a marginal ritual recorded in a liturgical genre of unstable character. This demonstrates that the choice to include one rite over another in each codex mattered and should be viewed as another form of diversity within the excommunication liturgy.

Finally, the present analysis showed the interconnected nature of the penitential and excommunication rites in the written liturgical tradition. This applied to instances such as manuscript Bamberg Ms. Lit. 59 where the inclusion of the penitential reconciliation rite appears to be sufficient to reconcile even an excommunicated person after he had completed the required penitential process. Further evidence to this is the correlation of continuous rearrangement of the reconciliation for both excommunicants and penitents in manuscript Bamberg Ms. Lit. 54. This, together with the interdependent nature of the two rituals, justifies

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<sup>97</sup> This subject will be further elaborated on in the final chapter.

their examination in tandem in the next chapter, as they clearly complemented each other and were viewed as linked by contemporaries as well.

### 3 The wider context

This chapter places the relatively locally confined liturgical evidence discussed in the first chapter into its broader context. To facilitate this perspective shift and provide a more detailed and complete picture of the excommunication liturgy I start by situating the PRG tradition in the wider context of tenth and eleventh century liturgical evidence. As some scholars proposed, the proliferation of these texts may be linked to active interest in the ritual of excommunication as a result of destabilization and subsequent disintegration of the Frankish Empire taking place in this period. For clarification an outline of the wider political developments in the Carolingian Empire follows. The primary purpose of this chapter is not only to offer a bridge between the concrete and general findings of this thesis. These case studies illustrate that punitive rites as a whole played an important role in this period and their more recent characterization by academics as stagnant, in any context, is simply untenable.

#### 3.1 Excommunication and its place within the wider liturgical context

As the previous chapter has shown, the excommunication formulas set down by Regino of Prüm in his early tenth century work proved highly influential for centuries to come. Despite the fact that canon law collections do not belong to the same genre as pontificals and other liturgical texts, similarities between the two are significant. Regino was explicit in both his preface and content that the purpose of his work was to aid the archbishops of Mainz and Trier in the visitations of their dioceses. While the work of the Lothringian abbot constitutes the oldest instance of recording excommunication formulas in normative texts in East Francia, the same does not apply for its western counterpart to which I turn now.

It is now widely accepted among scholars that the earliest surviving liturgical texts to contain the excommunication formulas originated around the year 900.<sup>98</sup> Probably the oldest inclusion of an excommunication formula recorded again alongside a collection of canon law was prompted by a specific event. On 6 July 900 CE the bishop of Rheims excommunicated several men as a punishment for the murder of Archbishop Fulk. The account includes a well-composed and harsh formula in which the names of the murderers are listed. The Sens pontifical in Saint Petersburg is of similar nature in that the names of the malefactors against which the excommunication was originally directed are included.<sup>99</sup> The rite starts off by admonishing the criminals, followed by a list of charges and the act of excommunication that uses the vocabulary we have encountered in the first chapter. Then follows a list of restrictions placed on them including a prohibition on entering churches as well as a denial of Christian burials. The section concludes with a variety of maledictions, each followed by Amen. A similar formula can be found in the Sens sacramentary, now in the Vatican library, which originated in the first half of the tenth century.<sup>100</sup> Titled *Maledictio adversus ecclesiae dei persecutores*, it was written in the margins of two facing pages in small, difficult-to-read handwriting. The double page marks the beginning of the creed which attests to the practice of carrying out an excommunication sentence following the reading of the Gospel.

The excommunication formula in the form of a letter of pope Leo, discussed in the first chapter, also came into circulation in the first half of the tenth century. The version of the Leonine formula that was discussed in the context of the PRG texts is a more universal one with the letter being addressed to the archbishops and their suffragans in Francia in general. The second,

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<sup>98</sup> The exact dating of these texts continues to be a matter of debate which is outside the scope of this thesis. What is important is that they all originate immediately before or after 900.

<sup>99</sup> An early modern transcription of the formula may be found in Lucas d'Achery's work: Lucas, D'Achery. *Spicilegium sive Collectio veterum aliquot scriptorum qui in Galliae bibliothecis delituerant*. Paris: Montalant. 1723. 3:320-321

<sup>100</sup> MS. Vat., Reg. lat. 567, ff. 48v-49v

more specific, version is addressed to the archbishops of Bourges, Lyons, Reims, Sens and Tours. They were exhorted to help abbot Odo defend the possessions of Saint-Benoit-sur-Loire at Fleury by anathematizing anyone who attacks the monastery or its possessions. All five bishops together with Leo VII were in office in the period from 938 to 939, which corroborates the letter's dating to the first half of the tenth century.<sup>101</sup>

The surprisingly substantial volume of surviving material from the tenth century stands in stark contrast to the dearth of material from preceding centuries. When looked at with this perspective in mind, the proliferation of material throughout the tenth century becomes undeniable. The eleventh century follows the same proliferation trends with at least eight surviving pontificals from the area of Germany containing the excommunication formulas. The closely connected genre of canon law collections grows apace and the aforementioned Burchard of Worms (d. 1025) included Regino's formulas with alterations as did Ivo of Chartres (d. 1115).

It is important to point out that based on the present evidence, the formulas in west Francia seem to be of more informal, spontaneous nature as opposed to those in the east. However, it would be erroneous to consider these two traditions separately, or, as some authors have done, to ignore the western formulas altogether.<sup>102</sup> As Wilfried Hartmann demonstrated, the canons in Regino's collection that he failed to attribute to any specific authority, which includes the excommunication rites, generally reflect Carolingian law. Abundant evidence supports the east

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<sup>101</sup>The modern editor of the Leonine formula Harold Zimmermann argued for the year 947 as the date of its origin. ed. Harold Zimmermann, *Papsturkunden 896-1046*, 3 vols. (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1984-89), 1:154-62.

<sup>102</sup> Laurent Jégou, *L'évêque, juge de paix: L'autorité épiscopale et le règlement des conflits (VIIIe-XIe siècle)*. (Collection Haut Moyen Âge 11, Turnhout: Brepols 2011), 462-475. Michel Lauwers, "L'exclusion comme construction de l'Ecclesia. Genèse et fonctions du rite de l'excommunication en Occident entre le IXe et le XIe siècle", in Stéphane Gioanni and Geneviève Bührer-Thierry, *Exclure de la communauté chrétienne (IVe-XIIe siècle)*, (Turnhout, 2015) 263-284.

and west connection - such as the correspondence of Regino's formulas to the practice attested in Hincmar's letter to his priests or in John VII's reading of the excommunication of Photius from a high ambo.<sup>103</sup> What is more, "linguistic echoes" have been identified between Regino's and the two tenth-century Reims formulas. Thus, contrary to some authors, this thesis concludes that while there are certain differences in the nature of the evidence coming from the two parts of Francia, they clearly originated in the same cultural climate.

A significant characteristic of the tenth century evidence from both eastern and western part of the continent is the prevalent nature of the offense of the intended recipient of the punishment - attack on the church property. In the case of Regino's collection, we can see this direct connection in the organization of the book, in which the topic of excommunication follows theft, especially of ecclesiastical possessions and property, which was considered to be sacrilege.<sup>104</sup>

However, the growing importance of this issue is by no means restricted to the liturgical evidence only. For instance, in 990 at the Council of Reims, Archbishop Arnulf instituted a special anathema to be used against the destroyers of the church of Reims.<sup>105</sup> To demonstrate the reasons behind first, this proliferation of liturgical excommunication formulas and second, their pertaining focus on church looters, we must now turn to the historical background against which these developments were taking place, with a focus on secular justice.

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<sup>103</sup> Hincmar of Rheims, *Hincmari rhemensis archiepiscopi Opera omnia*, in PL 126, Ep. XVII

"Seizing the Gospels, he (the pope) went up into the pulpit and declared to all present:"Let him be anathematized who refuses to admit that Photius was lawfully struck by the judgment of God, and was moreover condemned by my predecessors, the very saintly popes Nicholas and Hadrian." Translation in Francis Dvornik, *The Photian Schism: History and Legend* (Cambridge 1948) 217.

<sup>104</sup> Austin, *Shaping Church Law Around Year 1000*, 182

<sup>105</sup> Little, *Benedictine Maledictions*, 39 and appendix C in this thesis

## 3.2 Historical context

In the late eight century, the Frankish kingdom stretched, at its greatest extend under Charlemagne, from Western continental Europe to its heartland.<sup>106</sup> Following the accession of the first Carolingian king in 751, the dynasty ruled Frankia with a territorial zenith under Charlemagne whose infamous imperial coronation took place in 800. From the middle of the ninth century, historians speak of a period of decline which resulted in the fragmentation of the Frankish territories at the beginning of the tenth century. Failures of Charlemagne's grandsons are often illustrated by the battle of Fontenoy in 841, perhaps the bloodiest conflict of the entire era, and a direct result of the territorial disputes. Among the strongest drives behind the eventual disintegration of the Carolingian empire, besides the aforementioned internal struggles worsened by the untimely deaths of several Carolingian princes, were also external attacks from, among others, Scandinavians and Magyars.<sup>107</sup> Regional kingdoms rose from the ashes of the empire – East Francia, Lombardy, Burgundy, Lothringia, Provence, West Francia, and Catalonia. The territory of interest in the first half of the thesis, the East Francia, was led by the New Saxon dynasty, the Ottonians, who not only managed to add Lothringia and Lombardy to their sphere of control but soon also claimed the territories of Provence and Burgundy. Unlike its eastern counterpart, the West Frankish kingdom was ruled by a legitimate Carolingian heir until the close of the tenth century. His position was far from stable and soon lost his position in 987 to the Capetian dynasty. As far as Catalonia is concerned, located on

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<sup>106</sup> The Carolingian lands consisted of territories which had been formerly under the control of Merovingian rulers of the late sixth and seventh centuries. The original Frankish dynasty, the Merovingians, were removed in 751 when the de facto ruler Pippin was anointed king. Moreover, outside the lands that were directly incorporated into the empire, Brittany, the principality of Benevento and the Slavs on the eastern borders all had to pay tribute to the Carolingians. What was outside the Frankish control were the British Isles, the Scandinavian and Spanish peninsulas. The majority of the following overview is indebted to Timothy Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages*, (Longman 1991) 1-44

<sup>107</sup> Sarah Greer and Alice Hicklin, "Introduction" in ed. Sarah Greer, Alice Hicklin, *Using and Not Using the Past after the Carolingian Empire:c. 900–c.1050* (Routledge, 2019), 1-13

the outskirts of the former empire, it was soon claimed by local non-Frankish magnates such as the counts of Barcelona.

The structure of medieval society that was in place at the heyday of the empire was complex and multi-layered. As such, it came to rely heavily on centralized formal institutions to administer justice and maintain peace. In order to understand the changes taking place at the point of decline of the empire, an elaboration on how the empire functioned in the first place follows.<sup>108</sup>

Generally, there was not one center city or palace from which all the generations of Carolingians ruled. Instead, they moved around their kingdoms frequently.<sup>109</sup> The itinerant king governed by making his will known, either in person, through representatives, or in writing, addressing, among other issues, justice and peacekeeping within his borders. Arguably the most important element of the Carolingian government, essentially the king's direct representative, was the office of the count. The degree to which the borders of any given county were clearly delineated differed across the territory as did their sizes and significance. Southern Gaul, for instance, was characterized with very clearly defined territory, whereas that is not certain for the Eastern part.<sup>110</sup> Over time, the position skewed towards hereditary, though we continue to find evidence of kings deposing counts of their office. Besides carrying out the explicit will of the king, the count was responsible for overseeing justice by holding courts several times per year. These were presided over leading men of the community such as abbots, bishops and lay office-holders. The king originally communicated with their counts through

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<sup>108</sup> It is important to note that some aspects may have varied according to the specific ruler(s) on the throne.

<sup>109</sup> Depending on the time of the year, the kings would go on campaigns, undergo journeys for religious purposes, enjoy hunting and so forth. There are individual exceptions, of course, like Charlemagne or Louis the Pious who chose to reside in Aachen which functioned as the capital. Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages*, 23-24.

<sup>110</sup> Occasional references inform us of distinctions between powerful and less powerful counts. ed. Alfred Boretius, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Capitularia regum Francorum*, (Hannover 1893), 52.

the *missus dominicus*, royal envoys, which later developed into an institution. The primary purpose of these was to supervise the counts, oversee carrying out of justice via courts and prevent abuses from taking place. Otherwise, the king and his count frequently met at the general assemblies that may have taken place as often as twice a year.<sup>111</sup>

Christianity was an integral part of the Frankish Empire and bishoprics were closely tied to the inner workings of medieval society. North of the Alps, there were approximately 150 dioceses with massive landholdings all over the empire. Thus, their leading figures, who usually came from a small cohort of families, constituted a vital and powerful group of leading men of the empire.

Of particular importance for this study was the closeness between the empire's secular and ecclesiastical spheres, especially when it came to legislation. Secular laws demanding one to carry out penance were promulgated as early as 595 with Childebert's decree requiring penance for incest. In 742 the capitularies included provisions applying to false priests and sexual offenses and the list grew in the subsequent years, expanding until, under Pippin, strict laws threatened sinners with exile, fines or imprisonment if they fail to do penance.<sup>112</sup> The 760-761 capitulary included several provisions for enforcing penance and the one from 802 instructed the counts and *missi* to aid their bishops in coercing sinners to submit to the episcopal sentences. The cooperation was a two-way street, however. For instance, Charles the Bald opted to use his bishops to punish lawless nobles by imposing penance and even excommunication on them after the traditionally secular ways had failed him. Given the centrality of oath-taking in a variety of penal, political, social and religious spheres of the

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<sup>111</sup> Although there are exceptions to this - in 820, for instance, there was no assembly. Moreover, one cannot take for granted that each count would attend every assembly every year. Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages*, 29

<sup>112</sup> Thomas P. Oakley, "The Cooperation of Medieval Penance and Secular Law" *Speculum*, Oct., 1932, vol. 7, No. 4 (The University of Chicago Press, 1932), 518

society both the State and Church worked in unison to uphold their standard and punish their violation. The measures taken against perjury varied across periods but, for instance, under Charlemagne the penalty was the loss of a hand together with penance. The secular and religious spheres thus worked hand in hand in ensuring discipline and order in the medieval system of social control. What then happened when one half of the mechanism could no longer perform its part of the process?

From the perspective of the traditional legal historians, between the periods of the disintegration of the Carolingian comital court system in the tenth and eleventh centuries and the ascent of the royal courts of the late twelfth century there was a vacuum in place of the judicial institutions that control society.<sup>113</sup> Following George Duby's research on the subject, the topic was picked up by scholars who rather emphasized the nonlegal means of dealing with conflict whether that be social, moral or other.<sup>114</sup> Religious rituals such as excommunication and penance but also the monastic clamor represent exactly the only kind of measures the Church had at its disposal in the period when it could no longer rely on its secular judicial counterpart. This troublesome period is precisely the point in history when excommunication in liturgical texts flourished both in terms of number of surviving manuscripts as well as in the amount of attention the rites acquired by their scribes. Peculiarly, the surviving texts were not created as part of the so-called Carolingian renaissance. The renaissance marks a period of renewed interest in the Latin classics, many of which were primarily the Church fathers, that went hand in hand with the proper training of clerics and overall church reformation and it

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<sup>113</sup> Yvonne Bongert, *Recherches sur les cours laïques du Xe au XIIe siècle*, (Paris 1944). Georges Duby demonstrated the evolution of the traditional judicial institutions into voluntary tribunals of arbitration. Georges Duby, "Recherches sur l'évolution des institutions judiciaires pendant le Xe et le XIe siècle dans le sud de la Bourgogne", in *Hommes et structures du moyen âge: Recueil d'articles* ((De Gruyter Mouton 1986) A summary taken from Patrick J. Geary, "Living with Conflicts in Stateless France: A Typology of Conflict Management Mechanisms, 1050-1200" in Geary, *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Cornell University Press 1994) 129-137

<sup>114</sup> Little, *Benedictine Maledictions*; Geary, "Living with Conflicts in Stateless France"

caused an enormous increase in the production of manuscripts of all kinds. The fact that excommunication rites were incorporated only after this period is no coincidence. When the Church could no longer rely on its secular counterpart to preserve order, there was a clear need for more extreme punitive rituals. This was exactly the atmosphere at the time during which they entered the liturgical texts. With the historical context established, this thesis turns to a number of case studies which shed light on the emergence and importance of liturgical tradition.

## 4 Real-life cases

The final part of the present study deals primarily with real-life practices described in non-liturgical sources from all over the post-Carolingian world. The examples of concrete historical cases found in, for instance, medieval chronicles, enable me to paint a more coherent picture of the issue of punitive rites of this period. This is because the practice of punitive rites as it was recorded by clerics, who were often authors of medieval chronicles, was intricately tied to the sphere of liturgical tradition discussed in the first part of the thesis. In other words, the active effort the scribes often put into modeling their own versions of these rites in a liturgical setting reflects the growing importance of performing these rites as well as the multiplicity of ways when doing so.

The case studies within this chapter are organized on a thematic basis: starting with the penance of Henry of Schweinfurt, before moving on to the excommunication and penance of Henry IV, and finally ending with penance and excommunication in relation to death and burial.

### 4.1 Narrative evidence

In 1004, the Babenberger Henry of Schweinfurt, margrave in the Nordgau, decided to support the Polish king Boleslav Chrobry in his attack on the Bavarians. This took place in the context of Henry II's dynastic problems following his successions to the throne in 1002 and the Henry of Schweinfurt's earlier unsuccessful request for the duchy of Bavaria.<sup>115</sup> Moreover, upon his return to Merseburg, King Henry was informed that his brother Bruno fled to the Hungarian king Stephen. The source immediately described to us that, following the treachery, the

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<sup>115</sup> Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicle*, 5.12 transl. In D. Warner, *Ottonian Germany. The 'Chronicon' of Thietmar of Merseburg*, (Manchester 2011), 214-215. His request was denied on the grounds that the Bavarians, according to tradition, freely elect their duke.

margrave's intercessors dispatched to Henry informed the king of both: his brother's betrayal and also his request for forgiveness.

The margrave had also repented greatly for what he had undertaken. Accepting their petition, though unwillingly, and being influenced even more by the entreaties of his dear Tagino and Duke Bernhard, the king offered to forgive Margrave Henry, on the condition that all property and people be returned to him and to his supporters, and that the margrave himself be retained in custody as long as the king wished. In tears, Margrave Henry confessed that he was guilty in all things and, in the manner and clothing of a penitent, surrendered himself to the king. At the king's order, the archbishop of Magdeburg led him off to the burg at Giebichenstein and had his warriors guard him carefully, both day and night. Among his various good works there, the margrave sang the psalter with one hundred and fifty genuflections, all in a single day.<sup>116</sup>

This case has been formerly used as the paradigmatic example of the ritual of *deditio* - an act of surrender used to resolve conflicts between aristocrats in Ottonian Germany through the process of one party formally submitting itself to another.<sup>117</sup> In his study of the subject, Gerd Althoff argued that this was a secular ritual that took over many aspects from the rite of

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<sup>116</sup> Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicle*, 6.2

<sup>117</sup> Althoff, *Rules and Rituals in Medieval Power Games*,

ecclesiastical penance. These included the ritual vocabulary, wearing of a hair shirt, walking barefoot and shedding tears.<sup>118</sup>

In accord with Althoff, I view this event as critical, but I also consider it more complex than simply a secular ritual incorporating penitential aspects. Other scholarship contends that this is a religious ritual as well. Rob Meens, for example, notes that the *deditio* should hardly be looked at as a purely secular ritual that simply borrows aspects from its ecclesiastical counterpart.<sup>119</sup> After all, the ritual of penance formed a central component in the whole settlement of the betrayal. This becomes especially obvious when we compare it with the steps of the public penitential ritual found, among other sources, in the PRG.<sup>120</sup> The chain of events follows this order: the margrave betrayed the king, expressed remorse, and informed Henry through the help of his intercessors of his desire to make peace. The king, having decided to accept his request, set down the conditions for the margrave's induction into penance. The events up to this point follow the first two steps towards one's entrance into ecclesiastical penance as described in the pontificals. In this case, however, the king, instead of a bishop, opted not to consult the penitent directly but rather pondered the decision with the help of his advisors. The first aspect of the margrave's penance - giving up his wealth - could be seen as a test to uncover the penitent's true willingness to repent. This was ascertained by the margrave's confession of sins and his approaching the king in penitential mode and wearing penitential clothing. Again, instead of the priest awarding the formal penance, it is the king who decided the manner of performing penance. The manifold penitential aspects that crop up throughout the narrative and were mentioned by Althoff, such as the penitential garment, shedding of tears

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<sup>118</sup> “‘He begged pardon’ (*veniam expetebat*): the phrase is the same as that used in monastic customaries. Indeed, the language of political submission was nothing but the language of penance.” Translation in Koziol, *Begging Pardon and favour*, p. 187

<sup>119</sup> Meens, *Penance in medieval Europe*, 180.

<sup>120</sup> The outline of the ritual is included in Appendix B

and so forth, should not be considered separately from the vocabulary and especially the structure this ritual follows. All in all, the only important aspect in which the narrative did not follow the ecclesiastical rite was that the traditional role of a bishop was taken by a king. Nevertheless, the bishop was important in the second part of the affair - the expulsion and incarceration of the margrave. According to the text, the traitor was led by the bishop into the castle of Giebichenstein where he remained imprisoned while he did good deeds such as praying the psalter with 150 genuflections. The second part of the affair closely resembles the fate of an excommunicated person. This is evidenced by the bishop's charge to physically lead out the sinner out of the community as well as the medicinal effect it was supposed to have on the margrave. Similar to the evidence we find in liturgical sources, where the imposing of the rite was usually followed by its absolution, the margrave was allowed to re-enter the society.

Altogether, this early eleventh century case is noteworthy because it symbolizes several objectives of this study. First of all, delineating between the rituals of penance and excommunication in narrative sources may be precarious. Secondly, it showcases the intertwining of secular and religious realms. Not only was the nature of the offense ambiguous given that oath-breaking may fall into the sphere of both ecclesiastical and judicial courts but the whole event was written down by a cleric.<sup>121</sup> The chronicler, Thietmar of Merseburg, was himself a bishop between the years 1009 and 1018. Given that it was episcopal prerogative to ritually introduce someone into penance in ecclesiastical environment he must have been

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<sup>121</sup> Both canon law collections from the eleventh century include discussions of oaths and broken oaths. First of all, both Regino and Burchard take the fact that oaths were licit as a starting point, though Burchard devoted some space to the scriptural justifications of this. Given that oaths were such an integral part of medieval Europe - they swore oaths not only to their lords but also to profess their orthodoxy - they were considered licit although both authors warned of dangers of perjury (perjury for both authors meant breaking the sworn oath in any way). Greta Austin, *Shaping Church Law Around Year 1000: The decretum of Burchard of Worms* (Ashgate Publishing Company, 2009), 190-196. For instance, among the Anglo-Saxons, the punishment of perjury, sexual and ecclesiastical offences were usually, although not universally, left to the Church. See. Oakley, "The Cooperation of Medieval Penance and Secular Law", 515-524.

familiar either with the general accustomed practice or with the written liturgical sources specifically. This is reflected in the careful adherence to the structure and aspects of the ritual of penance found in pontificals. Thus, it also displayed the closeness between the actual practice, or rather the narrative describing this practice, and the liturgical texts of the period.

There existed certain latitude at one's disposal when it came to performing these punitive rites. Also, as this paradigmatic case has shown, we generally possess more evidence to witness medieval penitential practices in detail as opposed to those of excommunication. After all, the ritual of penance, by being the less severe punishment either self-imposed or inflicted on them by a member of the clergy, was repeatable and often involved positive connotations.<sup>122</sup>

This problem is also visible in the arguably most famous case of excommunication and penance: the excommunication and Canossa submission of Henry IV to pope Gregory VII in 1077. It combines all the elements under study in this thesis and also shows the level of flexibility when it comes to the form of the two rituals that I aim to demonstrate in this chapter.

The conflict marks the pinnacle of a centuries-long development of the East Frankish/German Church on the one hand and papal reform on the other.<sup>123</sup> The organization of the German Church came to be characterized by the royal influence on the appointment of bishops and abbots as well as the right to dispose of ecclesiastical properties. The royal prerogative materialized itself in the form of an investiture ritual that also later on gave name to the entire controversy. In this process, the king presented the successful candidate with his bishopric by

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<sup>122</sup> This is especially true when it comes to royal penitents - humility represented the ideal virtue for a Christian ruler. For instance, Louis the Pious' confession of sins in Attigny in 813 was described very positively - the bishops followed his "most salubrious example" which earned him the comparison to Theodosius and his penance. See Mayke de Jong, "Power and humility in Carolingian society: the public penance of Louis the Pious", in *Early Medieval Europe*, 1 (1992) 29-52.

<sup>123</sup> Uta-Renate Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy: church and monarchy from the ninth to the twelfth century*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995

handing the bishop-elect a symbolic staff and from the time of Henry III also a ring. This went in direct opposition to the growing atmosphere of religious renewal and reform that aimed to eliminate lay influence in the ecclesiastical sphere. The spark that actually ignited conflict was the royal investiture of several northern Italian bishops, a customary right that Henry refused to give up.<sup>124</sup> It is important to note, however, that while the issue of the proper relationship between secular and priestly power lay at the heart of the conflict, the investiture prohibition was a result of the dispute rather than as its underlying cause.<sup>125</sup>

A series of antagonistic measures on both sides finally culminated in Gregory's excommunication of the king in 1076. As often was the case with papal excommunication, there did not occur the imposition ritual we have encountered in the pontificals, due to the distance between the pope and the German king. Naturally, being excommunicated put the emperor in a politically problematic position. The German princes were no longer bound by their oaths to Henry and threatened to depose him and to choose a king in his stead. Unable to withstand the amount of pressure, Henry secretly crossed the Alps to Italy. Having heard of the news, the pontiff, on his way to the Augsburg assembly, took refuge at countess Matilda's fortress in Canossa where the king soon followed him.<sup>126</sup> The details of these days remain ambiguous given the biased sources that tend to be divided according to their support of the two conflicting parties. However, it is clear that following the three days that Henry spent barefoot in front of the castle gates dressed in nothing but a hair shirt, the pope lifted the excommunication sentence and readmitted the emperor as a full member of the Christian

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<sup>124</sup> Uta-Renate Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy*, p. 119

<sup>125</sup> Ibid, p. 121

<sup>126</sup> Gregory explained in his letter that he had not felt safe outside of Italy given that the German princes did not provide him with an escort to accompany him to Augsburg where a decision about the deposition was to be decided. Ephraim Emerton, *The Correspondence of Pope Gregory VII: Selected letters from the Registrum Gregory*, (Columbia University Press 1932), 113-114.

society.<sup>127</sup> From the limited sources that shed light on these events it is understood that instead of the three stage penitential process presented in the PRG manuscripts preceded by the absolution from excommunication, Gregory opted for a one-step procedure. Following Henry's public submission in front of the castle gate, Gregory then proceeded to the zenith of the ritual by allowing the sinner to take communion. As both Hamilton and Meens pointed out, this procedure was not unheard of in eleventh-century Italy.<sup>128</sup> For the purpose of this thesis, it demonstrates the adaptability of both excommunication and penance to different situations.

The story continued and, in the end, Henry did not escape excommunication. He was anathematized for the second time in 1080, though this time, the political repercussions were less severe and Henry managed to retain his power.<sup>129</sup> It becomes apparent that more often than not, the sentence of excommunication was not such a difficult burden to live with as the Church might have wished - which is applicable even in the case of the king's second excommunication. On the other hand, it was a much bigger issue as one's death approached, and he wished to be buried in consecrated ground - a power that fell exclusively into the hands of the Church. For this reason, now I turn my attention to evidence of the rituals in connection to death and burial.

## 4.2 Death and burial

After more than twenty years of reign, Henry IV was forced to abdicate in favor of his son Henry V in 1105. He confessed to various sins, submitted to the papal legates and begged for forgiveness. However, given that he was formally excommunicated by the pope the only way

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<sup>127</sup> He was not reinstated as king because in 1080 Gregory explicitly proclaimed that he had not yet restored Henry to his royal office.

<sup>128</sup> Meens, *Penance in medieval Europe*, 184, Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance*, 166-7

<sup>129</sup> And the bishop of Rome repeated the sentence in 1084 after Henry's imperial coronation. Ian S. Robinson, *Henry IV of Germany 1056-1106*, (Cambridge University Press 1999), 234.

for him to gain absolution was through a synod in Rome, and his requests were refused. The former emperor died in 1108 in Liege and was buried by the archbishop Otbert, his lifelong friend, in front of the altar dedicated to the Virgin Mary until his body could be moved to the cathedral of Speyer - the final resting place that Henry envisioned.<sup>130</sup> Since the former emperor was still technically excommunicated, his burial met with a fair amount of backlash and resulted in the body being dug up and moved to an unconsecrated ground. Henry V eventually decided to honor his late father's wishes and moved the body to the Speyer cathedral - which again caused an uproar, this time from the bishop of Speyer, and ultimately the body was placed into a newly-built, unconsecrated chapel. Henry V requested permission from the pope to have his father's body reburied in the Speyer cathedral, a request to which, after five years, Pope Paschal II agreed.

This whole chain of events shows one of the fundamental and most severe punishments inflicted on an excommunicated person: the denial of a Christian burial and a resting place in consecrated ground.<sup>131</sup> The importance of this is demonstrated through the frequent seeking of reconciliation at one's deathbed, as in the case of Henry IV. This can be linked both to the Christianity's theology of afterlife as well as to medieval society's considerable emphasis on memory and commemoration of the deserving dead.<sup>132</sup> A big part of what constituted a good Christian death was devoted to seeking absolution. As a point of comparison, the liturgy of the British Isles differs from that under consideration in this thesis in that the bishop does not reconcile the excommunicant in front of the church doors but rather at the outskirts of the local cemetery. Evidence such as the eleventh-century letter of Gerard of Cambrai to the French

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<sup>130</sup> Henry IV sent a message on his deathbed to his son - regarding his final resting place and a pardon for his supporters.

<sup>131</sup> "No Christian shall say an Ave for them; nor should a priest presume to celebrate Mass or give Holy Communion. Let them be buried in the manner of an ass in a dung heap." PRG

<sup>132</sup> Peter Brown, *The Ransom of the Soul: Afterlife and Wealth in Early Western Christianity* (Cambridge, MA, 2015), p. 35

clerics, chastising them for bargaining absolution or burial for money, suggests that people would go to great lengths to ensure a proper burial even in the case of the deceased being a known sinner. In instances when a person's status came into light only after their burial the body could be moved to unconsecrated ground.<sup>133</sup> The bishop of Rome Paschal II explicitly stated that:

The cadavers of the excommunicated should be thrown out of the basilicas of the saints, because their stench reaches up to supernal regions, just as the fourth book of Gregory's Dialogues indicates, and as we learn from the revelation of the saints; and on that account, while the (churches) still contain those bodies, we rule that divine offices should cease.<sup>134</sup>

Dyan Elliott viewed this argumentation as one of the pillar texts that argued in favor of what he called "negative translations"- the punitive rite of desecration which emerged as an anti-ritual to the positive translations of saints.<sup>135</sup> There exists plenty of evidence that attest to this practice actually taking place in the Middle Ages, however, the perpetrators nevertheless occasioned a certain amount of shame and generally seem to be in the position of apologists of

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<sup>133</sup> As happened in the case of Henry IV - although his status of an excommunicant was well known.

<sup>134</sup> Paschal II, Epist 288, to Gebeard, bishop of Constance in *Violence against the Dead*, p. 1036

<sup>135</sup> "The ultimate rite of recognition for the saint was the posthumous translation of relics, publicly acknowledging that the soul of the deceased was, indeed, already in heaven, and that, while the blessed body was still on earth, it merited a better resting place." Dyan Elliott, "Violence against the Dead: The Negative Translation and damnatio memoriae in the Middle Ages", in *Speculum* 92 (2017), 1020.

this practice. Similarly, posthumous excommunication, whenever it occurred, was frowned upon.<sup>136</sup>

The affinity of excommunication and death leads us back to the central point of the previous chapter: the rise in the importance of these rites as a means to resolve societal conflicts in times when the institutional means were not at disposal. As Patrick Geary illustrated using the example of a strife between the knights and monks of the medieval town of Chorges, the vital moments in long-running conflicts arose at the point of death of a participant.<sup>137</sup> This is also supported by the fact that contemporary sources tend to mention excommunication either as an admonition before an act - to warn the flock not to transgress the rules set up by the Church - or describe the inflicting of said punishment when an individual failed to obey the law. This is one of the reasons why tracing the testimonies that attest to the actual performance of the excommunication rite is much more difficult than that of penance.

The rite of penance was also connected to burials and death, although the relationship of the deceased and the church community appears to be less clear-cut. While the general medieval view of deceased excommunicants was that they were forever severed from the community in both earth and in heaven, the penitent was in a more liminal position. A fitting example of this is a kind of “posthumous public penance” that followed the death of emperor Otto III in 1002.<sup>138</sup> The emperor died suddenly while on his way to Rome. Thietmar again provided witness to the event of Otto’s funeral. The bodily remains were transferred from Italy to Cologne, where the archbishop Heribert integrated him into the stationary liturgy of Easter. On

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<sup>136</sup> The most famous cases of posthumous excommunication, among others, include the ninth century Cadaver Synod. Michael Edward Moore, *The Attack on Pope Formosus: Papal History in an Age of Resentment (875–897).* in *Ecclesia et violentia. Violence against the church and violence within the church in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Radosław Kotecki and Jacek Maciejewski (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 184–208.

<sup>137</sup> Geary, “Living with Conflicts in Stateless France”

<sup>138</sup> Meens, *Penance in medieval Europe*, p. 182

each of the first three days of the Holy Week, the body was brought into the most important churches of the city respectively, and on Maundy Thursday, the designated day for reconciling penitents, it was carried into the St Peter Cathedral where:

.. according to ecclesiastical custom, penitents are admitted and receive absolution.

With the body present, the archbishop granted absolution, assisting priests called everyone to remembrance, and the people responded tearfully and in all humility.<sup>139</sup>

The body was then taken to Aachen where it was buried in the Church of St Mary on Easter Sunday. According to Meens, at the end of this burial/penitential procession, Otto III was among the ones to receive absolution from Heribert which is supposed to show that, unlike excommunication, penitential absolution could reach one even after death. In my reading of the evidence, it is by no means clear whether the corpse itself received an absolution or it served a merely symbolic function.

Ideally a person would perform penance before the point of his death which is why there is an abundance of sources describing penitential practices before embarking upon dangerous ventures. King Otto the Great's preparations on the eve of the decisive battle of Lech in 955 - which saw a defeat of the Hungarian forces by his army - are described at length in Thietmar's account. According to the chronicler, the king prostrated himself publicly in front of his men, confessed his sins and promised that in return for his victory he would establish a bishopric in Merseburg. His confessor Ulrich then proceeded with celebrating the mass and communion and then the king, armed with the relic of the Holy Lance, came victorious in the battle.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicle*, 4.53

<sup>140</sup> Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicle*, 2.10. Thietmar's own interests become obvious here - as a bishop of Merseburg it was important to record the king's promise of a new bishopric.

The crusades to the Holy Land, that began at the instigation of pope Urban II at the close of the eleventh century, were likewise a movement motivated by strong penitential undertones. The violence exercised in these “penitential holy wars” was ultimately portrayed as an act of salvation to the participants and crusaders often confessed their sins and participated in communal penitential rituals before going into battles.<sup>141</sup>

Aside from the situations when the penitent’s own death or burial were of interest, a public burial of one’s kin also presented a good opportunity for performing penance. From the letter of Bern, abbot of Reichenau, addressed to the emperor Henry III, we learn that when his mother Gisela of Swabia died in 1043, the king:

..threw off the royal purple and assumed the mourning habit of penitence. With bare feet, with hands stretched out in the shape of the cross, you sank to the ground in the presence of all the people, you wet the pavement with tears, you did public penance, and you moved all those present to tears. Thus by weeping and by penance you satisfied the priests of the Lord, who will render account for you, and you appeased divine mercy.

The repetition of the outward penitential signs like bare feet, penitential garb, shedding of tears is enjoined with the act of prostration in the shape of a cross.

The following example of royal penance sheds even more light on the relationship between normative texts and actual practice. Thietmar’s description of the penance of the Polish king Boleslaw Chrobry is a useful case as it supports the proposed reservations of Philippe Buc

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<sup>141</sup> Bishop Adhemar of Le Puy organized fasting and processions near Antioch when the Latin army was under pressure from the Muslim forces. Moreover, they also sent away women from the camp before the battle as part of a desire for purity. Christopher Tyerman, *God’s War. A new history of the crusades* (Cambridge MA, 2006) p. 138

toward medieval descriptions of religious rituals. In this section of his chronicle, Thietmar's take on the Polish king is very critical. He is portrayed as scheming and deceptive, having not only bad-mouthed Henry in his letter to the pope but also sought to subvert the men of the region in question against their king. On top of having committed these shameful acts he was insincere and calculating in his conduct of penance:

If he either recognized that he had greatly sinned or knew of any justifiable complaint against him, he ordered the canons to be placed before him so that he could discover how this sin ought to be emended. Then in accordance with those writings, he immediately set about correcting whatever crime has been committed. Nevertheless, he is still more inclined to sin recklessly than to remain in salutary penance.<sup>142</sup>

From the author's witness to Boleslaw's behavior one can easily see the political dispensations that motivated him to write down the events in the reproachful style. He juxtaposed the Ottonian sincere willingness to do penance with that of the Polish king. This is by no means restricted to Thietmar. Liutprand of Cremona's account of the Ottonian and Lombard rituals differentiates between good and bad rituals on the basis of the author's political allegiances.<sup>143</sup> For the purpose of this research, however, the question is not whether the narrative is fair to its participants but rather what it can tell us about the relationship between the normative texts and real-life practice. No matter the Polish king's motivations, the canons were consulted, and the due procedure followed. The need to correct his misdeeds, the urge to do so correctly and the

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<sup>142</sup> Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicle*, 6.92

<sup>143</sup> Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual*, p. 15-50. Other fitting examples of describing religious rituals with an agenda is, among others, the 833 descriptions of Louis the Pious' public penance. The narrative came down to us in the apologia *Relatio Episcoporum* written by the king's enemies - the bishops supporting Louis' son Lothar. This version of the events emphasized the voluntary nature of the penance whereas the chronicles loyal to Louis reiterated the coercion. de Jong, "Power and humility in Carolingian society", 29-52

subsequent consultation of canons is obvious from the text and should be viewed as even more imperative given Thietmar's negative attitude to the foreign king.

### 4.3 Conclusion

These case studies make concrete the points established in the earlier analysis of liturgical tradition. They augment this work in two ways: first, due to the unstable political situation the tenth century witnessed the rise of importance of the excommunication ritual which translated itself into a proliferation of liturgical texts in this period.

Second, these cases show the various ways in which actual practice did and did not overlap with written liturgical directives. At times, this can be found only implicitly in sources upon closer analysis, as we witnessed in the case of the penance of margrave Henry of Schweinfurt. In other instances, it is explicitly stated, as it was in Thietmar's account of the penance of Boleslaw Chrobry.

These case studies highlight the critical role played by excommunication and penitence in the post-Carolingian world. Further, they make concrete many of the conceptual points discussed in the first chapter, showing how the structure and content of pontificals was reflected by real-world action. They showcase the heavy overlap between the secular and religious spheres, as well as the influence each had on the other. The selected cases also demonstrate the vital importance of death and burial in medieval society.

## 5 Final conclusion

No other word than “misunderstood” comes to my mind when considering the position of excommunication within the medieval liturgical tradition. Medieval liturgical texts have long suffered a lack of scholarly interest due to their supposed uniformity. The ninth-century abbot of Reichenau Walahfrid Strabo mentioned the various versions of psalms as well as baptismal practices he himself witnessed and accepted.<sup>144</sup> It is ironic, then, that the issue of excommunication within this commonly varied field was often reduced to a simplistic reading. Many scholars ignore the informal excommunicatory formulas found in the western part of the early tenth-century Frankish Empire, considering Regino’s canon law collection, written in the eastern part, as the earliest written forms. The picture they paint is a straightforward one, in which excommunicatory formulas proved influential and were not only copied in Burchard’s and Ivo’s canon law collections, but also entered broader liturgical tradition. There are, of course, authors who did recognize the sudden proliferation and variety of early tenth-century liturgical documents that contain these formulas. However, many make the mistake of viewing the formulas found in the manuscripts of Pontificale Romano-germanique tradition as united and consistent with the ones found in the modern edition of Cyrille Vogel and Reinhard Elze. These misunderstandings stem from two main misconceptions pertaining to the PRG that dominated the field of liturgical studies until recently. First, it has long maintained its unique status of a clearly delineated tradition of liturgical manuscripts in the sea of ambivalent and diverse liturgical books. The issue the success of the PRG presents was fittingly summarized by Parkes: “Medieval liturgy might be a difficult subject, one could say, but at least we have

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<sup>144</sup> Alice L. Harting-Correa, *Walahfrid Strabo’s libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiasticis rerum: A Translation and Liturgical Commentary*, Mittellateinische Studien und Texte 19 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996) in Gittos, “Understanding Medieval Liturgy”, 73

the PRG". Second is its successful story - starting from a German cathedral city, followed by a successful overtake throughout the whole eleventh and twelfth-century Europe, it finally triumphed as the standard for episcopal books in the most important bishopric in the Latin West - Rome. Thanks to Parkes' research, scholars nowadays not only avoid using the edited version of the rites and focus on the specific manuscript evidence instead, but also recognize that the PRG was not as influential in Europe as had been previously thought.

As demonstrated in the first half of this study, excommunication rites recorded in the manuscripts belonging to the PRG tradition suffered immensely from these misinterpretations. I built upon the work of Hamilton, who through her study of four German pontificals, showcased the overlooked variability of excommunication rites. Also, according to Hamilton, the two manuscripts that contained excommunication rites as their central part both include more detailed information on how to administer them. The pontificals that added these rites as more of an afterthought, on the other hand, were simpler and contain only the immediate instructions for the bishop. In my work, I followed in her footsteps in trying to prove that more effort and thought was put into the compilation process of these rites. Unlike Hamilton, I concentrated on another set of pontificals that belong to the PRG only and I chose and considered them on the basis of different criteria. While for Hamilton it was necessary to study manuscripts that contained the rites of both imposition and reconciliation of excommunication, it was not so for me. Rather, where the reconciliation rite was missing, as was the case with MS Bamberg 59, I suggested that it was interchanged with the rite for reconciliation of penitents. The authorial choice of including one rite over another mattered and was viewed as one of the criteria for the proposed diversity. While my analysis of the four German eleventh-century pontificals did not directly support the patterns proposed by Hamilton, it did contribute to the field by strengthening the case for liturgical variety. The author of Bamberg 54

completely changed the order of the rite while the author of the Parisian manuscript chose to compose a new *ordo* by combining the two existing in Regino's *Libri duo*. Other changes that were introduced included variations to the usual form of the title. Even in texts like the Vendôme 14 manuscript, which at first glance may appear to copy Regino's formulas perfectly, by highlighting the sections pertaining to the consecutive steps of the rite the scribe created an easy-to consult, step-by-step manual. Despite the fact that each of the scribes interacted with the formulas set down by Regino, they did so in their own ways. Therefore, I proved that the former view of excommunication liturgy recorded in the PRG manuscripts as unified, and static is simply untenable.

The following chapter then situated the four German pontificals into their wider context of extant liturgical evidence which only emphasized the level of misunderstanding the excommunication rites have faced. As demonstrated, the appearance of the liturgical books that contained excommunication formulas that occurred in the early years of tenth century was followed by a proliferation of these texts lasting all the way to the end of the eleventh century. This occurred only *after* the golden age of intellectual prosperity and manuscript production characteristic of the Carolingian renaissance. I, like some other scholars, have also linked the proliferation of these texts to the growing political instability of the Frankish Empire. The waning power of the secular courts gave rise to other means of resolving conflict and punishing people from the point of the Church: religious rituals like excommunication and penance. I argued that the growing interest in capturing the rites of excommunication in liturgical tradition is directly reflected in the scribal effort to create appropriate ordines.

The case studies from the final part of this thesis served to paint a more comprehensive picture of the excommunication rites. Often, liturgy is considered as detached from the real-life practice. As these cases make clear, the clerics that were responsible for shaping the liturgical

sphere were directly involved in describing the performance of rituals taking place in real life. The lack of attention to this fact prompted scholars to often characterize certain rituals as purely secular when, in fact, the religious and secular spheres heavily overlapped. This is apparent in the structure as well as vocabulary employed in the scribal descriptions of real-world events. This part of the study also emphasized the intertwined relationship of the two punitive rites, excommunication and penance. The latter, being the less serious and repeatable rite, permeated various aspects of medieval society and became an all-pervasive part of one's life, hence the bigger amount of narrative evidence. Excommunication, on the other hand, was a repercussion for a severe breach and disregard for church authority and as such dominated primarily the process of proper Christian death which fell into the purview of the medieval Church.

Overall, scholars dismissed liturgical study, considering it too rigid and narrow for further research. This thesis demonstrates how misguided leaves certain subjects of academic study stuck in a rut. This thesis opens up not just the possibility for further research in the field of liturgy, but also serves as a reminder to re-examine even the most firmly held beliefs in academia.

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## 7 GLOSSARY

**Quaternion** - A quire (the 'gatherings' or 'booklets' of which a book is formed) made up of four sheets.

**Ordo** - When used in ecclesiastical sense, the Latin word ordo denotes a guide for a conduct of a liturgical rite.

**Pontifical** - A liturgical book containing the prayers and instructions for ceremonies restricted exclusively to bishops.

**Rubric** - A part of a manuscript or book - such as a title, heading, or initial letter - that appears in decorative red lettering or is otherwise distinguished from the rest of the text.

## APPENDIX A

### EXCOMMUNICATION

- How a bishop ought to excommunicate unbelievers
- Another address of excommunication
- Another excommunication
- Another more terrible excommunication
- A brief excommunication
- How a bishop reconciles or receives an excommunicated person

The formulation of all of the excommunication ordines is taken from Regino of Prüm, *Libri duo synodalibus causis et disciplinis ecclesiasticis*.<sup>145</sup> The summary is my own and the numbers mark identifiable stages of the process.

#### **LXXXV. How a bishop ought to excommunicate unbelievers<sup>146</sup>**

In the longest ordo which is to be performed right after the reading of the Gospel is finished (1),<sup>147</sup> the bishop first addresses his audience and then with the same breath identifies the person to be excommunicated (2).<sup>148</sup> He goes on to clarify that the person has already been warned on three occasions and cites numerous biblical arguments to support his actions. The bishop then proceeds to separate him from the Christian society and the mother church both on

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<sup>145</sup> Regino of Prüm, *Libri duo synodalibus causis et disciplinis ecclesiasticis*, ed. H. Wasserschleben, *Regionis libri duo de synodalibus causis et disciplinis ecclesiasticis* (Leipzig 1840). It can also be found in its edited form in Cyrille Vogel, *Le Pontifical romano-germanique du dixième siècle. I, (NN. I - XCVIII)*, (Rist. anast.. Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1966), 308-321.

<sup>146</sup> 'Qualiter episcopus excommunicare infideles debeat'

<sup>147</sup> (1) 'Episcopus, cum excommunicare vel anathema tizare aliquem infidelem pro certis et manifestis sceleribus dispositum habet, post lectionem evangelii clerum et plebem ita debet aloqui:'

<sup>148</sup> (2) 'Noverit caritas vestra, fratres mei, quod quidam vir nomine Ill., diabolo suadente, postponens christiniam promissionem ...'

earth and in heaven, while constantly emphasising that the person failed to repent his sins (3).<sup>149</sup> Fellow present Christians ought to respond three times “amen” or “fiat, fiat” or “anathema sit” (4). Afterwards, twelve priests standing around the bishop throw down the burning candles from their hands and trample them with their feet (5).<sup>150</sup> Up to this point, everything has been performed in Latin. Now, switching to the vernacular language, the bishop should explain to the people present that no one is to communicate, eat, drink, or receive the excommunicant in his home, unless it is for the purpose of convincing him to do penance. Anyone who ignores this will be equally excommunicated (6).<sup>151</sup> Other priests are to be notified of the excommunication via letters and these are to be read out, again, after reading of the Gospel so that nobody communicates with the excommunicant (7).<sup>152</sup> Subsequently, the other bishops and the archbishop of the province are to be notified of the developments (8).<sup>153</sup>

Overall the rite has hundred and three lines, thus making it the longest of all. It is very pastoral and disciplinary in nature, especially in the addressory part which reads like a sermon. This section is covered in my summary in points (1) - (2), however, in the text it comprises fifty seven lines out of the rite as whole, making it the largest and therefore presumably the most important aspect of it. In a narrative style, the bishop describes how the named person was first seduced by the devil, then - thanks to the fact that through baptism he became the son of the church - he was implored not once, not twice, but three times to repent. Only after he failed to

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<sup>149</sup> (3) *'Igitur quia monita nostra et crebras exhortationes contemnit, quia tertio secundum dominicum preceptum vocatus ad emendationem et penitentiam venire despexit, quia culpam suam necdum cognoscit,..., a praetiosi corporis et sanguinis domini perceptione et a societate omnium christianorum separamus et a liminibus sanctae matris aecclesiae in caelo et in terra excludimus et excommunicatum et anathematizatum esse decernimus et damnatum ...'*

<sup>150</sup> (5) *'Debent autem XII sacerdotes episcopum circumstare et lucernas ardentis in manibus tenere, quas in conclusione anathematis vel excommunicationis proicere debent in terram et pedibus conculcare'*

<sup>151</sup> (6) *'Post haec episcopus plebi ipsam excommunicationem communibus verbis debet explanare, ut omnes intellegant quam terribiliter dampnatus sit, ...'*

<sup>152</sup> (7) *'Deinde epistolae presbiteris per parrochias mittantur, continentes modum excommunicationis, ...'*

<sup>153</sup> (8) *'Oportet etiam, ut aliis episcopis ipsa excommunicatio manifestetur. .. Seniori eius ipsa excommunicatio debet nota fieri'*

do so the priest proceeded with the excommunication. Moreover, the described process supplied an important narrative baseline which is heavily intertwined with, on the one hand, elaborate descriptions of the power of the devil, and on the other, with biblical precedents quoted in the form of a direct speech. Their inclusion, their form and importantly, their extent,<sup>154</sup> served to legitimise the excommunication practice and grant biblical authority to the decision to go directly against one of the pillar teachings of the Christian church - forgiveness.

#### **LXXXVI. Another address of excommunication<sup>155</sup>**

This address begins with the assumption that either the bishop has already delineated the nature of the person's offence, or that the whole matter is well known by the community, perhaps due to the public nature of the sin. He then continues to explain that the person did not respond to the frequent admonitions to make amends.<sup>156</sup> He again cites biblical precedents for solving the situation by removing the offender from the community and concludes the initial addressing of the community with various metaphors such as how a diseased sheep contaminates the whole flock or one limb may infect the whole body.<sup>157</sup> The ordo corresponds roughly to the first three stages of the previous one although it is considerably shorter. It should be considered in unison with the next rite - another excommunication.

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<sup>154</sup> The biblical references constitute approximately twenty nine out of the fifty seven lines of the allocutio.

<sup>155</sup> *'Item alia excommunicationis allocutio'*

<sup>156</sup> *'Audistis, dilectissimi, quanta et quam horrenda pravitatis ac iniquitatis opera Ill., a diabolo instigatus perpetrare non timuerit et quomodo per apostasiam a totius christianae religionis cultu profana mente recesserit...'*

<sup>157</sup> *'.. Infidelis si discedit, discedat. Una enim ovis morbida omnem gregem contaminat et modicum fermentum totam massam conrumpit et plerumque unum membrum putridum totum corpus inficitur. Et ideo tam pernicioosa pestis a corpore aecclesiae radicitus evellatur..'*

**LXXXVII. Another excommunication<sup>158</sup>**

The bishop, by invoking the already mentioned authorities such as the holy Trinity and the apostolic succession, excommunicates the "aforesaid worst man".<sup>159</sup> Then follows a list of activities the people as well as clerics are forbidden to partake in with this person - like greeting him or celebrating a mass together - or they be equally anathematized. The only exception is, again, if one engages with the excommunicant in order to bring him to penance.

This excommunicatory part, which should be analysed in unison with the previous rite - *item alia allocutio* - naturally shifts the focus on the bishop at first. This constitutes, however, only seven out of the eighteen lines of the rite as opposed to the remaining section that lists in a detailed manner all the prohibited interactions with the excommunicant.

**LXXXVIII. Another more terrible excommunication<sup>160</sup>**

Signalled already in the title, this more stringent ordo is aimed at violators of the churches, spoilers and robbers or murderers as the bishop accounces at its very beginning.<sup>161</sup> They are not only separated from the bosom of the holy mother the church as in the previous cases, but

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<sup>158</sup> *'Item alia excommunicatio'*

<sup>159</sup> *'Dominicis igitur atque apostolicis informati praeceptis, iudicio patri et filii eius domini nostri Iesu Christi et spiritus sancti, et auctoritate et potestate apostolis apostolorumque succesoribus a Deo concessa, una vobiscum praedictum pessimum virum a liminibus sanctae matris aecclesiae excludimus, et ab omni societate et communione christiana separamus separatumque esse in aeternum decernimus, id est et in praesenti et in futuro..'*

<sup>160</sup> *'Item alia terriblior excommunicatio'*

<sup>161</sup> *'Canonica instituta et sanctorum patrum exempla sequentes, aecclesiarum Dei violatores et possessionis earum invasores, vastatores, vel raptores atque depraedatores aut homicidas Ill. in nomine patris et filii et virtute spiritus sancti, necnon auctoritate episcopi per Petrum principem apostolorum divinitus collata, a sanctae matris aecclesiae gremio separamus ac perpetuae maledictionis anathemate condemnamus..'*

the offenders are also severely cursed in various ways and in a harsh language. The ordo is concluded with a dramatic saying that the extinguished lamps tossed down to the ground represent the lanterns of the offenders extinguished forever, unless they repent.<sup>162</sup>

### **LXXXIX. A brief excommunication<sup>163</sup>**

This ordo consists of a simple excommunication sentence that nevertheless contains majority of the aspects we have encountered in the previous ordines: by invoking canonical traditions and precedents as well as the authority of God and the Holy Spirit, the bishop separates the violator from the holy bosom of the church and the Christian community unless he comes to his senses.<sup>164</sup> Interestingly, the first third of the short formula is a verbatim copy of the more terrible excommunication - the remaining part is essentially a very close paraphrase.

### **XCI. How a bishop reconciles or receives an excommunicated person<sup>165</sup>**

1. The bishop who performed the excommunication meets the offender, who demands pardon, is led by penance and not only promises but also makes his amendments.

They meet in front of the doors of the church and the bishop is surrounded by twelve

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<sup>162</sup> *'Et sicut hae lucernae de manibus nostris proiectae hodie extinguuntur, sic eorum lucerna in aeternum extinguatur, nisi forte resipuerint et aecclesiae Dei, quam leserunt, per amendmentem et condignam penitentiam satisfecerint.'*

<sup>163</sup> *'Excommunicatio brevis'*

<sup>164</sup> *'Canonica instituta et sanctorum patrum exempla sequentes, ecclesiarum Dei violatores, Ill., auctoritate Dei et iudicio sancti spiritus, a gremio sanctae matris aecclesiae et consortio totius christianitatis eliminamus quousque resipiscant et aecclesiae Dei satisfaciant.'*

<sup>165</sup> *'Qualiter episcopus reconciliet vel recipiat excommunicatum'*

priests.<sup>166</sup>

2. He then establishes the penance for the crimes committed as well as the excommunicant's willingness to perform it.<sup>167</sup>
3. The bishop, following the excommunicant's prostration and performance of other outward signs of repentance, physically leads the penitent by hand into the Church and thus metaphorically back into the Christian communion and society.<sup>168</sup>
4. Afterwards his penance is assigned and letters sent out to the other parishes informing them of the reconciliation.<sup>169</sup>
5. A warning is made that no bishop is to excommunicate or reconcile a person without the consent of the bishop to which the excommunicant belongs.<sup>170</sup>
6. A list of psalms to be sung is included.

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<sup>166</sup> 'Cum aliquis excommunicatus vel anathematizatus, penitentia ductus, veniam postulat, et emendationem promittit, episcopus, qui eum excommunicavit, ante ianuas aecclesiae venire debet et XII presbyteri cum eo, qui eum hinc inde circumdare debent..'

<sup>167</sup> 'Deinde interroget episcopus si penitentiam iuxta quod canones praecipunt pro perpetratis sceleribus suscipere velit.'

<sup>168</sup> 'Et, si ille in terram prostratus veniam postulat culpam contitetur, paenitentiam implorat de futuris cautelam spondet, tunc episcopus, apprehensa manu eius dextra, eum in aecclesiam introducat et ei communionem et societatem christianam reddat.'

<sup>169</sup> 'Post hoc secundum modum culpae paenitentiam ei iniungat et literas per parrochiam dirigat, ut omnes noverint eum in societate christiana receptum. Aliis etiam episcopus hoc notum faciat.'

<sup>170</sup> 'Nullus autem episcopus alterius parrochianum excommunicare vel reconciliare presumat sine conscientia vel consensu proprii episcopi.'

## APPENDIX B

### PENANCE

- The entry into penance on Ash Wednesday
- The reconciliation of penitents on Maundy Thursday
- Penance in the usual way

When it comes to the public rite of penance in the PRG, we have a record of three main types of *ordines* - one that marks a person's entry into penance on Ash Wednesday,<sup>171</sup> one that reconciles the penitent on Maundy Thursday,<sup>172</sup> and one called “Penance the usual way”.<sup>173</sup> These three rites were analysed in detail by Sarah Hamilton and for the sake of being concise I utilise her succinct summary of each text.<sup>174</sup>

**Table 1**

#### **The entry into penance on Ash Wednesday**

##### *Entry into penance*

1. Deacon's admonition to all Christians to come to penance (no.44).
2. The priest's reception of the penitent and his/her entry into penance (nos 44-5).
3. The priest's interrogation of the penitent.

Consults with penitent over his/her vices (no.46).

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<sup>171</sup> PRG xcix - '*Ordo in quarta ebdomada quadragesimae quae est in capite ieiunii*' - the *ordo* is one out of many rites to be performed at the beginning of Lent, together with the subsequent one that reconciles the penitent on Maundy Thursday.

<sup>172</sup> PRG xcix in Vogel, *Le Pontifical romano-germanique du dixième siècle*. 2

<sup>173</sup> '*Qualiter sacerdotes suscipere debeant poenitentes more solito*', PRG, cxxxvi in Vogel, *Le Pontifical romano-germanique du dixième siècle*. 2

<sup>174</sup> Hamilton, Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 in “Liturgy: unity or diversity” in *The Practice of Penance*, 109,118,123. The *ordines* may also be found in its edited version in Vogel, *Le Pontifical romano-germanique du dixième siècle*. 2

Considers penitent's status and circumstances when awarding penance (nos 47-9).

Interrogates the penitent on the articles of faith and his/her willingness to do penance (no.50).

4. Penitent's formal confession prayer (no. 50a) followed by priest's intercession prayer (no.51) and priest's pastoral instruction on the eight vices (no. 52).
5. Penitent's act of contrition (no. 53).
6. Priest awards a formal penance (nos 54-5).
7. Priest's intercession on behalf of the penitent: seven penitential psalms followed by preces and intercessory prayers (nos 56-64).
8. Priest and penitent enter church and chant Psalms xxxvii and cii followed by Kyrie, preces and intercessory prayer (nos 65-6).

#### *Missa post confessionem*

9. After the complendum ashes are placed on the head of the penitent and s/he puts on sackcloth (nos 71-2).
  10. The penitent is ejected from the church (no. 73).
- The blessing of the ashes (nos 74-7).
- Ashes are placed on the heads of the congregation (nos 78-9).
- Procession to the next station (no.80).

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## **Table 2**

### **The reconciliation of penitents on Maundy Thursday**

1. The presentation of the penitents

Penitents brought into the atrium of the church (no. 224).

Archdeacon requests that the bishop look favourably on the penitents (no. 225).

The bishop acknowledges his own sinfulness (no. 226).

Archdeacon petitions the restoration of the penitents (no. 227).

The penitents are called and approach the bishop (no. 228).

The penitents are handed to the bishop (no. 229).

2. The reconciliation of the penitents.

The bishop prostrates himself with the penitents during the recitation of the litany followed by preces (no. 229).

The bishop intercedes on behalf of the penitents (nos 230-45).

The absolution of the penitents (nos 246-50).

Penitents are sprinkled with holy water and stand up (no. 251).

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### **Table 3**

#### **Penance in the usual way**

1. Priest's preparation prayer in secret (nos 1-3).
2. The priest's reception of the penitent

Reception prayer: 'Deus qui confitentium tibi corda purificas' (no. 4).

3. The priest's interrogation of the penitent

Interrogation on the articles of faith and affirmation that the penitent wishes his sins to be forgiven (no. 5).

Assesses penitent's willingness and suitability for confession and penitential psalm xxxvii (nos 6-9).

Priest's prayer for God's intercession alternated with penitential psalms (cii and l) (nos 10-12).

Interrogation and confession of sins: list of questions with appropriate tariffs (no. 13).

4. Priest's instruction about the penitent's future behaviour.

Advice on future conduct in accordance with rank (no. 14).

Interrogation about minor sins (no. 15).

5. Priest's imposition of penance taking into account personal disposition and status (nos 16-18).

6. Priest's intercession.

Penitent's formal affirmation of his confession of sins and confession of his sins in the vernacular (nos 19-23), followed by the recitation of preces and intercessory prayer by penitent (nos 24-5)

Priest's intercessory prayers (nos 26-38).

Mass (Missa post confessionem) (ordo cxxxvii, PRG ii. 245)

