

Forging immunities – religious exemption, justice, and territories in eleventh century in the medieval West

Sheffield April 2016

While immunities were clearly the most important form of religious exemption in the medieval West throughout the Middle Ages, they have not been studied extensively for the long eleventh century. Starting out from evidence for the episcopal church of Worms, the paper discusses the evidence for ecclesiastical immunities, and its consequences for the exercise of justice and ecclesiastical lordship during this period. Starting out from a dossier of the episcopal church of Worms containing royal charters, many of them forgeries dating back to the late tenth century the evidence will be placed into its Western European context. Specifically, the paper will point to differing ways the demarcations created by immunities was connected to territorial exercise of lordship, either by the churches themselves, or by those who layman who were charged with protecting ecclesiastical immunities, such as advocates.