

ADVICE FOR FIRST-TIME USERS OF *CORPUS SYNODALIUM*¹

Corpus Synodaliium vs. Critical Editions

The *Corpus Synodaliium* text database is not intended as a substitute for existing critical editions, which contain a wealth of textual and contextual information omitted from the online transcriptions (largely for reasons of copyright).

Users should therefore confirm readings found in the online transcriptions against the sources from which they were drawn (whether printed editions or manuscripts), insofar as this is feasible. These sources are indicated in abbreviated form in both the working [repertory](#) and the metadata for each database text, under the headings “Source” (which lists important manuscript versions) and/or “Edition”, along with links to online digital versions where available. Full bibliographic references can be found in the [Bibliography](#). For any questions concerning the sources of the transcriptions, please feel free to contact the project leader Rowan Dorin (dorin@stanford.edu).

Interpreting Search Results

When consulting a modern edition of the statutes from a particular diocese or province, a reader understands implicitly that statutes from the rest of Latin Christendom are not included. When running a general search in the *Corpus Synodaliium* database, it is much less straightforward for a user to know what is encompassed in the search versus what is missing. In interpreting search results, it is essential for users to recognize that many statutes are still to be added to the *Corpus Synodaliium* database, while many other statutes have been lost over time. (And of course, some ecclesiastical jurisdictions never issued statutes in the first place.)

To facilitate such critical awareness, the project website includes a [report](#) of the rate of completed transcriptions for different regions and time periods. A more precise indicator is provided by the downloadable [repertory](#), which highlights all of the known texts that have already been added to the database. Finally, alongside displaying the frequency of search results for any given jurisdiction (whether a diocese or province), the mapping tool also visually distinguishes between areas with zero results and areas with no associated texts in the database.

Replicating a Search

Users of the text database can save and replicate any search simply by copying and pasting the associated URL. Every text (and every subsection of a text) likewise possesses its own distinctive URL, which can be copied and saved.

Citation Practices

Please acknowledge the use of *Corpus Synodaliium* in any resulting publications in order to spread awareness of it among the broader scholarly community. Further guidance on citation practices can be found on the [Citation Guidelines](#) page.

¹ This document is adapted from Rowan Dorin, “*Corpus Synodaliium*: Medieval Canon Law in the Digital Age,” in *Digital Medieval Studies: Practice and Preservation*, eds. Laura Morreale & Sean Gilsdorf (ARC Humanities Press, 2022), 49-75.