



Papal Letters in the Early Middle Ages (History of Medieval Canon Law)

Horst Fuhrmann

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This second volume in the History of Medieval Canon Law series discusses the earliest papal decretals, covering the period from the end of the fourth century to the end of the ninth century. In contrast to earlier scholarly works, which usually skim over the beginnings of the papal decretal tradition and the earliest collections containing them, the authors begin with the first papal letters and thoroughly describe their transmission and reception into the canonical tradition up to Gratian's *Decretum* (1140). They examine the letters of twenty-five popes from Siricius (384-399), whose pontificate undoubtedly produced the first known papal decretal in 385, to Stephen V (885-891).

Horst Fuhrmann is president emeritus of Monumenta Germaniae Historica and Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Detlev Jasper is collaborator at the Monumenta Germaniae Historica in Munich.

"Exceptionally clear and helpful, this volume will be welcome by those who have no German or, even more, to those who have no time to plow through the massive literature on the emergence of decretals, the early history of the papal archives, the reception of early decretals in later collections down to Gratian, and the massive collection known as Pseudo-Isidore. . . . Jasper is especially good on the emergence of the papal correspondence, on the rise of the decretals, and on the formation of collections of papal letters. Fuhrmann opens fascinating insights into the papal correspondence by exploring how clever forgers created papal letters whose forms and claims had plausibility."?Theological Studies

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