

reveal the real or imagined motives which led to their composition. In response, Robert Somerville and Bruce Brasington have now translated into English several canonical prefaces dating from 500 to 1245, adding introductions and notes. The result is a unique and successful source book inviting reflection from all those concerned with the nature and functions of canon law. This is not a book just for medievalists.

The prefaces are grouped chronologically into five chapters. After a general introduction, we are led from the prefaces of Dionysius Exiguus to the preface by Bartholomew of Brescia to a gloss on Gratian's *Decretum*. Canon law and its collections are shown to have been made from a wide variety of standpoints and put to significantly different uses, a lesson that never loses its relevance. These attempts at making laws and using authority in a Christian way relied on divine guidance, especially in the Bible, but might also ponder the at times bewildering 'unseen but not unjust judgment of God' in contemporary events, as Abbo of Fleury's preface put it.

Chapter 4, covering the era of reform 1050–1140, is particularly fascinating. One group of texts is from Northern France and relates to the learned and saintly Bishop Ivo of Chartres. The *Prologue* generally associated with him is a pivotal text, the longest in this anthology and, in the opinion of its translators, 'arguably the most remarkable'. As if this needed proving, J. Werckmeister has recently published an annotated edition in Latin and French of the *Prologue* (Paris 1997). Ivo would soon be praised in someone else's preface for his treatise written 'in very brilliant language concerning the concordance of canons'. Elsewhere, Alger of Liège warns of the dangers of using canonical rules noncanonically, pleading for an understanding of canon law appropriate to it and its concern for charity and salvation.

Whatever the preferences of a reader, and anthologies tend to be used selectively, this volume should be considered as a whole precisely to grasp the diversity of the canonical enterprise and its versatility. If there is ever a second edition, it ought to include an index of key juridical and theological terms along the lines of Werckmeister's edition. The allusions that have escaped the translators could also be identified by then, for example, the reference to Jn 1:29 on p.161, to 2 Cor 10:5 on pp.133–4 and to a letter to Alcuin of York on p.77. Thanks to this volume, the kind of investigation Mordek called for is now easier to envisage.

Robert Ombres OP, Blackfriars, Oxford

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The latest edition of Chancellor Mynors' authoritative text is published by Sweet and Maxwell which has taken over the previous publisher, FT Law and Tax. Full discussion of the topic of Ancient Monuments is now included and the chapter on Ecclesiastical Buildings has been expanded.