

The five appearances of bishop lists in the early church mark the principal points at which apostolic succession of bishops emerged and developed into a crucial and well defined doctrine. Walter Bauer long ago termed these lists, legitimately if not charitably, literary propaganda. This study delves into the political struggles surrounding the lists and the doctrine they served to define. The ancient Mediterranean world established legitimacy of authority in social institutions, whether Roman, Greek, Jewish, or Christian, by citing successions of leaders. In early catholic churches, apostolic succession was the linchpin in the three pillars of tradition, succession, and canon. It guaranteed the first and assured interpretation of the third. A social history approach reveals political intrigue at every point of the development of the doctrine of apostolic succession. In crises of the first century, the New Testament recorded (monopiscopal?) bishops and succession, and Ignatius and 1 Clement make moniscopacy and apostolic succession explicit. In the second and third centuries, writers employed episcopal successions in reaction to subsequent struggles with heresy and schism. By the fourth century, Eusebius employed succession lists for apologetic and edification. Ecclesiastical politics in each case reflects the threat to the bishop's authority and clarifies the meaning of apostolic succession in the Church's development. This social history approach, examining the function of the literature within its historical circumstances, reveals how theology developed from politics. The development is as gripping politically as it is illuminating theologically. Robert Lee Williams is Professor of Biblical Theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He has written a number of articles focused on New Testament and patristic topics from the vantage point of social-scientific methodology. Accordingly, Williams has been active in the SBL Social World of Early Christianity, the North American Patristics Society, the International Conference on Patristic Studies, and the Seminar on the Development of Early Catholic Christianity, and the American Society of Church History. *Bishop Lists: Formation of Apostolic Succession of Bishops in Ecclesiastical Crises* is a revision of his doctoral dissertation in New Testament and Early Christian Literature completed under Robert M. Grant at the University of Chicago.

Derek Jarman, *Die schönste Form der Freiheit: Reden und Essays zur Kultur der Nation* (German Edition), *Memorial Addresses On the Life and Character of Richard W. Townshend, a Representative from Illinois: Delivered in the House of Representatives and in the Senate, Fifty-First Congress, First Session*, *Working Knowledge: Employee Innovation and the Rise of Corporate Intellectual Property, 1800-1930* (Studies in Legal History), *Ethnic Renewal in Philadelphia's Chinatown: Space, Place, and Struggle* (Urban Life, Landscape and Policy),

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