

Flight during times of persecution has a long and fraught history in early Christianity. In the third century, bishops who fled were considered cowards or, worse yet, heretics. On the face, flight meant denial of Christ and thus betrayal of faith and community. But by the fourth century, the terms of persecution changed as Christianity became the favored cult of the Roman Empire. Prominent Christians who fled and survived became founders and influencers of Christianity over time.

*Bishops in Flight* examines the various ways these episcopal leaders both appealed to and altered the discourse of Christian flight to defend their status as purveyors of Christian truth, even when their exiles appeared to condemn them. Their stories illuminate how profoundly Christian authors deployed theological discourse and the rhetoric of heresy to respond to the phenomenal political instability of the fourth and fifth centuries.

"This exciting book offers the first sustained examination of flight during times of persecution. A significant contribution to the study of late antiquity that readers are sure to find highly stimulating." **SUSANNA ELM**, author of *Sons of Hellenism, Fathers of the Church: Emperor Julian, Gregory of Nazianzus, and the Vision of Rome*

"A fascinating meditative exploration of the shifting nature of exile and its uses in late ancient Christianity. Jennifer Barry depicts with lucid prose the adoptions and adaptations Christian bishops made of the concept in order to tap the authority exile could grant to those who managed it well. Those who study early church politics and imperial power will relish this book." **ELLEN MUEHLBERGER**, author of *Moment of Reckoning: Imagined Death and Its Consequences in Late Ancient Christianity*

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