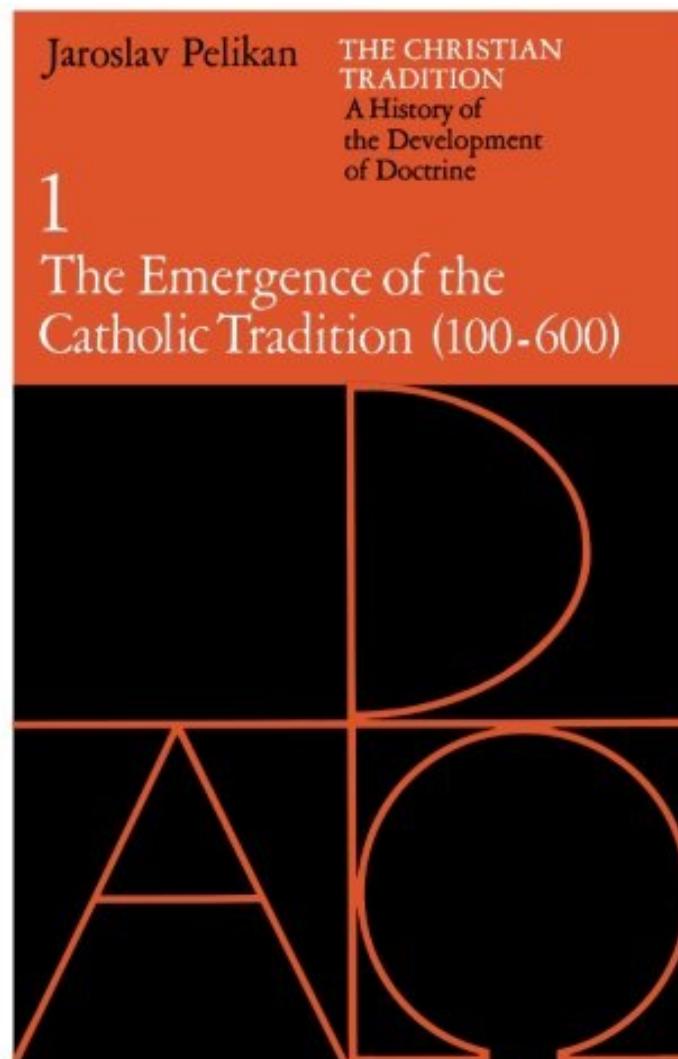


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The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine, Vol. 1: The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)

Jaroslav Pelikan

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4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A must-read, the best introduction to the thought of early Christianity
By Vanessa W. I don't think that the English language has a word that is sufficient to describing just how excellent this book is. Every Christian and, really, every non-Christian should have to read this book. Pelikan describes in a good amount of detail, but in a nonetheless very approachable and readable manner, the development of doctrine from the close of the Apostolic era through to the time of St. Augustine, St. Gregory the Great, and the Fifth Ecumenical Council, hinting at the developments of both East and West slightly beyond. His approach is wide and his views are always fair and balanced. A very helpful feature of the book is the sidenote approach where, rather than in-text citations, footnotes, and endnotes, Pelikan instead lists the sources of his quotations and summaries to the side of where they are given. I'm looking forward to reading the rest of the books in this series. I cannot recommend enough reading this book, no matter your own personal doctrinal or non-doctrinal views.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Quality Work, Not the Easiest to Read
By swillia9 I believe as someone else had pointed out, the quality in terms of accuracy and insight is top notch. The readability isn't as friendly. His thesis is that Christian Doctrine is what the Church has believed, taught, and confessed based upon the word of God. He certainly leans on the historical elements and dwells deeply from early Christian writers, thinkers, and the Scriptures as they would have been understood in the context of history. This text should not be seen as a chronology of historical data that covers every thinker or writer since the time of Jesus, but the development of how we arrived at certain positions on certain matters as a result of historical situations relating to Christian theology and doctrine and attempts to help you arrive at an understanding to be more faithful in articulating a defense for the faith you have as a Christian.
1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Very Good!
By F. Gwin I purchased this book based on the high amount of good reviews it has received in the past, and I was in no way disappointed! Pelikan did a great job making top notch scholarship easy to follow along with and I learned a ton. This book is split into seven chapters, all of which are well put together and masterfully thought out. The main point of this study was to overview the doctrines of the church throughout history, not study the actual history that was going on during the times that doctrines were developed. This makes it even more interesting because dates and places are not often mentioned, mean that the book is very much focused on a long line of evolving thought as opposed to random events and places. There is a lot of cool information that made this book worth it. For example, I had never known that Tertullian was a Montanist, I never knew that Augustine so readily defended infant baptism, plus I got a front seat primer on Cyril of Alexandria's major beliefs (which I sort of knew, but I got details), plus more!!! I cannot recommend this book enough! I can't wait to crack open the second one!

In this five-volume opus now available in its entirety in paperback Pelikan traces the development of Christian doctrine from the first century to the twentieth. "Pelikan's *The Christian Tradition* [is] a series for which they must have coined words like 'magisterial'." Martin Marty, *Commonweal*

From the Back Cover *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition* is the history of this critical, troubled time. Pelikan focuses upon the subtle relation between what the faithful believed, what teachers--both orthodox and heretical--taught, and what the church confessed as dogma during its first six centuries of growth. In constructing his work, Pelikan has made use of exegetical and liturgical sources in addition to the usual polemical, apologetic, and systematic or speculative materials.
About the Author Jaroslav Pelikan is Sterling Professor of History Emeritus at Yale University.