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| 1. Record Nr.           | UNINA990004972470403321   |
| Autore                  | Calderón de la Barca, Pedro <1600-1681>   |
| Titolo                  | A secreto agravio, secreta venganza La dama duende / Pedro Calderon de La Barca   |
| Pubbl/distr/stampa      | Buenos Aires : Espasa-Calpe Argentina, c1946  |
| Descrizione fisica      | 166 p. ; 18 cm  |
| Collana                 | Colección austral ; 650   |
| Locazione               | FLFBC   |
| Collocazione            | YP 3 659  |
| Lingua di pubblicazione | Portoghese  |
| Formato                 | Materiale a stampa  |
| Livello bibliografico   | Monografia  |
| 2. Record Nr.           | UNINA9910793447503321   |
| Autore                  | Wilken Robert Louis   |
| Titolo                  | Liberty in the Things of God : The Christian Origins of Religious Freedom // Robert Louis Wilken  |
| Pubbl/distr/stampa      | New Haven, CT : , : Yale University Press, , [2019]<br>©2019  |
| ISBN                    | 0-300-24549-1   |
| Descrizione fisica      | 1 online resource (247 pages)   |
| Disciplina              | 233.7   |
| Soggetti                | Liberty - Religious aspects - Christianity<br>Freedom of religion   |
| Lingua di pubblicazione | Inglese   |
| Formato                 | Materiale a stampa  |
| Livello bibliografico   | Monografia  |
| Nota di contenuto       | Frontmatter -- Contents -- Acknowledgments -- Introduction -- 1. Endowed with Freedom -- 2. A Christian Society -- 3. The Two Swords: Reformation in Germany -- 4. Custodians of Both Tables: Switzerland |

-- 5. Two Religions in One City: France -- 6. Freedom of Worship: The Netherlands -- 7. Sturdy Piety: Catholics in England -- 8. Seeking Faith's Pure Shrine: English Separatists -- 9. Liberty Necessary unto Human Nature -- Conclusion -- Epilogue -- Appendix: Thomas Jefferson and Tertullian -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Index -- Index of Biblical Citations

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Sommario/riassunto

From one of the leading historians of Christianity comes this sweeping reassessment of religious freedom, from the church fathers to John Locke. In the ancient world Christian apologists wrote in defense of their right to practice their faith in the cities of the Roman Empire. They argued that religious faith is an inward disposition of the mind and heart and cannot be coerced by external force, laying a foundation on which later generations would build. Chronicling the history of the struggle for religious freedom from the early Christian movement through the seventeenth century, Robert Louis Wilken shows that the origins of religious freedom and liberty of conscience are religious, not political, in origin. They took form before the Enlightenment through the labors of men and women of faith who believed there could be no justice in society without liberty in the things of God. This provocative book, drawing on writings from the early Church as well as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, reminds us of how "the meditations of the past were fitted to affairs of a later day."

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