

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910452639703321
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Titolo	Homer's Turk [[electronic resource]] : how classics shaped ideas of the East // Jerry Toner
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge, Mass., : Harvard University Press, 2013
ISBN	0-674-07633-8 0-674-07628-1
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (320 pages)
Disciplina	950.072/041
Soggetti	Classical literature - Influence Historiography - Great Britain - History Orientalism - Great Britain - History Travel writing - Great Britain - History Electronic books. Orient Description and travel Early works to 1800 Orient Historiography History
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Preface -- Part I: Contexts -- 1 Classicizing Orientalisms -- 2 The Uses of Classics -- 3 Classics and Medieval Images of Islam -- Part II: Texts -- 4 Traders and Travelers -- 5 Gibbon's Islam -- 6 The Roman Raj -- 7 Empires Ancient and Modern -- 8 Colonial Adventures -- Part III: Afterwords -- 9 Screen Classics -- 10 America Roma Nova -- Notes -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	A seventeenth-century English traveler to the Eastern Mediterranean would have faced a problem in writing about this unfamiliar place: how to describe its inhabitants in a way his countrymen would understand? In an age when a European education meant mastering the Classical literature of Greece and Rome, he would naturally turn to touchstones like the Iliad to explain the exotic customs of Ottoman lands. His Turk would have been Homer's Turk. An account of epic sweep, spanning the Crusades, the Indian Raj, and the postwar decline of the British Empire, Homer's Turk illuminates how English writers of all eras have relied on the Classics to help them understand the world once called

"the Orient." Ancient Greek and Roman authors, Jerry Toner shows, served as a conceptual frame of reference over long periods in which trade, religious missions, and imperial interests shaped English encounters with the East. Rivaling the Bible as a widespread, flexible vehicle of Western thought, the Classics provided a ready model for portrayal and understanding of the Oriental Other. Such image-making, Toner argues, persists today in some of the ways the West frames its relationship with the Islamic world and the rising powers of India and China. Discussing examples that range from Jacobean travelogues to Hollywood blockbusters, Homer's Turk proves that there is no permanent version of either the ancient past or the East in English writing-the two have been continually reinvented alongside each other.
