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Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Acknowledgments -- Abbreviations -- Chapter 1. Introduction: Ancient Greek Sexual Blueprints for Social Order -- Part One. Greek Philosophical Sexual Reforms -- Part Two. Greek Biblical Sexual Rules and Their Reworking by Paul and Philo -- Part Three. Patristic Transformations of the Philosophical, Pauline, and Philonic Rules -- Bibliography -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	This provocative work provides a radical reassessment of the emergence and nature of Christian sexual morality, the dominant moral paradigm in Western society since late antiquity. While many scholars, including Michel Foucault, have found the basis of early Christian sexual restrictions in Greek ethics and political philosophy, Kathy L. Gaca demonstrates on compelling new grounds that it is misguided to regard Greek ethics and political theory-with their proposed reforms of

eroticism, the family, and civic order-as the foundation of Christian sexual austerity. Rather, in this thoroughly informed and wide-ranging study, Gaca shows that early Christian goals to eradicate fornication were derived from the sexual rules and poetic norms of the Septuagint, or Greek Bible, and that early Christian writers adapted these rules and norms in ways that reveal fascinating insights into the distinctive and largely non-philosophical character of Christian sexual morality. Writing with an authoritative command of both Greek philosophy and early Christian writings, Gaca investigates Plato, the Stoics, the Pythagoreans, Philo of Alexandria, the apostle Paul, and the patristic Christians Clement of Alexandria, Tatian, and Epiphanes, freshly elucidating their ideas on sexual reform with precision, depth, and originality. Early Christian writers, she demonstrates, transformed all that they borrowed from Greek ethics and political philosophy to launch innovative programs against fornication that were inimical to Greek cultural mores, popular and philosophical alike. The Septuagint's mandate to worship the Lord alone among all gods led to a Christian program to revolutionize Gentile sexual practices, only for early Christians to find this virtually impossible to carry out without going to extremes of sexual renunciation. Knowledgeable and wide-ranging, this work of intellectual history and ethics cogently demonstrates why early Christian sexual restrictions took such repressive ascetic forms, and casts sobering light on what Christian sexual morality has meant for religious pluralism in Western culture, especially among women as its bearers.
