

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910816056003321
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Titolo	Oscar Wilde's elegant republic : transformation, dislocation and fantasy in fin-de-siecle Paris // by David Charles Rose
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Newcastle upon Tyne, England : , : Cambridge Scholars Publishing, , 2015 ©2015
ISBN	1-4438-8763-3
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (687 p.)
Disciplina	828.809
Soggetti	Paris (France) Social life and customs 19th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Sommario/riassunto	Why was Paris so popular as a place of both innovation and exile in the late nineteenth century? Using French, English and American sources, this first volume of a trilogy provides a possible answer with a detailed exploration of both the city and its communities, who, forming a varied cast of colourful characters from duchesses to telephonists, artists to beggars, and dancers to diplomats, crowd the stage. Through the throng moves Oscar Wilde as the connecting thread: Wilde exploratory, Wilde triumphant, Wilde ruined. This use of Wilde as a central figure provides both a cultural history of P