

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910817886303321
Autore	Liebert Hugh
Titolo	Gibbon's Christianity : religion, reason, and the fall of Rome // Hugh Liebert
Pubbl/distr/stampa	University Park, Pennsylvania : , : Pennsylvania State University Press, , [2022] ©2022
ISBN	0-271-09243-2
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (196 pages)
Disciplina	808.1
Soggetti	Christianity Rome History Empire, 30 B.C.-476 A.D Historiography
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Religious controversies and conversions in the time of Gibbon -- Gibbon's autobiographies -- Essai -- The rise of Christianity -- General observations.
Sommario/riassunto	There has never been much doubt about the faith of the "infidel historian" Edward Gibbon. But for all of Gibbon's skepticism regarding Christianity's central doctrines, the author of The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire did not merely seek to oppose Christianity; he confronted it as a philosophical and historical puzzle. Gibbon's Christianity tallies the results and conditions of that confrontation. Using rich correspondence, private journals, early works, and memoirs that were never completed, Hugh Liebert provides intimate access to Gibbon's life in order to better understand his complex relationship with religion. Approaching the Decline and Fall from the context surrounding its conception, Liebert shows how Gibbon adapted explanations of the Roman republic's rise to account for a new spiritual republic and, subsequently, the rise of modern Europe. Taken together, Liebert's analysis of this context, including the nuance of Gibbon's relationship to Christianity, and his readings of Gibbon's better- and lesser-known texts suggest a historian more eager to comprehend Christianity's worldly power than to sneer at or dismiss it. Eminently readable and wholly accessible to anyone

interested in or familiar with the Decline and Fall, this groundbreaking reassessment of Gibbon's most famous work will appeal especially to scholars of eighteenth-century studies.

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