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Autore	Fuchs Martin
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Sommario/riassunto

This volume brings together key findings of the long-term research project 'Religious Individualisation in Historical Perspective' (Max Weber Centre for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies, Erfurt University). Combining a wide range of disciplinary approaches, methods and theories, the volume assembles over 50 contributions that explore and compare processes of religious individualisation in different religious environments and historical periods, in particular in Asia, the Mediterranean, and Europe from antiquity to the recent past. Contrary to standard theories of modernisation, which tend to regard religious individualisation as a specifically modern or early modern as well as an essentially Western or Christian phenomenon, the chapters reveal processes of religious individualisation in a large variety of non-Western and pre-modern scenarios. Furthermore, the volume challenges prevalent views that regard religions primarily as collective phenomena and provides nuanced perspectives on the appropriation of religious agency, the pluralisation of religious options, dynamics of de-traditionalisation and privatisation, the development of elaborated notions of the self, the facilitation of religious deviance, and on the notion of dividuality.
