

Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, written in the early fourth century, continues to serve as our primary gateway to a crucial three-hundred-year period: the rise of early Christianity under the Roman Empire. In this volume, James Corke-Webster undertakes the first systematic study considering the *History* in the light of its fourth-century circumstances as well as its author's personal history, intellectual commitments, and literary abilities. He argues that the *Ecclesiastical History* is not simply an attempt to record the past history of Christianity but a sophisticated mission statement that uses events and individuals from that past to mould a new vision of Christianity tailored to Eusebius' fourth-century context. Eusebius presents elite Graeco-Roman Christians with a picture of their faith that smooths off its rough edges and misrepresents its size, extent, nature, and relationship to Rome. Ultimately, Eusebius suggests that Christianity was – and always had been – the Empire's natural heir.

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