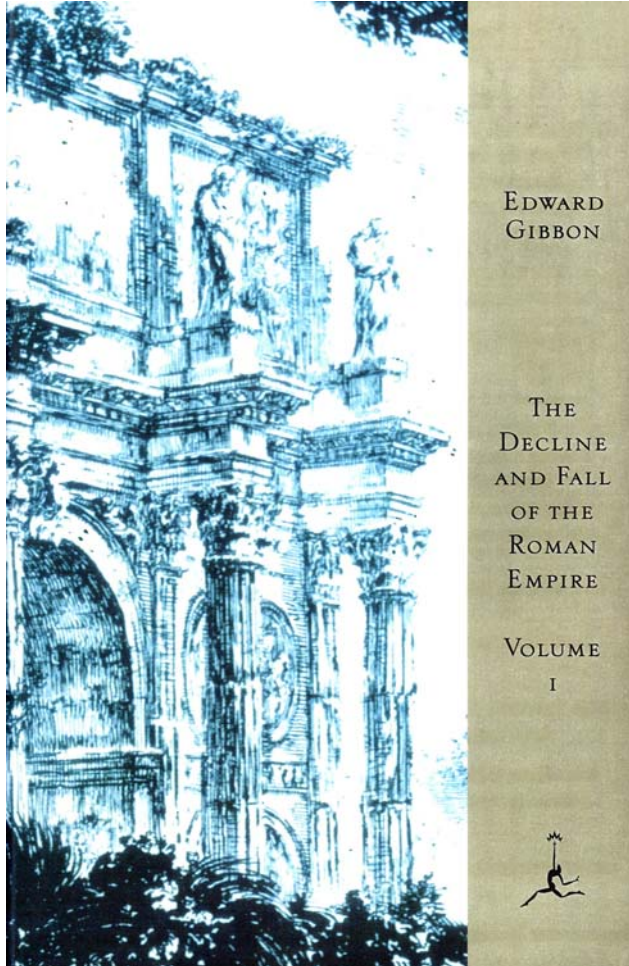


Book of The Century



**Edward Gibbon.(1737-1794;1995).
The Decline and Fall of The Roman Empire Vol 1,11, 111)
Modern Library Edition. Random House. New York.**

"Praise of Gibbon (1737-1794) has become especially fashionable with the rise of liberal and Marxist prejudices against religion. And, as pessimism have become increasingly fashionable about the future of our Western civilization, the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* has become a handy guide to the sources of decay in other empires and civilizations"(p. v. Vol. 1)

The relevance of Gibbon to the thesis presented herein is his affirmation that religious warfare was unknown on this planet until the rise of the monotheistic religions.

Additional Commentary

"It is not alone by the rapidity or extent of conquest that we should estimate the greatness of Rome....The obedient provinces of Trajan and the Antonines were united by laws and adorned by arts. They might occasionally suffer from the partial abuse of delegated authority; but the general principle of government was wise, simple, and beneficent. They enjoyed the religion of their ancestors, whilst in civil honors and advantages they were exalted, by just degrees, to an equality with their conquerors

1. The policy of the emperors and the senate, as far as it concerned religion, was happily seconded by the reflections of the enlightened, and by the habits of the superstitious, part of their subjects. The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world were all considered by the people as equally true; by the philosopher as equally false; and by the magistrate as equally useful. And thus toleration produced not only mutual indulgence, but even religious concord....The elegant mythology of Homer gave a beautiful and almost a regular form to the polytheism of the ancient world. The philosophers of Greece deduced their morals from the nature of man rather than from that of God....

Reasoners of such a temper were scarcely inclined to wrangle about their respective modes of faith or of worship. It was indifferent to them what shape the folly of the multitude might choose to assume; and they approached, with the same inward contempt and the same external reverence, the altars of the Libyan, the Olympian, or the Capitoline Jupiter.

It is not easy to conceive from what motives a spirit of persecution could introduce itself into the Roman councils (Vol 1. Chapter 2. pp 22ff).

We have already described the religious harmony of the ancient world, and the facility with which the most different and even hostile nations embraced, or at least respected, each other's superstitions. A single people refused to join the common intercourse of mankind. (Chapter XV, p.350).

<http://www.violence.de/prescott/politics-trust.pdf>