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Sommario/riassunto	“Pottenger’s resuscitation of the philosophical foundations of US religious pluralism and civil discourse is essential reading for anyone concerned with the growing secular-religious divide that threatens the nation’s democratic future.” —John Francis Burke, Visiting Professor of Political Science, Trinity University, USA “John Pottenger’s book explores the nexus of religion and politics throughout American history—from the evolution of what he calls the 'colonial collusion between Church and State,' to the current benign relationship between these two institutions. Readers will have much to consider in this volume!” —Jo Renee Formicola, Professor, Political Science and Public Affairs, Seton Hall University, USA “Pottenger deftly addresses the

challenge of welcoming a vibrant religious marketplace while also muting the 'fires of faith' so that the containment structure is not itself consumed." —Emily R. Gill, Caterpillar Professor of Political Science Emerita, Bradley University, USA This book discusses the evolution of three philosophical foundations from the twelfth through the eighteenth centuries that converged to form the basis of liberal democracy's approach to the place and role of religion in society and politics. Identified by the author as a "religious axis," the period of convergence promoted rational and empirical investigation, enabled the development of diverse religious beliefs, and affirmed religious liberty and expressions amidst pluralist politics. The author shows that the religious axis' three philosophical foundations—epistemic, axiological, and political—undergird the political architecture of American liberal democracy that designed a containment structure to protect a vast array of religious expressions and encourage their presence in the public square. Moreover, the structure embodied a democratic ethos that drives religious and political pluralism—but within limits. The author argues that this containment structure has paradoxically ignited frenzied fires of faith that politically threaten the structure's own limits. John R. Pottenger is Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, USA.

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