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Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Illustrations -- Preface and Acknowledgments -- Abbreviations -- Introduction: Diagnosing the "Disease" of Tantra -- 1. The Golden Age of the Vedas and the Dark Age of Kālī: Tantrism, Orientalism, and the Bengal Renaissance -- 2. Sacrificing White Goats to the Goddess: Tantra and Political Violence in Colonial India -- 3. India's Darkest Heart: Tantra in the Literary Imagination -- 4. Deodorized Tantra: Sex, Scandal, Secrecy, and Censorship in the Works of John Woodroffe and Swami Vivekananda -- 5. Religion for the Age of Darkness: Tantra and the History of Religions in the Twentieth Century -- 6. The Cult of Ecstasy: Meldings of East and West in a New Age of Tantra -- Conclusion -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	A complex body of religious practices that spread throughout the Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain traditions; a form of spirituality that

seemingly combines sexuality, sensual pleasure, and the full range of physical experience with the religious life-Tantra has held a central yet conflicted role within the Western imagination ever since the first "discovery" of Indian religions by European scholars. Always radical, always extremely Other, Tantra has proven a key factor in the imagining of India. This book offers a critical account of how the phenomenon has come to be. Tracing the complex genealogy of Tantra as a category within the history of religions, Hugh B. Urban reveals how it has been formed through the interplay of popular and scholarly imaginations. Tantra emerges as a product of mirroring and misrepresentation at work between East and West--a dialectical category born out of the ongoing play between Western and Indian minds. Combining historical detail, textual analysis, popular cultural phenomena, and critical theory, this book shows Tantra as a shifting amalgam of fantasies, fears, and wish-fulfillment, at once native and Other, that strikes at the very heart of our constructions of the exotic Orient and the contemporary West.
