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Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Introduction / Bellah, Robert N. / Joas, Hans -- Fundamental Questions -- 1 The Axial Age Debate as Religious Discourse / Joas, Hans -- 2 What Was the Axial Revolution? / Taylor, Charles -- 3 An Evolutionary Approach to Culture / Donald, Merlin -- 4 Embodiment, Transcendence, and Contingency / Jung, Matthias -- 5 The Axial Age in Global History / Wittrock, Björn -- 6 The Buddha's Meditative Trance / Obeyesekere, Gananath -- 7 The Idea of Transcendence / Dalferth, Ingolf U. -- A Comparative Perspective -- 8 Religion, the Axial Age, and Secular Modernity in Bellah's Theory of Religious Evolution / Casanova, José -- 9 Where Do Axial Commitments Reside? / Swidler, Ann -- 10 The Axial Age Theory / Roetz, Heiner -- Destructive Possibilities? -- 11 The Axial Conundrum between Transcendental Visions and Vicissitudes of Their Institutionalizations / Eisenstadt, Shmuel N. -- 12 Axial Religions and the Problem of Violence / Martin, David -- 13 Righteous Rebels / Runciman, W. G. -- Reevaluations -- 14 Rehistoricizing the Axial Age / Arnason, Johann P.

-- 15 Cultural Memory and the Myth of the Axial Age / Assmann, Jan
-- Perspectives on the Future -- 16 The Axial Invention of Education
and Today's Global Knowledge Culture / Sullivan, William M. -- 17 The
Future of Transcendence / Madsen, Richard -- 18 The Heritage of the
Axial Age / Bellah, Robert N. -- Bibliography -- Contributors -- Index

Sommario/riassunto

The first classics in human history—the early works of literature, philosophy, and theology to which we have returned throughout the ages—appeared in the middle centuries of the first millennium BCE. The canonical texts of the Hebrew scriptures, the philosophical writings of Plato and Aristotle, the Analects of Confucius and the Daodejing, the Bhagavad Gita and the teachings of the Buddha—all of these works came down to us from the compressed period of history that Karl Jaspers memorably named the Axial Age. In *The Axial Age and Its Consequences*, Robert Bellah and Hans Joas make the bold claim that intellectual sophistication itself was born worldwide during this critical time. Across Eurasia, a new self-reflective attitude toward human existence emerged, and with it an awakening to the concept of transcendence. From Axial Age thinkers we inherited a sense of the world as a place not just to experience but to investigate, envision, and alter through human thought and action. Bellah and Joas have assembled diverse scholars to guide us through this astonishing efflorescence of religious and philosophical creativity. As they explore the varieties of theorizing that arose during the period, they consider how these in turn led to utopian visions that brought with them the possibility of both societal reform and repression. The roots of our continuing discourse on religion, secularization, inequality, education, and the environment all lie in Axial Age developments. Understanding this transitional era, the authors contend, is not just an academic project but a humanistic endeavor.
