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Nota di contenuto	Violence and religion in perspective / David G. Bromley and J. Gordon Melton -- Dramatic denouements / David G. Bromley -- Challenging misconceptions about the new religions-violence connection / J. Gordon Melton and David G. Bromley -- Sources of volatility in religious movements / Thomas Robbins -- Crises of charismatic legitimacy and violent behavior in new religious movements / Lorne L. Dawson -- Public agency involvement in government-religious movement confrontations / Stuart A. Wright -- Watching for violence: a comparative analysis of the roles of five types of cult-watching groups / Eileen Barker -- Mass suicide and the Branch Davidians / John R. Hall -- Occult masters and the Temple of Doom: the fiery end of the Solar Temple / Massimo Introvigne and Jean-Francois Mayer -- Dramatic confrontations: Aum Shinrikyo against the world / Ian Reader --

Making sense of the Heaven's Gate suicides / Robert W. Balch and David Taylor -- Lessons from the past, perspective for the future / J. Gordon Melton and David G. Bromley.

Sommario/riassunto

This explores the question of when and why violence by and against new religious cults erupts and whether and how such dramatic conflicts can be foreseen, managed and averted. The authors, leading international experts on religious movements and violent behavior, focus on the four major episodes of cult violence during the last decade: the tragic conflagration that engulfed the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas; the deadly sarin gas attack by the Aum Shinrikyo in Tokyo; the murder-suicides by the Solar Temple in Switzerland and Canada; and the collective suicide by the members of Heaven's Gate. They explore the dynamics leading to these dramatic episodes in North America, Europe, and Asia, and offer insights into the general relationship between violence and religious cults in contemporary society. The authors conclude that these events usually involve some combination of internal and external dynamics through which a new religious movement and society become polarized.
