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Sommario/riassunto	Mechanical Engineering, an engineering discipline borne of the needs of the industrial revolution, is once again asked to do its substantial share in the call for industrial renewal. The general call is urgent as we face profound issues of productivity and competitiveness that require engineering solutions, among others. The Mechanical Engineering Series features graduate texts and research monographs intended to address the need for information in contemporary areas of mechanical engineering. The series is conceived as a comprehensive one

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