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Autore	Deely John N.
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Nota di contenuto	Preface: the boundary of time -- 1. Society and civilization: the prelude to philosophy -- 2. Philosophy as physics -- 3. The Golden Age: philosophy expands its horizon -- 4. The final Greek centuries and the overlap of Neoplatonism with Christianity -- 5. The geography of the Latin age -- 6. The so-called Dark Ages -- 7. Cresting a wave: the second stage -- 8. The fate of sign in the later Latin age -- 9. Three outcomes, two Ddstinies -- 10. The road not taken -- 11. Beyond the Latin umwelt: science comes of age -- 12. The founding fathers: Rene Descartes and John Locke -- 13. Synthesis and successors: the strange case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde -- 14. Locke again: the scheme of human knowledge -- 15. Charles Sanders Peirce and the recovery of Signum -- 16. Semiology: modernity's attempt to treat the sign -- 17. At the turn of the twenty-first century -- 18. Beyond realism and idealism: resume and envoi.

## Sommario/riassunto

The first full-scale demonstration of the centrality of the theory of signs to the history of philosophy, *Four Ages of Understanding* provides a new vantage point from which to review and reinterpret the development of intellectual culture at the threshold of "globalization."

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