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Sommario/riassunto	This book explores the stagnation of democracy in the Western Balkans over the last decade. The author maps regional features of rising authoritarianism that mirror larger global trends and, in doing so, outlines the core mechanisms of authoritarian rule in the Balkans, with a particular focus on Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. These mechanisms include the creation of constant crises, the use of external powers to balance outside influences, as well as state capture. The

authoritarian patterns exist alongside formal democratic institutions, resulting in competitive authoritarian regimes that use social polarization to retain power. As the countries of the Western Balkans aspire, at least formally, to join the European Union, authoritarianism is often informal. Florian Bieber is Professor for Southeast European History and Politics and Director of the Centre for Southeast European Studies at the University of Graz, Austria. He coordinates the Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group (BiEPAG) and has been a visiting professor and fellow at Cornell, NYU, Central European University, and LSE.
