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Sommario/riassunto	As it enters its sixtieth year of independence, India stands on the threshold of superpower status. Yet India is strikingly different from all other global colossi. While it is the world's most populous democracy and enjoys the benefits of its internationally competitive high-tech and software industries, India also contends with extremes of poverty, inequality, and political and religious violence. This accessible and vividly written book presents a new interpretation of India's history, focusing particular attention on the impact of British imperialism on Independent India. Maria Misra begins with the rebellion against the British in 1857 and tracks the country's advance to the present day. India's extremes persist, the author argues, because its politics rest upon a peculiar foundation in which traditional ideas of hierarchy, difference, and privilege coexist to a remarkable degree with modern notions of equality and democracy. The challenge of India's leaders today, as in the last sixty years, is to weave together the disparate threads of the nation's ancient culture, colonial legacy, and modern

experience.

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