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	Sommario/riassunto	We live in an age of democracy. Very few people challenge the virtues of 'government by the people', yet politicians and commentators are fond of decrying the 'crisis of democracy'. How do these views square up?This book provides the answer by surveying the philosophical history of democracy and its critics and by analysing empirical data about citizen participation in Britain and other developed democracies. In addition to analysis of major political thinkers like Plato, Machiavelli and J.S. Mill, the book analyses how modern technology has influenced democracy.Among the issues discussed in t