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Sommario/riassunto	Framed into the broader conceptual debate that addresses the controversial role of human rights in the foreign policies of states, this book aims to critically investigate whether, how and to what extent human rights matter in the definition of Italy's external action. The focus of this study, which considers a period ranging from the end of the Cold War to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, is placed on the whole 'human rights component' of foreign policy, which is intended as the combination of three dimensions that are part of the same policy effort but can analytically be distinguished among them: 'institutional dialogue'; 'multilateral initiative' and 'bilateral emphasis'. This book investigates the consistency of this whole foreign policy component between the content and scope of the human rights discourse of Italian foreign policy-makers domestically and internationally and the actual efforts put in place by the country to advance the global human rights agenda, its institutions and procedures in both multilateral and bilateral settings.