

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910463274403321
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Titolo	Papacy in the modern world : a political history // Frank J. Coppa
Pubbl/distr/stampa	London, United Kingdom : , : Reaktion Books, , 2014
ISBN	1-78023-324-8
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (306 p.)
Disciplina	262.1309
Soggetti	Christianity and politics - Catholic Church Electronic books.
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Cover; The Papacy in the Modern World: A Political History; Imprint Page; Contents; Introduction: Harmony and Hostility between the Papacy and the Powers; I. Revolution Turns the Papal World Upside Down; II. The Papacy between Transformation and Restoration; III. The Papacy in an Age of Liberalism and Nationalism, 1820-1846; IV. Pio Nono's Transition from Reform to Reaction; V. Leo XIII: Conciliation with Modernity, Conflict with Italy; VI. Pius X: Confrontation with Modernity, Conciliation with Italy; VII. Benedict XV: The First World War, the League and the Missions VIII. The Crusade of Pius XI against Anti-SemitismIX. Pius XII: The Second World War, the Holocaust and the Cold War; X. Aggiornamento and Aperturismo: The Second Vatican Council and Beyond; XI. The Papacy of John Paul II and the Aftermath of the Council; XII. Benedict XVI: Conflict and Conciliation with the Contemporary Age; Conclusion: The Papacy Past and Present; Timeline; References; Select Bibliography; Index
Sommario/riassunto	In March 2013, millions of people sat glued to news channels and live Internet feeds, waiting to see white smoke rise from the Sistine Chapel, signaling the election of the new pope. For two millennia, the papacy, leader of the Roman Catholic Church, has played a fundamentally important role in European history and world affairs. Transcending the religious realm, it has influenced ideological, philosophical, social, and political developments, as well as international relations. Considering

the broad role of the papacy from the end of the eighteenth century to
the present, this original histor
