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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	An unstable past -- An improvised state -- A voluntarist ethic -- A flagging demography -- A stagnant economy -- A sexist tradition -- An educated elite -- A xenophobic style -- A socialist revival -- A strange defeat? -- Epilogue.
Sommario/riassunto	"In this essay, the author maintains that the French Third Republic - and European history during this period in general - can only be understood if particular attention is paid to the special relationship that existed between France and Germany. The experience of the French people was so intimately related to that of its closest neighbor that a bilateral perspective becomes unavoidable. Without the unifying theme of Germany's crucial role in acting upon and within the French Republic, this story would become a much more random tale of events. After 1870, an autonomous national history of France is no longer possible." --BOOK JACKET.