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Sommario/riassunto	As the twentieth century opened, American intellectuals grew increasingly sympathetic to Pragmatism and empirical methods in the social sciences. The Progressive program as a whole--in the form of Pragmatism, education, modern sociology, and nationalism--seemed to be in agreement on one thing: everything was in flux. The dogma and "absolute truth" of the Church were archaisms, unsuited to modern American citizenship and at odds with the new public philosophy being forged by such intellectuals as John Dewey, William James, and the New

Republic magazine. Catholics saw this new public philosophy as at least partly an attack on them. Focusing on the Catholic intellectual critique of modernity during the period immediately before and after the turn of the twentieth century, this provocative and original book examines how the Catholic Church attempted to retain its identity in an age of pluralism. It shows a Church fundamentally united on major issues-- quite unlike the present-day Catholic Church, which has been the site of a low-intensity civil war since the close of the Second Vatican Council in 1965. Defenders of the faith opposed James, Dewey, and other representatives of Pragmatism as it played out in ethics, education, and nationalism. Their goals were to found an economic and political philosophy based on natural law, to appropriate what good they could find in Progressivism to the benefit of the Church, and to make America a Catholic country. *The Church Confronts Modernity* explores how the decidedly nonpluralistic institution of Christianity responded to an increasingly pluralistic intellectual environment. In a culture whose chief value was pluralism, they insisted on the uniqueness of the Church and the need for making value judgments based on what they considered a sound philosophy of humanity. In neither capitulating to the new creed nor retreating into a self-righteous isolation, American Catholic intellectuals thus laid the groundwork for a half-century of intellectual vitality.
