

1. Record Nr.	UNICAMPANIASUN0043757
Autore	Solmi, Arrigo
Titolo	La riforma del Codice di procedura civile : discorsi, conferenze e interviste con prefazione e indice / Arrigo Solmi
Pubbl/distr/stampa	200 p. ; 23 cm
Edizione	[Roma : Soc. ed. del Foro italiano]
Descrizione fisica	Fondo Raffaele Papa.
Lingua di pubblicazione	Italiano
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
2. Record Nr.	UNINA9910797812103321
Autore	Goldstein Jonathan
Titolo	Jewish identities in East and Southeast Asia : Singapore, Manila, Taipei, Harbin, Shanghai, Rangoon, and Surabaya / / Jonathan Goldstein
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Berlin, Germany ; ; Boston, [Massachusetts] : , : De Gruyter Oldenbourg, , 2015 ©2015
ISBN	3-11-039546-0 3-11-035150-1
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (256 p.)
Collana	New Perspectives on Modern Jewish History, , 2192-9645 ; ; Volume 6
Disciplina	950.42004924
Soggetti	Jews - East Asia - History Jews - Southeast Asia - History Jews - East Asia - Identity Jews - Southeast Asia - Identity East Asia Southeast Asia
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

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Sommario/riassunto

The Jewish communities of East and Southeast Asia display an impressive diversity. Jonathan Goldstein's book covers the period from 1750 and focuses on seven of the area's largest cities and trading emporia: Singapore, Manila, Taipei, Harbin, Shanghai, Rangoon, and Surabaya. The book isolates five factors which contributed to the formation of transnational, multiethnic, and multicultural identity: memory, colonialism, regional nationalism, socialism, and Zionism. It emphasizes those factors which preserved specifically Judaic aspects of identity. Drawing extensively on interviews conducted in all seven cities as well as governmental, institutional, commercial, and personal archives, censuses, and cemetery data, the book provides overviews of communal life and intimate portraits of leading individuals and families. Jews were engaged in everything from business and finance to revolutionary activity. Some collaborated with the Japanese while others confronted them on the battlefield. The book attempts to treat fully and fairly the wide spectrum of Jewish experience ranging from that of the ultra-Orthodox to the completely secular.