

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910827438203321
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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	Front matter -- Map -- Acknowledgments -- Table of Contents -- List of Illustrations -- A Note on Romanization and Spelling -- 1. Jewish Identities in East and Southeast Asia: 1 Common Denominators and Dissimilarities -- 2. Setting a Standard for Jewish Identity in East 2 and Southeast Asia: Singapore's Baghdadi 2 Community from 1795 to 2015 -- 3. Between Spain, the United States, Japan, 3 and Israel: Manila's Multicultural "Bagel Boys" 3 in Historical Perspective -- 4. Taipei: An Oasis of Tranquility for Americans, 4 Europeans, and Israelis -- 5. Between Russia, China, Japan, and Israel: 5 The Transnational Identity of Harbin's Jews, 5 1899–2015, with Special Reference to the 5 Ehud Olmert Family -- 6. Shanghai as Microcosm and Mosaic of Eurasian 6 Jewish Identities, 1850–1960 Shanghai as Microcosm and Mosaic of -- 7. Empire, Nationalism, and Dissolution: 7 Rangoon and Surabaya, 1752–2015 -- 8. Enduring Jewish Identities and Legacies 8 Across the Landscape of East and Southeast 8 Asia -- Abbreviations and

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.
