

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910958151003321
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Titolo	A voice that spoke for justice : the life and times of Stephen S. Wise // Melvin I. Urofsky
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Albany, : State University of New York Press, c1982
ISBN	9781438422572 1438422571 9780585057361 0585057362
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xi, 439 pages, 1 unnumbered pages of plates) : portrait
Collana	SUNY series in modern Jewish history
Disciplina	296.8/341/092
Soggetti	Rabbis - United States Zionists - United States
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliography and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front Matter -- Half Title Page -- Title Page -- Copyright Page -- Table of Contents -- Introduction -- Content -- Goodly Beginnings -- The Cause and the Lady -- Bishop of Oregon -- Emanu-El -- The Free Synagogue -- Rabbi of the Free Synagogue -- The Rabbi as Progressive -- Wilson and the New Freedom -- Zionism Redivivus -- War. . . -- . . . and Peace -- Slightly Dispirited -- The Jewish Institute of Religion -- Ivri Anochi -- Great Betrayals -- In the Prime of Life -- The Political Rabbi -- A Voice in the Wilderness -- Non Possumus! -- In Congress Assembled -- Conflicts -- Holocaust -- Dissent in Zion -- Shehechyanu -- Final Fruits -- At Last to Rest -- Back Matter -- Notes -- 1. Goodly Beginnings -- 2. The Cause and the Lady -- 3. Bishop of Oregon -- 4. Emanu-El -- 5. The Free Synagogue -- 6. The Rabbi of the Free Synagogue -- 7. The Rabbi as Progressive -- 8. Wilson and the New Freedom -- 9. Zionism Redivivus -- 10. War . . . -- 12. "Slightly Dispirited -- 13. The Jewish Institute of Religion -- 15. Great Betrayals -- 16. In the Prime of Life -- 17. The Political Rabbi -- 18. A Voice in the Wilderness -- 19. Non Possumus! -- 20. In Congress Assembled -- 21. Conflicts -- 22. Holocaust -- 23. Dissent in Zion -- 24. Shehechyanu -- 25. Final Fruits -- 26. At Last to Rest --

In the first half of this century, a talented and charismatic leadership restructured the American Jewish community to meet the demands and opportunities of a pluralistic, secular society. The work of this generation of titans still guides the current modes of American Jewish life. The last of these giants was the influential reformer Stephen S. Wise—a progenitor of American Zionism, creator of the American and World Jewish Congresses, and founder of the Jewish Institute of Religion. As rabbi of the Free Synagogue, Wise led the fight for a living Judaism responsive to social problems. This engrossing study is more than a chronicle of an ethnic community's adjustment to a host society. Thanks to Melvin Urofsky's painstaking research, it succeeds in revealing the true story behind a legendary and controversial figure in American Jewish history.

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