

The “First Hebrew City”: Collecting on Tel Aviv and Israel at Stanford

By Zachary Baker

Description: In December 2005 the Stanford University Libraries acquired collection of rare archival documents, ephemera, maps, posters, photographs, books, pamphlets, and journals devoted to Tel Aviv—the “first Hebrew city”—from its founding in 1909 until Israel declared its independence in 1948. These materials belonged to Eliasaf Robinson, one of Israel’s leading antiquarian booksellers, and he assembled this collection over a period of four decades. This presentation will focus on the collection’s contours and on issues that have arisen in the course of its processing. It will view the collection’s acquisition in the context of other Israeli-oriented collections at Stanford and in the broader academic context of Israel Studies as an emerging sub-field within both Jewish and Middle Eastern Studies. With the approach of the Tel Aviv’s centenary, the Stanford’s Taube Center for Jewish Studies is making plans to hold a conference marking that event and the Stanford library will mount an exhibition of some of the important and unusual documents in the collection. Portions of the collection will be digitized to facilitate access.

Zachary Baker, since becoming the Reinhard Family Curator of Judaica and Hebraica Collections at Stanford in 1999, has devoted much of his attention to building up the library’s holdings relating to the Yishuv and the formative years of the State of Israel. He is a past-president of AJL (1994-1996) and currently serves as editor of AJL’s peer-reviewed journal *Judaica Librarianship*.