

Building the Israeli Nation: Two Decades of Collecting Initiatives at Stanford

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Description: Over the past two decades, the Stanford University Libraries have pursued a collection development strategy that has resulted in the assembling of a critical mass of primary source materials documenting pivotal aspects of the Israeli nation-building enterprise and Israeli cultural production. These include literary collections such as the Israel Cohen library, historically based holdings such as the Eliasaf Robinson Collection on Tel-Aviv, archives on Israeli water resources and infrastructure, contemporary art exhibition catalogs, and – most recently – the *Lahiton-Cinema World* photo archive [the focus of Anna Levia’s presentation]. In addition to showcasing examples from these collections, the presentation will include an overview of the emergence and development of Stanford’s collecting efforts in this arena, and a discussion of ways in which they respond to the university’s broader research agenda. In the context of North American library collections, Stanford’s collections relating to Israel can be described as distinctive, highly selective, and largely retrospective in nature – and as complementing more ambitious collecting enterprises at other research establishments. Technological advances offer the hope (if not always the promise) of facilitating access to these holdings, to the research community at large.

Zachary Baker has served as Reinhard Family Curator of Judaica and Hebraica Collections in the Stanford University Libraries since 1999. Before that, he was Head Librarian of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. He is Past-President of AJL, former editor of *Judaica Librarianship*, and is currently Secretary-Treasurer of the Association for Jewish Studies. He has presented frequently at AJL and AJS conferences and published in a range of professional and scholarly venues.