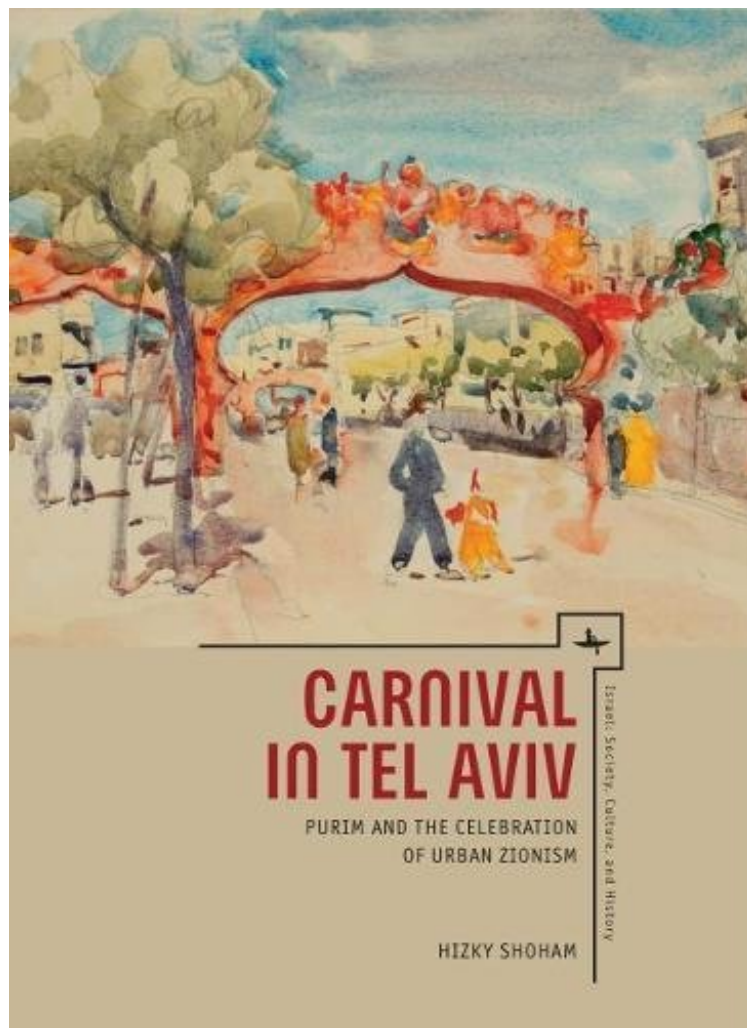


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Carnival in Tel Aviv: Purim and the Celebration of Urban Zionism (Israel: Society, Culture, and History)

Hizky Shoham

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Hizky Shoham : Carnival in Tel Aviv: Purim and the Celebration of Urban Zionism (Israel: Society, Culture, and History) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Carnival in Tel Aviv: Purim and the Celebration of Urban Zionism (Israel: Society, Culture, and History):

The Tel Aviv annual Purim celebrations were the largest public events in British Palestine, and they played a key role in the development of the urban Jewish experience in the Promised Land. Carnival in Tel-Aviv presents a historical-

anthropological analysis of this mass public event and explores the ethnographic dimension of Zionism. This study sheds new light on the ideological world of urban Zionism, the capitalistic aspects of Zionist culture, and the urban nature of the Zionist project, which sought to create a nation of warriors and farmers, but in fact nationalized the urban space and constructed it as its main public sphere.

Hizky Shoham combines fastidious attention to historical detail with considerable theoretical sophistication to make an important intervention in our understanding of the history of Zionism. Glancing through the prism of Purim carnivals in Tel Aviv, he reorients our gaze from the rural countryside to the city, as well as from the realm of politics to that of culture. The result is a path-breaking inquiry into Urban Zionism, an important and understudied phenomenon that blends the vaunted nationalist ethos of Zionism and the leisure culture of an emerging major city. All in all, a major contribution from a leading member of the new generation of historians of Zionism. (David N. Myers, Professor of Jewish History and Robert N. Burr Department Chair, UCLA) In this original, sophisticated and engaging work of micro-history, Hizky Shoham shows how Purim celebrations in Mandatory Palestine illuminated the sensibilities of the countrys new Zionist community. Rooted in archival sources yet drawing liberally from anthropological and cultural theory, *Carnival in Tel Aviv* presents Zionisms invented traditions, in Palestine as elsewhere in the world, as inseparable from urban modernity. A smart and stimulating book. (Derek J. Penslar, FRSC, Stanley Lewis Professor of Israel Studies, University of Oxford Fellow, St. Annes College) *Carnival in Tel Aviv: Purim and the Celebration of Urban Zionism* presents a lucid and engaging study of an invented Hebrew tradition that drew on the Hebrew Bible and the greater Jewish tradition of Purim celebrations to become the largest urban public event in British Palestine. Shohams carefully documented and theoretically informed discussion of the carnivals history and multilayered meanings explores the creativity and the tensions that underlie the Purim Carnival within the context of Zionist ideology, Tel Avivs vibrant and rapidly developing bourgeois culture, the national secular Hebrew culture of the Jewish society in Palestine during the first decades of the twentieth century, and gender politics. This book is a major contribution to the growing field of Israeli cultural history. (Yael Zerubavel, Professor of Jewish Studies and History and author of *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Culture*) Shohams monograph presents fascinating new research that uncovers an important component of the building of Tel Aviv, the development of the Yishuv, and Zionism at large. His book would well enhance seminars on themes such as the development of Hebrew and Israeli culture, the formation of Tel Aviv, tourism and religion, and the intersections of nationalism, culture, and public space. He opens an important conversation on urban Zionism and provides significant insights into the development of Tel Aviv culture during the Yishuv. Shohams study is an essential addition to the field and enhances our understandings of Zionist culture and history. (Nina S. Spiegel (Portland State University), *Journal of Israeli History*, vol. 35, no. 1 (March 2016))

About the Author Hizky Shoham is a cultural historian of Israel and Zionism. He is a research fellow in the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem and a lecturer in the Interdisciplinary Program for Hermeneutics and Cultural Studies at Bar-Ilan University, Israel.