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Shimeon Brisman (1920–2004), Z”L

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We Remember . . .

*Shimeon Brisman (1920–2004), ז"ל**

DAVID HIRSCH

It is with deep sadness that I must report that my predecessor, Shimeon Brisman, Jewish Studies Bibliographer from 1962 to 1988, passed away in Brooklyn on July 14, 2004 (25 Tammuz 5764). Shimeon Brisman was born in 1920 in Suraz (Poland). He studied in Hebrew schools and rabbinic seminaries in Poland and spent the years of World War II in Lithuania, Russia, Japan, and Shanghai. During the same period he studied and received degrees in Rabbinics and Yiddish literature.

Shimeon arrived in the United States in 1947 and worked in libraries in New York and in Los Angeles, including the Jewish Community Library of Los Angeles. He also engaged in the book business, and in preparing and editing works for publication.

Shimeon began his appointment as Near Eastern Cataloger in the UCLA Library August 1, 1962, hired by then University Librarian Robert Vosper. He was responsible for making UCLA's Judaica collection one of the premier collections in the U.S. in a very short time. UCLA had very little in terms of Judaica when Shimeon arrived, and in addition to acquiring current materials, he was instrumental in acquiring several large collections to build UCLA's retrospective Judaica holdings. Shimeon's negotiating skills played a pivotal role when he was sent to Jerusalem to purchase the Bamberger & Wahrman Bookstore collection of 33,000 volumes of antiquarian Judaica, which became the nucleus of UCLA's Theodore E. Cummings Collection of Judaica and Hebraica.

While Shimeon worked tirelessly to build a well-rounded Judaica collection, he took special interest in building UCLA's collection of rabbinic literature and the collection of yizkor books describing the life and destruction of Jewish communities in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. During his tenure as Jewish Studies Librarian he regularly taught a course Hebraica Bibliography and Research Methods in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures.

*Reprinted from the *UCLA Library Newsletter*.

Shimeon retired from UCLA on July 1, 1988, and moved to Brooklyn, where he continued his scholarly activities, including the publishing of the third volume in the series, *Jewish Research Literature*. This three-volume work remains a classic work in the field of Judaica bibliography.

Shimeon was a scholar-librarian in the truest sense. May his memory be for a blessing.