

## **Eliezer (Elie) Chammou, 1936 – 2012.**

Eliezer (Elie) Chammou, retired cataloger of Arabic, Hebrew and atlases in the Young Research Library Cataloging Department of UCLA, died suddenly of a stroke on October 24, 2012. The funeral was held at Eden Memorial Park in Mission Hills on October 25.

Elie was born in Mosul, Iraq in 1936. His family emigrated to Israel, along with the majority of Iraqi Jews in 1951 while he was still in high school. Elie's family lived in a transit camp for some time after their arrival in Israel, but Elie completed high school with honors by going to night school. Elie completed his BA and later an MA in Middle East Geography at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He also worked as a high school teacher.

After marrying his wife Shoshana, the couple moved to the United States in 1970 and Elie began studying towards his PhD in Geography at UCLA. He completed his PhD in 1976. His dissertation was entitled Migration and adjustment: The case of Sephardic Jews in Los Angeles. Elie began his library career as a Library Assistant in the YRL Cataloging department in 1980 and became the Middle Eastern Cataloger in 1981. He obtained his MLS from UCLA in 1985.

During his tenure in the YRL Cataloging Department he had a wide variety of responsibilities including the original cataloging of Hebrew and Arabic, geography of the Middle East, as well as the cataloging of atlases for the Henry J. Bruman Map Library.

As a Middle Eastern specialist, Elie played a key role in persuading the Library of Congress to change the subject heading Near East to Middle East. His research into this question is documented in the article he wrote for *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, vol. 7(3), Spring 1987, entitled "Near or Middle East? Choice of Name." and originally presented as a paper at the Middle East Librarians Association Conference in November, 1985. This issue had been a long time interest of Elie's and was in fact the topic of his specialization paper during library school.

In the early 1990's Elie collaborated with UCLA Library systems programmer, Jim Fayollat to develop a tool for the Library's ORION catalog called BLISTM file which linked first-occurring subject headings in cataloging records with their corresponding classification assignments. This tool was a time-saver for original cataloging, much the same as the LCC-LCSH correlations now available in the LC Classification Web product used by catalogers today.

Elie received a number of LAUC-LA mini-grants during his tenure at UCLA. In 1988 for writing a paper entitled "Problems in Cataloging Hebrew Literature." He presented this paper at the International Conference on Hebrew Language, Literature and Culture, sponsored by the National Association of Professors of Hebrew. In 1991/1992 he received a mini-grant to prepare a paper on Judeo-Arabic literature in Iraq during the British Mandate period.

He used another LAUC-LA mini-grant for a paper entitled "Problems in Cataloging Arabic Materials" which he presented in 1995 at the Annual Meeting of the Middle East Librarians Association (MELA). The third mini-grant he used for his paper entitled "Jerusalem in Early Maps of the World" which he presented in the summer of 2001 at the Annual Convention of the Association of Jewish Libraries (AJL). In the year 2000 he began contributing Arabic names to the National Authority File via the Name Authority Cooperative Program (NACO). He contributed over 200 names to the file before retiring.

In addition to his work at UCLA, Elie also taught evening classes at several local institutions. He developed and taught two classes on the geography of the Middle East at the USC Dept. of Geography; geography of Israel at the University of Judaism; geography, Hebrew language, and library/media technology at West Los Angeles College. Locally, and was frequently invited to speak on Islamic cartography and Islamic

contribution to geographic exploration at the UCLA Dept. of Geography, and on water and peace in the Middle East at the UCLA Summer Conference.

After 22 years of service, Eliezer Chammou retired from the UCLA Library on October 31, 2002.

Following retirement from the library he continued teaching part-time at Santa Monica College, West Los Angeles College, UCLA Extension, and the University of Judaism.

Elie was a pleasant and charming colleague to spend time with and even in retirement, he valued and kept in contact with his colleagues, often initiating invitations for get-togethers. His presence will be missed.

He is survived by his wife Shoshana, a son, Yossi, daughters Tali and Tamar, and 8 grandchildren.

Condolences may be sent to Shoshana at 16910 Escalon Drive, Encino, CA 91436.

**Source:**

David Hirsch - Librarian for Jewish and Middle Eastern Studies, UCLA, October 29, 2012